

LESSONS FROM CHURCH HISTORY



Week 12: Lessons from the Puritans

LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

WHO ARE THE PURITANS? (1558-1714)



- The Puritan Era began after Elizabeth I took the throne in England from 1558 to 1603. She established the Elizabethan Settlement that many felt was a compromise between the reforms of Edward VI & Catholic Mary I.
- The primary Puritan Era in England continued through the reigns of James I (1603-25), Charles I (1625-49), Oliver Cromwell (1653-58), Charles II (1660-85), and James II (1685-88). It ended with the reign of William and Mary (1689-1702) and the Act of Toleration.
- Many exiles during Mary's reign fled to places like Geneva where they witnessed more robust forms of church reform and returned under Elizabeth only to see their ideas repressed under various Acts of Uniformity over successive reigns.

LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

WHO ARE THE PURITANS? (1558-1714)

- The word “puritan” was a term of derision which is still used to smear the reputation of the Puritans. It broadly covers all those who had similar ideas.

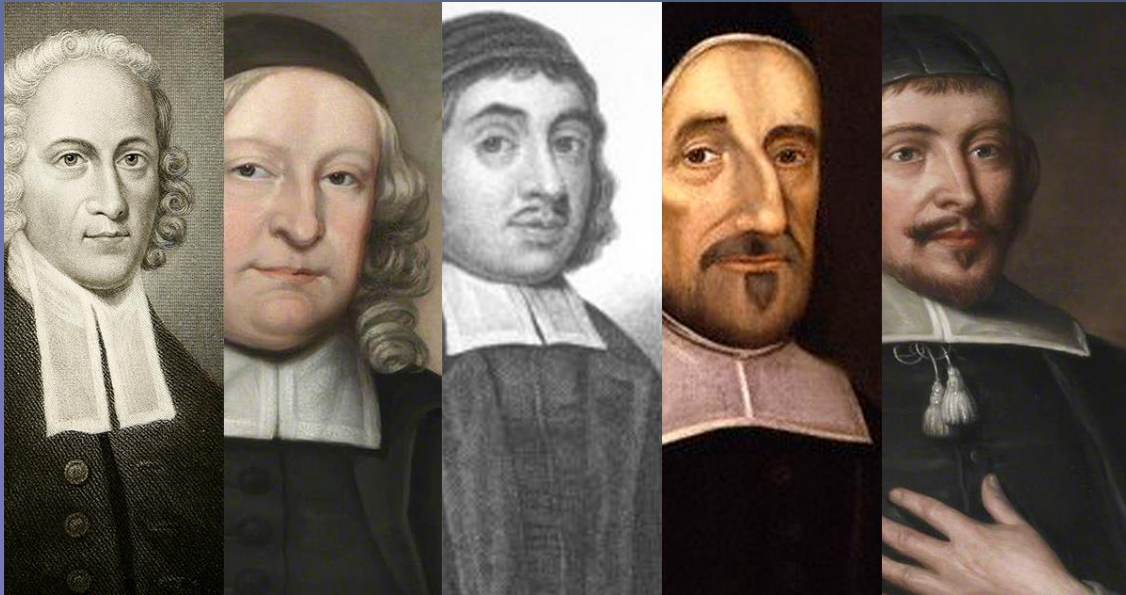


- The greatest enemy of Puritans was William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1633-45. He severely persecuted the Puritans, many of whom fled to the Netherlands and New England.

- In 1662, the Great Ejection deposed 2000 Puritan pastors from their churches.

5 Distinctive Ideas of the Puritans:

- * 5 Solas of the Reformation
- * Centrality of Preaching
- * Personal conversion and holiness
- * Experimental (head & heart) Christianity
- * Regulative Principle of worship



LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

WILLIAM PERKINS (1558-1602)



- Known as the 'Father of Puritanism.' His books were published more than any other Reformation or post-Reformation figure throughout most of the 16th & 17th century. He and his pupil, William Ames (1576-1633) were the most widely read authors among the New England Puritans in the early to mid 1600's. His books were published in at least 8 languages.



- Perkins was known to be a drunkard and dabbled in witchcraft (black magic). He overheard a mother scold her child saying, "Hold your tongue or I'll give you over to drunken Perkins yonder." Convicted of his sin, he converted shortly after.
- He graduated from Christ College, Cambridge (a hotbed for Puritan ideas) with his BA in 1581 and his MA in 1584.

LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

WILLIAM PERKINS

(1558-1602)



- At age 26, Perkins took on the “lectureship” (preaching) at Great St. Andrews Church in Cambridge. He was known as a great evangelist among the poor and prisoners, even those on death row.

“Preach one Christ by Christ to the praise of Christ.”



- Perkins did more to solidify the Reformation in England than any other figure during Elizabeth’s reign. He also set the standard for all future Puritan preaching and piety. His book, *The Art of Prophesying* was the standard textbook for many preachers during the Puritan Era.

LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD (1600-1661)



- Born in the village of Nisbet in southeastern Scotland, near the border with England.



- He was educated at the University of Edinburgh where he excelled at Latin and Greek, earning a M.A. in 1621. In 1623 he became the Professor of Humanities there, but...
- Lost this position in 1625 due to an immoral relationship with Euphame Hamilton, whom he would marry. This sinful transgression was devastating to his reputation, but laid him low and lead to his salvation.

LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD

(1600-1661)



- In 1627 he was asked to pastor a tiny church in Anwoth, a town which would become inextricably linked to his name. For the next nine years he was a model pastor and shepherd.
- In July 1636 he was called to the High Court for violation of the Perth Articles. After a three day trial his pastorate was removed, he was forbidden to preach in Scotland, and he was confined to house arrest in Aberdeen...
- During these 22 months he wrote 220 of his 365 Letters, blessing his congregation - and future ages of Christians - with some of the greatest Christ-centered prose ever expressed.
- Outside his room, tensions were rapidly growing...



ANWOth OLD KIRK
SAMUEL RUTHERFORD
MINISTER FROM 1627 - 1636
PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY AND HONORARY OF ST MARY'S COLLEGE, 1647-1661
BURIED IN THE CATHEDRAL GROUNDS ST ANDREWS 1661
COUNSELLOR IN THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES
AUTHOR OF FAMOUS LETTERS AND 'LEX REX'
PREACHER OF PERMANENT RENAISSANCE
REFORMER AND DEFENDER OF THE FAITH
MONUMENT ERECTED TO HIS MEMORY ON THE NEAR-BY HILL 1842
'FAIR ANWOth BY THE SOLWAY'
'GLORY DWELLEth IN EMMANUELS LAND'

LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD (1600-1661)



- Jenny Geddes and the stool toss that launched what Scottish historians call the Second Reformation.
- In 1638, escalating struggles between England's Parliament and king, mixed with Scotland's Presbytery and Episcopacy, led to the signing of the National Covenant.



- 4,000 signatures can be counted on the document today.



LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

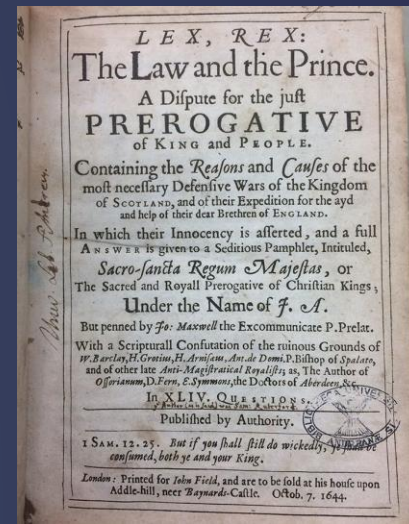
SAMUEL RUTHERFORD (1600-1661)



- Presbyterians now controlled the land, and Rutherford was strategically needed as Professor of Theology at St. Mary's College, St. Andrews. He accepted reluctantly and left Anwoth.



- Samuel Rutherford remarried in 1641, to a woman named Jean McMath, described as “A person of great worth and piety, worthy of such a husband”. She would bear him six children, but none would outlive Rutherford.
- Westminster Assembly from 1643 to 1647. Rutherford was one of six Scottish commissioners to attend. During this time he also wrote five books, including *Lex Rex* (“The Law is King”).



LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD (1600-1661)



- After returning to St. Andrews, Rutherford spent the next 14 years of his life teaching and preaching. The 1650 were a time of great unrest, culminating in the Restoration in 1660 which saw King Charles I return to the throne.
- Rutherford knew his days were short. In 1661 he was summoned to appear before a trial for treason. Terminally ill at this point, he replied, “Tell them I have got a summons already before a superior Judge...”
- Some of his last words were, “I shall live and adore Christ; glory to my Redeemer forever. **Glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel’s land.”** To his fellow ministers he said, “Dear brethren, do all for Christ. Pray for Christ. Preach for Christ. Beware of men-pleasing.”

