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Dear heavenly Father, we worship You this morning with our tithe and offerings. We pray for the courage to put You first in our lives. In the name of Jesus, amen.

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JULY 24, 2021

## When William Tyndale put God First

William Tyndale lost everything when he put God first. Even then, he didn't give up. What can we learn from William Tyndale today that will help us put God first in our own lives?

In the 16th century, the Roman Catholic Church had prohibited the Bible from being read and understood by regular people. Persecution was certain for anyone who challenged the authority of the church and especially the Pope. The Papacy had become the apocalyptic beast depicted in the Bible.

During this dark period of human history, William Tyndale was a light that helped change the course of human history by making the Bible accessible in English.

Tyndale's translation was the first English Bible to draw directly from Hebrew and Greek texts. It was also the first English translation to take advantage of the printing press, the latest technology at the time for spreading a message. This brought him into direct conflict with the church, which believed that the general population didn't have the skills to understand the Bible and therefore needed the church to do it for them.

Fleeing England, Tyndale sought refuge in the Flemish territory of the Catholic Emperor Charles the Fifth. In 1535, Tyndale was arrested and jailed in

the castle of Vilvoorde (Filford) outside Brussels for more than a year. In 1536, he was convicted of heresy and executed by strangulation, after which his body was burnt at the stake. His dying prayer was that the King of England's eyes would be opened.

His prayers were answered. Not long after he gave his life for putting God first, the King James Bible would be compiled and sanctioned by the king of England. The Bible is the foundation of western society and Tyndale truly helped change the world by bringing the inspired text to the average person who could now understand it.

We are called to help people understand the Bible so they can find freedom, healing and hope in Jesus. When we are faithful with our tithe and offerings, we are helping to take the Three Angels' Messages to the entire world as God commanded. Putting God first by sponsoring missions is crucial. However, we should also invest our time and energy with the people around us, inspiring them to know more about the love of God.

*William Tyndale put God first, even when it cost him everything. His courage inspires us today. Jesus gave up everything to redeem us and His love compels us to put His kingdom first in our own lives. As the deacons collect the tithe and offerings, we are challenged to put God first.*