



BIBLE Passages *Journal-ette*

Dear Supporters and Friends,

Something incredible happened to the Great Bible in 1566. Copies were literally chained to lecterns in St. Paul's Cathedral in London for fear that someone might steal them. Prior to 1566 the reading of the Bible in English in public assemblies had been forbidden. It was argued that scripture was only to be read in a beautiful and historic language like Latin. According to high church officials, English was just too vulgar and simple to be used as a means of communicating the lofty and solemn thoughts of God. The Oxford scholar and theologian William Tyndale did not think so, and in 1526 translated and published his own copy of the English Bible—the first English Bible to be translated from the Greek Language.



A copy of the Great Bible on display at Freed Hardeman University

Tyndale had broken with hundreds of years of church tradition by actually translating and encouraging citizens to the read and study the Bible in their native tongue. This infuriated the newly self-proclaimed head of the English church, Henry VIII, and he eventually had Tyndale declared a heretic and burned him at the stake. The “damage” however had already been done. The bible had been smuggled into the homes and business of many English citizens. Tyndale’s translation, along with other translations circulating at the time, were causing great concern that inferior and highly Calvinized forms of the scripture were being read. Therefore, only a few short years after having Tyndale murdered, King Henry reversed his thinking and authorized an official translation to be published for use in the public assemblies of the church only. Thus, the Bibles were literally chained to the pulpit so that no one would be tempted to steal it, nor to read it in such a lowly place as one’s own private residence.

The translation authorized by King Henry VIII to be read in public assemblies became known as the Great Bible (so called because of its enormous size). A copy of the Great Bible, along with a type of the Greek New Testament utilized by William Tyndale, are on permanent display in the library of Freed-Hardeman University (FHU). They are a part of the David and Paula Tarbet collection, and contain numerous other ancient copies of the Bible. Carla and I were privileged to see them during a tour given to us by our long-time friend Rick Brumback, a Bible professor at FHU. It was my privilege to speak at the FHU lectureship in February, and it likewise gave me the opportunity to utilize what I had learned on that tour to further enhance the church history class that I am now teaching at Bear Valley Bible Institute International (BVBI). The timing was perfect to include it in my lectures on the Reformation movement of the 16th and 17th centuries. It reminded us of the

sacrifices then and now that many have made to allow me, and the students at Bear Valley Bible Institute, the honor to study and proclaim God's precious words.

Thank you for allowing us the privilege of preparing over 40 students for ministry. Many of these students are nearing their graduation and will soon enter the ministry on a full-time basis. Classes I have been teaching this quarter on Biblical Counseling and Church History are serving to better equip them for the work they will encounter. Your support has allowed us this month to not only provide instruction in an academic environment both at FHU and BVBII, but also to provide private and personal feedback, counsel and advice in the development of their faith. February has also been filled with many hours of planning and preparation for the upcoming Bible Lands Studies Program in March, which has also included two orientation sessions, the development of our Guidepost instructional manual, and the answering of lots of questions. If God wills, by time you receive this report I will have administered my final exams, graded student assignments, calculated grades, and then have been on our way to lead the Bible Studies program for the month of March. Once thank you so very much for your generous support and love. Our hearts are refreshed by you and your love for souls.

In Him, *John*

L-R: Much preparation in February for the two March study tours!...a quick trip to Dripping Springs for John to preach and to see family...Tyler King, John, Mark Hanstein, Rick Brumback and Denny Petrillo at the FHU lectures... February brought a lot of snow to Denver!...Rick Brumback next to copies of Latin works at FHU.

