**WEEK 2: Lessons from the American Colonial Era**

**John Eliot (1604-90) – “Apostle the American Indians”**

* Eliot was born in Widford, Hertfordshire, England. Both his mother and father died when he was young. He received his BA from Jesus College, Cambridge, in 1622.
* Eliot migrated to New England in 1631, aboard the *Lyon*. Soon afterward, he became the pastor of First Church of Roxbury that met in a small meeting house. Later, the church moved into one of several larger buildings. John served the church for 58 years till his death at age 86.
* He married Hanna Mumford in 1632, the first wedding in Roxbury. They had six children.
* He founded one of the first grammar schools in New England in 1645 and was a great promoter of education for children, establishing many schools.
* Eliot was involved in compiling the *Bay Psalm Book* in 1640, the first book to be published in the colonies.
* Eliot began his missionary outreaches to native Americans in 1646, alongside Cutshamekin (the first Indian convert to Christianity). His first sermon was a disaster and so he committed to learning the Algonquin language of the Massachusetts tribe and soon mastered it. With the help of an Indian slave named Cockenoe, he translated the Lord’s Prayer and the Ten Commandments.
* He then worked on a Bible translation for 14 years. 1000 copies were printed in 1663. It was the largest printing project in 17th c. colonial America. He also produced a catechism in 1663 and then an Algonquian grammar and dictionary in 1666.
* This was the first time the Bible was translated into a language that had no written form. As well as a translation into a language that was not native to the writer.
* In 1709, a parallel Algonquian Bible was published with Algonquian in one column and English in the other column.
* The Algonquian word, *Nummatchekodtantamoonganunnonash* means “our lusts.”
* In 1650, Eliot established a Christian Indian settlement and school along the Charles River called Natick. Eventually 14 such settlements were established called “praying towns.” These settlements had strong Christian influence among the Indians. However, they were all destroyed during King Philip’s War in 1675-76. Only Natick was rebuilt.
* Daniel Tokkohwopait, became the pastor of the Natick settlement in Eliot’s waning years after the war. He of wrote to Eliot:

“God hath made you to us and our nation a spiritual father, we are inexpressibly [indebted] to you for your faithful constant indefatigable labors, and love, to us and for us, and you have always manifested the same to us as well in our adversity [or] prosperity, for about forty years making known to us the glad tidings of salvation of Jesus Christ.”

**Cotton Mather (1663-1728) – America’s First Evangelical**

* Mather came from one of the most distinguished and influential families in all of colonial America. He was proficient in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin at a young age. He was admitted to Havard at age 11, the youngest ever. He received his BA in 1678 and MA in 1681 (age 18).
* Cotton wrestled with guilt and sin growing up in a pastor’s home. In his late teen years, he turned to Christ. He wrote in his diary: “I behold a *Fulness* and a *Bounty* in ye Lord JESUS CHRIST. He is worth Loving, worth Prizing, worth Following Hard after Him.”
* He wanted to be pastor, but he stuttered so severely he could not preach. By singing he overcame it. He assisted his father Increase at the Old North Church in Boston in 1681 at age 18. In 1685 (22 yrs old), he was so beloved by the church they called him as the pastor.
* Cotton quickly gained a reputation as a passionate Christ-centered preacher. He often worked 16 hrs a day, studying, counseling, door to door visitation, evangelism, etc.
* He married Abagail Phillips in 1686, had 9 children, 5 died in childhood. Abagail died of breast cancer in 1702 and he married Elizabeth Clark Hubbard who bore him 6 more children. 10 years later she died from a measles epidemic shortly after giving birth to twins. They died shortly after along with his daughter Jerusha. Of his 15 children only 6 survived to adulthood. In 1715, he married his third wife Lydia Lee George. She battled severe depression and bouts of insanity. They had a tumultuous 13 yrs before he died.
* The Bay Colony struggled in the later 1600’s before losing its charter. The spiritual condition of the colony was in trouble. This precipitated the crisis of the Salem Witch trials in 1692-93 that severely tested New England.
* The crisis began when two girls (Betty Paris and Abigail Williams) were severely afflicted (bewitched) by apparent curses from witches in the town and village of Salem. Things quickly got out of hand. Over 100 people were eventually accused of witchcraft and 20 people were executed.
* The trials were shut down by the advice of Increase Mather & Samuel Willard. Samuel Seawall (a judge) later publicly repented for his part in the trials.
* Cotton also wrote an account of the trials called *The Wonders of the Invisible World*. He was attacked over the crisis by Robert Calef which has tarnished the Mathers ever since.
* Cotton continued building his reputation both in America and Europe. He has over 600 surviving letters, conversing with people such as Isaac Newton, Isaac Watts, novelist Daniel Defoe and others. He was respected as a scholar in the of fields of natural science, philosophy, and theology. He also was known as a great philanthropist in Boston.
* Cotton and Increase built a coalition of Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Baptists to fight the decline in orthodox Christianity called the “United Brethren.” In 1718, he participated in the ordination of the Baptist minister Elisha Callender.
* Cotton wrote 469 books. In 1693, he began *Biblia Americana*, a massive commentary on the whole Bible. He also published *Magnalia Christi Americana* (*The Glorious Works of Christ in America*)in 1702.