



Secondary School Collective Worship - Education Sunday 2026

Tyndale, Paul, and Living Well Together

Last/next Sunday was/will be Education Sunday, which is a day when Christians across England and Wales reflect on the importance of education and celebrate and pray for everyone who is involved in it.

This morning, we're going to think about how learning shapes not just what we know, but the kind of people we become.

But first let's look at a story from 500 years ago that still matters today, when ordinary people in England could not read the Bible in their own language. It was only available in Latin, which most people could not understand.

A priest and scholar named William Tyndale believed that if the Bible really mattered (and, he said, it did), then everyone should have access to it. He famously said he wanted even an ordinary farm worker to know the Bible better than the priests did. Powerful people opposed him, but despite personal risk, he translated the Bible into English, fleeing to Germany to do so. In 1526 he published the New Testament in English. Eventually, he was arrested and executed, but his work endured, influencing later English Bibles, including some we use today, and helping generations to read the Bible for themselves.

What kinds of knowledge or opportunities do you think everyone should have today?

People who have taken the Bible seriously have often challenged injustice and changed society. Tyndale, highly educated and trained in ancient languages, did not translate the Bible as an academic exercise or for its own sake. He wanted ordinary people to read and understand it as well as he did. He believed that reading the Bible and taking it seriously changes people. He believed it would help them to develop wisdom, to live better lives, and to understand God.

Today's Bible reading comes from the Book of Romans, which was written in about 55CE by the Apostle Paul, an early Christian leader who travelled around the Roman Empire starting groups of

Christians. He kept in touch with them by letter, often giving advice or answering questions. Some of these letters, including this one to Christians in Rome, are now part of the Bible. Christians now, and others also look to Paul's writings to help them make sense of life, grow in wisdom, and understand God's will.

Read Romans 14.1–7 Good News Bible

14 Welcome those who are weak in faith, but do not argue with them about their personal opinions. 2 Some people's faith allows them to eat anything, but the person who is weak in the faith eats only vegetables. 3 The person who will eat anything is not to despise the one who doesn't; while the one who eats only vegetables is not to pass judgment on the one who will eat anything; for God has accepted that person. 4 Who are you to judge the servants of someone else? It is their own Master who will decide whether they succeed or fail. And they will succeed, because the Lord is able to make them succeed.

5 Some people think that a certain day is more important than other days, while others think that all days are the same. We each should firmly make up our own minds. 6 Those who think highly of a certain day do so in honour of the Lord; those who will eat anything do so in honour of the Lord, because they give thanks to God for the food. Those who refuse to eat certain things do so in honour of the Lord, and they give thanks to God. 7 We do not live for ourselves only, and we do not die for ourselves only.

The Christians in Rome, who Paul was writing to, were disagreeing with each other. They all took the teachings of Jesus seriously, but some thought following Jesus meant keeping dietary rules or special days; others disagreed. At the heart of this was the question: do followers of Jesus still need to keep Old Testament rules about food and festivals? That is why some of them were eating only vegetables.

Paul encourages both sides to treat each other with humility, respect, and understanding. For Paul, it's more important that they become people who can live well with others, treat others with dignity, listen carefully, and recognise that everyone matters to God.

Paul's message is still useful today here in school. Learning gives us knowledge and skills, but it also shapes how we think, judge, and treat others. The question is not just 'What have we learned?', but 'What kind of people are we becoming through our learning?'

How does our school become better when we truly respect those who think differently?

How would social media change if people were more interested in understanding than judging? Are we becoming more thoughtful and compassionate? Are we becoming more willing to listen?

Can you think of something you've learned recently that has actually changed how you think about the world or how you act, not just what you know?

For Christians, the Bible is more than a source of information. It is intended to form character as well as minds and to help people to grow in wisdom. Paul encourages us to be more patient, less judgemental, and more aware of others' value, and Tyndale's story reminds us that when people take the Bible seriously, they can change the world.

