

Pilgrim Purification and Praise *Heb. 11:13-16*

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Nov. 19th

1 Cor. 10:11 reminds us that the things God recorded about His people in the Bible are *“written for our admonition.”* Nouthesi’a: **warning!** Why does God use “history” to warn us? Because we’re prone to forget that “history” repeats itself! The tradition of “Thanksgiving” has Biblical Roots in the Feast of Tabernacles, which God initiated to remind future generations of how he led their forefathers to freedom. (Lev. 23:34-44; Deut. 16:9-17)

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF! Let’s take some time to remember:

1. REMEMBER THE “BONDAGE”

Israel left “Egypt” to escape slavery and the Pilgrims left Europe because of religious bondage.

A. The Reformation brought the Bible back to Europe! John 8:32

1) Many embraced “Religion” without a real Relationship with God through His Son and Word.

B. Government enforced “Religion” produced another type of bondage.

6 times in Galatians Paul uses “douleu’o” (slavery) to describe the effect “Religious Traditions” can have on us. Gal. 2:4; 4:3,9,24,25; 5:1

1) The Reformation reproduced “State” churches, run by Ecclesiastical Politicians.

a) Support and obedience were “non negotiable”.

b) Non-conformity brought harsh Consequences. (Fines, imprisonments, banishment, death!)

C. Puritans sought to “Purify” the Church from within.

1) Some eventually immigrated to America (1628) & formed the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

D. Others separated from the state church, forming independent churches.

1) They were called “Separatists” or “Pilgrims”. (Congregationalist)

2. THE PRICE OF “FREEDOM”. Jn 8:32

A. The path to freedom is always difficult. Darkness always reacts to Light! John 3:19

1) Pastor John Robinson led a group to separate from the official church in 1603.

2) After years of persecution they decided to flee to Holland.

a) In 1607 they paid an English captain to smuggle them to Holland. (He betrayed them)

b) In 1608 they hired a Dutch ship to take them. They were caught while boarding and the ship left, leaving many men and all the women and children behind who had to find another way.

3) After 12 years in Holland, the church voted to immigrate to America.

4) Their trip was financed by a group of London investors in exchanged for produce/furs.

a) They agreed to work for 7 years to repay their voyage expenses. (changed to 20 years)

b) The day of their departure Weston showed up with a new contract requiring them to work 7 days a week and basically turning them into slaves.

c) Brewster refused to sign so Weston refused to pay the remaining fare.

d) They ended up selling some of their supplies to fund the rest of the trip.

5) The “Company” had hired two ships (Mayflower and Speedwell) to sail to America .

a) After leaving England (Aug 5th) , the Speedwell leaked.

b) They had to “cram” into Mayflower, delaying their journey.

6) There wasn’t enough room for the passengers from both ships.

Pastor Robinson stayed behind with some while William Brewster took the others.

7) They finally left on Sept 16, 1620, with 102 passengers.

(50 men, 19 women {3 were pregnant} 14 teens, and 19 kids.)

- a) About half of the adults were pilgrim separatist. The others were known as “adventurers”.
 - b) These 102 spent the 7 week passage in the lower cargo hold enduring violent storms.
- 8) For 2 months, they braved the storm-tossed Atlantic but were blown off course, arriving in Mass. Bay, (instead of Virginia) on Nov. 11, 1620!**

“The Rest of the Story”

*“Being thus arrived in a good harbor and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees & blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast & furious ocean, and delivered them from all their perils & miseries, But here I cannot but stay and stand half amazed at this poor peoples present condition; Being thus passed the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation, they had now no friends to welcome them, nor inns to entertain or refresh their weather-beaten bodies, no houses or much less towns to repair too, to seek for succor. **What could sustain them but the Spirit of God & His grace?**”*

- 1) They spent the first winter living on the ship. Found corn in a deserted village.
- 2) Over half of the passengers died that first winter. William Bradford’s wife died first!
- 3) Winter 1620 Squanto met them late winter and taught them how to plant corn and find shell- fish.
- 4) Spring 1621 Mayflower returned to England. Not one pilgrim returned to England with them!
- 5) Spring of 1623 brought a 3 month drought.
- 6) Summer 1623 two ships arrived with "treasure hunters" from “the Company” but no supplies.
- 7) Bradford Proclaimed day of prayer (July 30th) and after 9 hours it began to rain.
- 8) The same day another ship arrived with some of their family members and fresh supplies!
- 9) That Fall, 1623: Gov. Bradford declared a 3 day feast.
- 10) 1631 crops were so bad they had to live on acorns. During the winter when these were also scarce they had only 5 kernels of corn per person each day.
- 11) Bradford appointed another day of fasting and prayer!
- 12) On that day, (Feb. 22) the ship "LYON" came filled with food.

The day of Fasting became a day of feasting!
Before they began their Thanksgiving feast, they placed five kernels of corn on their plates, “lest they should forget.” (Deut. 8:11-19)

Conclusion: Tragically, Israel failed to “celebrate” the feast of Tabernacles as God commanded. Within a few generations, they stopped living in “booths” and soon lost the wonder of what God had done for them. Dt 8:10-11,14 **Are we any different?**

Application: Our natural tendency is to compromise God’s Word and Ways and return to a more familiar or “comfortable” bondage. Like Ancient Israel, the Pilgrim’s children eventually “forgot” their roots and were “absorbed” by the Mass. Bay Colony. October 7, 1691 Eventually they (the once persecuted) became the “persecutors” of non-conformists.

The first “Pilgrim” scriptural reference is in Heb. 11:13 *“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”*

The Last is in 1 Peter 2:11,12 *“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul”*



“Thus out of small beginnings greater things have been produced by His hand that made all things of nothing, and gives being to all things that are; and, as one small candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled hath shone unto many...”

— William Bradford, Bradford:

On line version of “Of Plymouth Plantation”

<https://archive.org/stream/historyplymouth00bradgoog#page/n298/mode/2up>