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THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE OF THE PURITAN

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CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

# THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE OF THE PURITAN

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. THE SUBJECT STATED AND DEFINED

The Puritanic spirit has been handed down from generation to generation and has been expressed in many forms. Though the name is not much more than four hundred years old the spirit is older than Christianity itself. As there were Reformers preceding the Reformers, so there were those who advocated Puritanism long before they were called Puritans.

As we look back upon Jewish history, we find all that was pure and noble came through those who possessed the Puritan spirit. Samuel, Ezra and John the Baptist were Puritans. And when we look back upon Christian history, it was the same spirit of the Puritan that moved Jesus to cleanse the Temple by driving out the traffickers in merchandise. It was the spirit of the Puritan that fired the breast of Ambrose when he compelled the Emperor Theodosius, before entering the church at Milan, to make amends for the slaughter of the citizen of Thessalonica. The same spirit led and stimulated Martin Luther to wage the War he did on the corruptions of the Catholic Church in the Sixteenth Century. This is not using the word Puritan in a loose sense, because Puritan is all that stands for purity of

faith, worship and manners.

Thus, Puritan represents the spirit, "Native to the soul of man which rises in protest against whatever causes spiritual bondage, and seeks out a way by which relationship with God may be attained and maintained."<sup>1</sup>

But the term "Puritan" in this study will be applied in the stricter historical sense, excluding both precursors and successors. Without any doubt the term Puritan arose in connection with the opposition against the Romish remainders in the English Church, that is, "In the 1550's, when the advocate of purification first acquired the name of Puritans."<sup>2</sup> This seems to be the true historical origin of the term. The Puritans then were those who desired a pure form of worship, that is, a form purified from all Romish elements.

On the history of Christian Church, there were many persons who gave out the holy light, following the Lord, but there was, perhaps, no class of men, whose lives deserve to make a deep impression on us, equal to that of the persons stigmatized by their name of Puritans. They suffered many cruel hardships and persecutions for the testimony of a good conscience of faith and the purification of the church of Christ. The proofs which they gave of their zeal, their perseverance, and their integrity, were certainly worthy of praise. In order to follow in the Lord's footsteps and to glorify Him, they

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1. Paul C. Warren; The Principle of Puritanism and the Significance of Its Recurring Manifestations, p. 7.
2. Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson; The Puritans, p. 6.

denied themselves, and those honours, rights, and all the worldly advantages by which they were allured to conformity. Many of them were the eminent persons in their churches and state but they sacrificed all their lives and properties for the one thing only, nonconformity. They were driven from their flocks, whom they loved as their own souls, and they were obliged to spend the best of their days in prison. Finally many of them could not help being exiled in a foreign land which was unknown to them.

But the spirit of the Puritan "transformed England from a small island kingdom into the center of the greatest Empire the world has ever seen,"<sup>1</sup> and their philosophy of the devotional life, that code of values, was carried to New England by the Pilgrim Fathers in the early seventeenth century. It became one of the continuous factors in the American spirit of religious life. The Puritans, indeed, were the founders of the American Church and civilization.

It is the purpose of this thesis to study the aspects of their devotional life manifested in their faith and daily practice, which provided a spiritual atmosphere and a continuing influence that helped to sustain and to renew their energy, and that furnished motivation for the expansion of their usefulness.

#### B. THE SUBJECT DELIMITED

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1. John Marlowe; The Puritan Tradition in English Life, p. 1.

In an attempt to depict the devotional life of the Puritan, it would be hard for our study within the limits of this thesis to deal with all the Puritans of the vast Christian history; nor would it be entirely profitable. In our treatment of this subject, we do not propose to include a complete research into all the individuals concerned or the detailed aspects of their spiritual life or of their theological problems; but rather we propose to examine the essential aspects of their devotional life, choosing material from some of the out-standing persons, events and diaries in the Puritan age in England and New England. No doubt the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are the period of the prosperity of the Puritans and many of the great men are the products of this age and represent the usual picture of Puritan devotion.