Notes for teachers

A short biography of William Tyndale can be found below, along with the Bible passage in two different translations, should you wish to use one of them instead of or as well as the Good News Bible translation provided above: as translated by Tyndale in 1525, and the Easy English version, which might be appropriate if your students have a less strong understanding of English e.g. EAL.

William Tyndale (c. 1494–1536)

Tyndale is best known for translating much of the Bible into English. Tyndale was born in Gloucestershire and studied at Oxford. A gifted linguist, he mastered Greek, Latin, Hebrew and several European languages. Although ordained a Catholic priest, he adopted Protestant ideas.

At the time, the Bible in England was the Latin Vulgate, and the Church taught that people should receive scripture through clergy rather than personal reading. Tyndale believed everyone should be able to read the Bible, and this conviction shaped his life's work.

Unauthorised English translations were banned, so Tyndale left England for Germany in 1524. He published an English New Testament in 1526, which was smuggled into England and widely circulated despite efforts to destroy it. He later revised this work and began translating the Old Testament, producing English of notable clarity and power.

As his influence grew, so did opposition, and he was declared a heretic. He was eventually betrayed in 1535 and arrested in Antwerp. He was executed on 6 October 1536, reportedly praying, 'Lord, open the King of England's eyes.'

In 1539, Henry VIII authorised the Great Bible, which drew heavily on Tyndale's work, as did later translations. Much of the 1611 King James Version, especially in the New Testament and Pentateuch, is based directly on his translations.

Tyndale's influence continues in modern English Bibles and in the language itself, with phrases such as 'let there be light', 'the powers that be', 'fight the good fight', and 'the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak' originating from his work.

Teach about Tyndale

Your students can find out more about William Tyndale and his Bible translation using these free resources.

For primary schools, six lessons introduce Tyndale, explain why his translation mattered, and explore its lasting impact.

For Key Stage 3 RE, two lessons examine how Tyndale made the Bible accessible and why the meaning and authority of sacred texts can be contested.

For Key Stage 3 History, three lessons explore his role in the Reformation, including religious change in the 1520s and 1530s, the spread of the Bible, and why English translation was controversial and dangerous.

Find out more and download at biblesociety.org.uk/education/tyndale

Romans 14.1–7 from Tyndale's New Testament, with spellings and punctuation changed to modern-day English

14 Him that is weak in the faith receive unto you not in disputing and troubling his conscience. 2 One believes that he may eat all things. Another which is weak eats herbs. 3 Let not him that eats despise him that eats not. And let not him which eats not judge him that eats. For God has received him. 4 What are you that judges another man's servant? Whether he stands or falls that pertains unto his master: yet he shall stand. For God is able to make him stand.

5 This man puts difference between (one) day and (another) day. Another man counts all days alike. See that no man wavers in his own meaning. 6 He that observes one day more then another does it for the Lord's pleasure. And he that observes not one day more then another does it to please the Lord also. He that eats does it to please the Lord, for he gave God thanks. 7 And he that eats not, eats not to please the Lord and gives God thanks.

Romans 14.1–7 (Easy English)

14 It is difficult for some Christians to trust God completely about everything. You should accept people like that as your friends. Do not argue with them about what they think is right or wrong. 2 Some people believe that they may eat all kinds of food. But other people are not so sure, so they eat only vegetables. 3 People who eat anything must not think that they are better than people who eat only vegetables. Also, people who eat only vegetables must not judge other people who eat anything. They are not doing anything wrong, because God himself has accepted them.

4 God is the master of all believers and they are his servants. You do not have authority to judge someone else's servant. The servant's own master will decide if he has done well or he has done

something wrong. And he will serve his master well, because the Lord is able to help him to do that.

5 Some people think that certain days are special and more important than other days. Other people think that all days are the same. Each person should decide what seems right to him. 6 A person who makes a certain day special does that so that he can respect the Lord. A person who eats all kinds of food does that so that he can respect the Lord. He thanks God for the food that he eats. A person who refuses to eat certain foods also does that so that he can respect the Lord. And he also thanks God.

7 None of us lives only to please ourselves. And we do not die to please ourselves.

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