

## Tudor primary sources

*In modern English underneath in italics in brackets*

### William Tyndale talking to a church leader

'... If God spare my life, ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plow to know more of the Scriptures than thou dost.'

*(If I live, before long, I will make sure every farm boy knows more of the Bible than you do.)*



### William Tyndale

'I perceived how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth except the Scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue.'

*(For ordinary people to know the truths of the Bible they need the Bible in English.)*

**Henry VIII**

'The Word of God, is disputed, rhymed, sung and jangled in every ale-house and tavern, contrary to the true meaning and doctrine of the same.'

*(The Bible is sung and discussed in every pub, which is not right for understanding the true meaning of the Bible.)*

**The Act for the Advancement of True Religion 1543**

*After putting the Great Bible into churches in 1539, Henry VIII had another change of mind and this act restricted the reading of the Bible to clergy, noblemen, the gentry and wealthy traders. Gentlewomen were allowed to read it in private. Women below the gentry rank, servants, apprentices and poor people were forbidden to read it.*

"malicious minds have, intending to subvert the true exposition of Scripture, have taken upon them, by printed ballads, rhymes, etc., subtilly and craftily to instruct His Highness' people, and specially the youth of this his realm, untruly. For reformation

whereof, His Majesty considereth it most requisite to purge his realm of all such books, ballads, rhymes, and songs, as be pestiferous and noisome".

In modern English:

*'Evil minds have - with the intention of ruining the true understanding of the Bible - taken it upon themselves to slyly teach the king's people , particularly the young people, by using printed songs and poems, etc. In order to put this right, the King thinks it important to clear his kingdom of all such books, rhymes, and songs, as they are deadly and dangerous'.*

**From *Obedience of the Christian Man* by William Tyndale**

*In this document, Tyndale lists the objections given by the authorities to the Bible being in English. Tyndale's arguments against objections paraphrased in modern English are in italics. Difficult words are explained in brackets.*

1. They tell you that Scripture (*Bible*) ought not be in the mother tongue (*English*).

*They only say this out of fear and in order to keep control*

2. They say that Scripture needs a pure quiet mind, and that laymen (*ordinary people*) are too cumbered (*busy*) with worldly business to understand it.

*Church leaders are just as busy*

3. They say that laymen would interpret (*understand*) it each after his own way.

*They should provide teachers who will show the right way to understand the Bible. They don't do this because their lives don't live up to their teaching.*

4. They say our tongue (*English*) is too rude (*rough*).

*God made English! Hebrew and Greek translate well into English.*

5. They say we need doctors (*educated people*) to interpret Scripture because it is hard.

*If churchmen will not teach us we must have the Bible and read it for ourselves with God as teacher.*