#### C. PLAN OF PROCEDURE

Our plan of procedure in this study is in three steps: the first step, to study the historical background of the Puritans' devotional life in order that we may be able to understand fully the motivation of the Puritan movement, its inflexible spirit in faith, and the particulars of its devotional life, which are rooted in and respond to the social environment; the second step, to study the specific aspects of this devotional life, which are mainly concerned with the inner life and constitute the essential elements of their spiritual life; and the third step, to study the main expression of the devotional life in daily practice, which is entirely concerned



with its manifestation in the church, home and society. The concluding chapter will be a summary of the nature of their spiritual life, the contributions of it to Christian Church to day, and evaluation of their devotional life in the light of the contemporary Christian view of life.

CHAPTER II  
THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND  
OF THE PURITAN'S DEVOTIONAL LIFE

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OF THE PURITAN'S DEVOTIONAL LIFE

A. INTRODUCTION

The history of Puritanism is the history of a theological movement and of a great national struggle. The spirit of which the Puritan's devotional life is the symbol has entered deeply into the national life, and strongly coloured many of its manifestations in England and New England. It has given depth and passion not only to the religion, but to the literature and patriotism of these countries; it has largely contributed alike to its intellectual lustre and heroic fame.

But the Puritan spirit was not something that developed overnight. It does not appear in history as a sudden manifestation. Neither is it true that the Puritan spirit cannot be adequately explained as something imported from the Continent. "Like all other movements which produced a lasting influence, the Puritan spirit is rooted deep. To be sure, its roots were many, and some of them ancient."<sup>1</sup> No one, therefore, can understand the devotional life of its members without studying its historical background, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in which the great Puritanical movement appears. The purpose of this chapter will be to trace the religious movement

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1. Ralph Bronkema; The Essence of Puritanism, p. 23.

in the age in order to understand the historical process of the Puritan life.

B. TRACE OF THE PURITAN SPIRIT AND PRE-PURITANIC  
INFLUENCE TENDING TO DEVELOP IT

The Christian principle existed before the followers of Christ were called Christians at Antioch. The reformation was carried on in the Church before the reformation. So also did the Puritan spirit existed before there were people called Puritans.

1. John Wycliff, the Precursor of the Puritan.

The Albigenses of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries defended a similar creed of Puritanism opposing the creed and ceremony of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>1</sup> But the most important of the precursors was John Wycliff (1320-1384), who was the flower of Oxford scholarship in his time. If he may be called a Pre-Reformer, much more may he be called a Pre-Puritanic Puritan. He translated the Bible into English and contributed greatly to the spread of Lollardism and therefore also to the rise of the Puritan spirit in England. He advocated justification by faith, the right of private judgment, and the priesthood of believers, and he maintained that we must practice and teach only the Laws of Christ and that mystical ceremonies in religious worship are unlawful.

It is rather striking that Wycliff's warfare began exactly

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1. Ralph B. Perry; Puritanism and Democracy, p. 66.

in the same manner as that of the Puritans. Wycliff started by opposing offensive practices in the church, and this led him later to oppose important parts of the Romish Church doctrine. Elements essential to the Puritan spirit and existing before Wycliff were emphasized by him.

## 2. John Huss and the Lollards.

The followers of Wyclif, the Lollards, and those of the younger contemporary, John Huss, who was the leader of the Czech Reform in German's, renewed themselves from generation to generation, so that the opposition of the sixteenth century had in it a considerable body of Christians already protestant in thought and feeling and predisposed to accept the teaching of Luther or Calvin.

We may thus conclude that the Lollards and Wycliff were the spiritual ancestors of the Puritans. Wyclif sowed the seed which began their powerful growth at the beginning of the sixteen century.

## C. THE PURITAN STRUGGLE FROM KING HENRY VIII TO QUEEN MARY

For a better understanding of the Puritan emphasis on the practical we must study the character of the English Reformation and the conditions of the people at the time the Puritan arose.

### 1. The Puritan's Struggle under Henry VIII.

#### a. A Spiritual Movement in Progress.

Henry VIII (1509-1547) was the King of England during the period of the Reformation on the Continent. Most of the Reformation under Henry VIII concerned ecclesiastical politics rather than reli-

gious conviction.

In June, 1536 the first reformation convocation in England assembled; in which Lord Cranmer, prince secretary, sat in state above the bishops, as the King's vicegerent in all spiritual matters. The reformation began with Cranmer. The declaration of the King shows the spirit of the Reformation:

.....That it was His Majesty's pleasure, that the rites and ceremonies of the church should be reformed by the RULE OF SCRIPTURE, and that nothing should be maintained which did not rest on that authority; for it was abused, since the Scripture were acknowledged to contain the laws of religion, that recourse should be had glosses or the decrees of Pope, rather than to them.....<sup>1</sup>

The pious reformers rejoiced to see the Holy Scriptures professedly made the only standard of faith and worship, to the exclusion of all human traditions. The immediate worship of image and saints was now renounced, and purgatory declared uncertain. The publication of Tindale's and Coverdale's Translation of the Bible greatly promoted the work of reformation,<sup>2</sup> though the later soon received a powerful check by the passing of the terrible and bloody act of the Six Articles.

b. The Persecution to the Puritan.

Towards the close of this King's reign, the Popish party obtained the ascendancy; the severity of persecution was revived, and the Romish superstitions greatly prevailed. Henry now took the Pope's place as head of the Church, and all who refused to observe these

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1. Benjamin Brook; The Lives of the Puritan, Vol. I, p.3.  
2. James Heron; A Short History of Puritanism, pp. 45-49.

practices were condemned as traitors against the King. To make the standing of the persecuting prelates more secure, and their severities the more effectual, these practices was ratified by act of Parliament. Many excellent persons were condemned to the flames; "It is calculated that during the reign of Henry not less than 70,000 persons were violently put to death for one cause or another."<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Puritan's Activity under Edward VI.

### a. The Great Progress of the Puritan Movement.

Henry VIII died in 1547. During the last ten years of his reign Puritanism had no chance to crop out, for he opposed anything that looked like reformation beyond what he had already done. It is said that it was forbidden by law to read the Bible in English.

But Henry's successor, Edward VI (1547-1553), definitely favoured further reformation. Being only nine years old when he came to the crown, he was ready to observe the instructions of Archbishop Crammer and the Duke, Somerset, who was the brother of Edward's mother. By his aid and influence he set himself to promote sound religion.<sup>2</sup> Somerset had Protestant sympathies and was a sincere friend of the agricultural classes. Upon his accession, the penal laws against Protestant were abolished, the chains of many worthy persons confined in prison were struck off, and the sufferers released, others who had fled from the storm now with joy returned home. Among the former were old Bishop Latimer and John Rofers, and among the

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1. Ibid., p. 43.

2. Brook; op. cit., pp. 4-5.

latter, were Hooper, a fore runner of Puritanism, sometimes called a father of Puritanism, afterwards the famous martyr, and Miles Coverdale, afterwards a celebrated Puritan. Hooper became Bishop of Gloucester, and Coverdale was made Bishop of Exeter. The monuments of idolatry, with the superstitious rites and ceremonies, were commended to be abolished, and a pure form of worship introduced.

In 1549 Warwick, later duke of Northumberland, ascended to Somerset's place as the most powerful men in England. The Protestant cause under him became much more radical in character than under Somerset.

b. The Stopping Far Short of Complete Reformation.

But the government did not continue in its efforts. Up to this time the Puritans could agree with the government in its policy of reformation, but when the government stopped reforming, the Puritans could not be satisfied. From this time on we see the rise of a definite group in the Church which was the Puritan party of later time and which distinguish itself from the English Church in that it wished to root out all Romish elements from Protestant worship.

3. Marry's Persecution to the Puritans.

a. The Great Persecution of Bloody Mary.

In the year 1553, upon the death of King Edward, his sister Mary (1553-1558) coming to the throne, soon overturned the reformation and restored the whole body of popery. Many of the Protestant reformers were immediately caught and burnt. Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper and other of Edward's bishops were thrown into prison and in



due time brought to the stake. During her reign, in three years some three hundred victims were burned at the stake, and at the last the Queen gave no sign of relenting her severity.<sup>1</sup> But, as Prof. Heron says, the cruel persecution, which was her most infamous act, had kindled a fire in the heart of the English people that flamed in deep hatred of Popery. The martyrs had, in the dying words of Latimer, "Lighted a candle that would never be put out."<sup>2</sup>

b. The Exile of the Puritans.

During the Marian Persecution many English divines fled to the continent and found an asylum at Frankfort, where having obtained the use of a Church on condition that they should subscribe to the French confession of Faith, they founded a society, chose John Knox as their minister, and proceeded on the path of reformation farther than it had yet been possible to go in England. Troubles consequently arose there and finally caused to them remove to Geneva, there Knox found a more peaceful field of labour. Here, then we see the First Puritan Congregation organized.<sup>3</sup> We will see next how it was nursed and weaned under the Elizabethan reign.

D. THE SACRIFICIAL PURITAN PROTEST FROM QUEEN ELIZABETH

TO KING JAMES

1. Puritans Nursed and Weaned Under Elizabeth.

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1. Ibid., pp. 10-12.
2. James Heron; op. cit., p.69.
3. Ibid., p. 76.

a. The Relation of Elizabeth on the Puritans.

It has already appeared that there were manifestations of the Puritans before these days but "there is in history a definite period which may be called the Puritan age." "This begins with the ascension of Elizabeth in 1558 and extends to the death of Cromwell in 1658."<sup>1</sup> The period of great persecution and exile ended with the death of Mary and the ascension of Elizabeth (1558-1603). When she ascended the throne, the exiles returned Home, but, much to their sorrow, they found the Queen disposed to retrograde rather than to advance. Fond of the Pope, she determined on preserving vestments and some symbols of Popery, claiming a desire to retain the Roman Catholic in the Church. To aid in securing this object some offensive passages in the Service-Book were removed and ceremonies which favored their opinions were retained.

Elizabeth hated the Puritans, because they wanted England to be Puritan and opposed her policy of religion. There is no doubt that Elizabeth, feeling the insecurity of her position and magnitude of the dangers which encompassed her in the beginning of her reign, acted from policy and endeavored to mark out a via mediava between Protestantism and Popery. This partly accounts for her severities towards the Puritans who strongly opposed this course, but it can not excuse them. The Puritans on the other hands, were zealous for the honor of Christ, the true head of the Church, and would conform

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1. Bronkema; op. cit., p. 36.

to nothing which tended to endanger Protestant truth. Yet in this age the Puritans came to progress rapidly.

b. The cause of the Growth of Puritanism.

There were many things which caused the Puritans to grow in number during Elizabeth's reign. Dr. Bronkema Points out four conditions.<sup>1</sup> Firstly, Mary's persecutions had aroused so intense an antagonism that most of the earnest men in the kingdom inclined in the opposite direction. When Elizabeth came to the throne, her first concern was to break the power of the Romish clergy. Secondly, another thing which apparently directly aided in the growth of the Puritans was the return of the exiles, who had imbibed much learning on the continent, and returned with hope of doing great things. The other factors tending to strengthen the Puritan movement were the success of Puritanism in Scotland under the famous John Knox, and the constant communication between many of the Puritan clergy and Protestant leaders on the Continent.

c. The Groups of the Puritans.

Many who advocated the Puritan spirit committed acts by no means worthy of the name Puritan. "There appeared three classes of Puritans at this time."<sup>2</sup> First, those who dissented from the Church of England because of its corruption, yet still clung to it, holding to purify it by their influence. They hoped to act as the leaven that should leaven the whole lump. Secondly, those who dissented for the

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1. Ibid., pp. 38-40.

2. Gregory; Puritanism in the Old and in the New, pp. 136-42.

same reason but had given up all hope of cleansing the church by staying inside. The third group, those who dissented from the principle of an established church as being opposed to the spirit as well as the teachings of the New Testament. Each of these classes was Puritan, but with a wide difference in methods of operation. Most of the Puritans belonged to the first class, and wished to stay within the church, but many were compelled to withdraw from the church or worship contrary to the dictates of their conscience, which would have been no worship at all. The Puritans of this class had many objections against the established Church. Mr. Brook details some of these:

"They complained of the assumed superiority of bishops above Presbyters....of the exorbitant power and jurisdiction of the prelates. They lamented the want of godly discipline. They dislike some things in the public liturgy; as the frequent repetition of the Lord's prayer, the response to some things in the office of marriage, the burial of the dead. They disliked the reading of the apocryphal books, to the exclusion of some parts of canonical Scripture. They disallowed of the cathedral mode of worship. They disapproved of the festival or holidays, as having no foundation in Scripture.....and they scrupled Conformity to certain rites and ceremonies as the cross in baptism, the promises and vows; the use of sponsors, to the exclusion of parents; the custom of confirming children; and the wearing of the surplice with other ceremonies equally without foundation in Scripture."<sup>1</sup>

The famous fighters of the Puritan in this age were Thomas Cartwright (1535-1603) and Earl of Leicester.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Benjamin Brook; op. cit., pp. 29-30.
2. Ibid., pp. 23-24. (& Heron; op. cit., pp. 110-133.)

The third class, Separatists, as a whole emphasized the necessity of the personal religious experience. Inspiration of the Spirit was considered more significant than corrections of doctrinal belief. They wished to eliminate the state from the province of religion, at the same time rejecting the authority of any centralized organization in matters of faith and doctrine.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the strongest Separatist groups were the Independent, (after the Congregationalist) and the Baptist, which developed in the reign of James I. The Congregationalist conception of the true Christian Church was that of a voluntary organization of regenerated believers.

The chief leaders of the separations in this age were Coleman, Button, Halingham, Benson and Hawkins. "Notwithstanding the threatenings and severities of the prelates, they continued to meet in their private assemblies, as they found opportunity in the neighbourhood of London, to avoid the discovery of their watchful enemies."<sup>2</sup>

d. Martyrs of the Puritans.

Though the oppression occasioned by "the statute of Conformity continually fell upon the Puritans,"<sup>3</sup> they were men eminent for piety, devotion, and zeal in the cause of Christ. The suspensions and deprivations of this long reign are said to amount to several thousands. Many brave Puritan leader's lives were destroyed in the age of Elizabeth.

Formost among the Elizabethan martyrs was John Udall, who was

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1. Ibid., pp. 27-28. (& Gregory, op.cit., pp. 62-63.)
2. Ibid., p. 29.
3. Ibid., p. 26.

a highly educated man, absolutely upright and pure-minded, cut off in the prime life for the simple reason that he wrote two books setting forth the church, as he thought Christ would have it, and the church as it then existed. The writing of these books was called treason and rebellion against the bishops, for which offense he was cast into prison where he died of a broken heart in 1592.<sup>1</sup>

X And several Separatists were hanged in 1583.<sup>2</sup> Among whom were Roger Rippon, William Dennie, John Coping and Elies Thacker. The most note worthy of those who died for the principles of Independency were John Greenwood, John Penney and Henry Brarrowe.<sup>3</sup> These three wrote and preached against a lazy, ignorant and evil clergy.

X Another evidence of the unjust sufferings of the Puritans may be seen from the following petition signed by fifty-nine sufferers and sent to Lord Burghley in 1592:

"Please it then your Lordship to understand that we, Her Majesty's loyal dutiful, and true hearted subjects to the number of threescore persons and upwards, have contrary to all law and equity, been imprisoned, separated from our trades, wives, children, and families. Yea, shut up close prisoners from all comfort many of us to the space of two years and a half, upon the bishops' sole commandment, in great penury and noisomeness of the prison, many enduring their lives, never called to trial; some haled forth to the sessions, some cast in iron and dungeons, some in hunger and famine; all of us debarred from any lawfull audience befor our honorable governors and magistrates, and from all benefit and help of the laws;"<sup>4</sup>

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1. Gregory; op. cit., pp. 171-174.
2. Ibid., pp. 174-77.
3. Ibid., pp. 177-89. (& Heron; op. cit., p. 138.)
4. Ibid., pp. 196-97.

X While the nonconformists were thus harassed, the church and the nation were in a most deplorable state. "Great numbers of churches were without ministers. Among them, those who professed to be ministers, about three thousands were mere readers who could not preach at all. Under pretence of maintaining order and uniformity in the church, popery, immorality, and ungodliness were everywhere promoted."<sup>1</sup> So that while the jealous prelates to be building up the church of England, they were evidently destroying and undermining the church of their Lord.

## 2. The Puritan Protest Under King James I.

### a. The Puritan Petition and the King's Unsympathetic Policy.

When King James (1603-1625) came to the Crown of England, having reigned in Scotland from his infancy, His Majesty's behavior in Scotland had raised too high the expectations of the Puritans; they relied on his education, his professed kindness for the suffering nonconformists, and his repeated declarations. But James' attitude in this connection was a direct outgrowth of his conception of the absolute sovereignty of the territorial monarch. On his ascension the Puritans presented their Millenary Petition, subscribed by above one thousand pious and able ministers and containing concrete proposals of church reformers. It was entitled "The humble petition of the ministers of the Church of England, desiring reformation of certain ceremonies and abuses of the Church."<sup>2</sup>

.....  
1. Brook; op. cit., p.60.

→ 2. Ibid., p. 61.

James undoubtedly must have winced when he saw the proposals, but he consented to a conference at Hampton court, composed of prominent divines of both Anglican and Puritan sympathies. But "for the Episcopal church, there were nine bishops and about the same members of dignitaries; but for the Puritan, there were only four divines,"<sup>1</sup> and the Puritans were swept as chaff before the fierce blasts of the royal temper. The conduct of the King, who bore down all before him, was highly gratifying to the dignified prelates. Besides other instances of flattery, Archbishop Whitgift said, "He was verily persuaded the King spoke by the Spirit of God."<sup>2</sup>

The poor Puritans were now persecuted in every quarter, some of them being suspended, and others deprived of their living. They received the terrible sentence of excommunication, being turned out of the congregation, rendered incapable of sueing for their lawful debts, imprisoned for life, denied Christian burial, and as far as possible, excluded from the Kingdom of heaven.

b. The Pilgrim Fathers and the Corrupt State of the Anglican Church.

Indeed, Archbishop Bancroft incessantly harassed and plagued the Puritans to bring them to an exact conformity. On account of his rigorous proceedings, in the year 1,620, great number of Puritans began to emigrate to America for the freedom of faith, and founded

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1. Ibid., p. 61. (& Heron; op. cit., p. 182.)  
2. Ibid., p. 62.



the colony in New England, an uncivilized country, where they could enjoy the blessing of religious liberty.<sup>1</sup> We will refer to this in more detail in another section.

It is calculated that between the year 1620 and 1640 more than 22,000 Puritan emigrants had sailed from English and Dutch ports. They were, as Milton said, "faithful and freeborn Englishmen and good Christians, constrained to forsake their dearest home, their friends and kindred, whom nothing but the wide ocean and the savage desert of America could hide and shelter from the fury of the bishops."<sup>2</sup>

When the reign of James was drawing to a close the corruption of religion and the immorality of the society were deplorable. The church was full of hypocrites, dissemblers, whoremongers, so that if any election were committed to them, they would be sure to take one like to themselves. Now, the Church was full of Papists and atheists. "Among the clergy there was ignorance and licentiousness; among bishops, sordid, sycophancy, and truckling to power. The mass of the clergy were so illiterate that they could have done little to elevate the people, or reflect honour upon the Church. Earnestness in religion was treated with derision and ridicule."<sup>3</sup> This was the state of the Anglican Church that had expelled the Puritan divines from their church and country.

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1. Heron; op. cit., pp. 192-94.
2. Ibid., p. 196, & Brook; op. cit., pp. 68-69.
3. Gregory; op. cit., pp. 145-48.

E. THE PURITAN ASCENDENCY AND DECLINE IN THE  
PERIOD OF KING CHARLES I

1. The Puritan Ascendency and Charles I.

a. The Tyranny of Charles I.

James was succeeded by his son Charles I (1625-1649), it would have required an exceptionally wise and broad-minded king and sage counsellors to rescue the kingdom from the evils and perils which beset it. But the unjust and inhuman proceeding of the Council-table, the Star-chamber, and the High Commission, during this reign, are unparalleled.<sup>1</sup>

The Arminian tenets, warmly supported by Bishop Laud and his brethren, now began rapidly to gain ground. Agreeable to the King's injunction, many excellent lectures were put down, and such as preached against Arminianism or the popish ceremonies, were suspended and committed to New Prison. The unparalleled cruelty of this prelate most appeared in the terrible sentence inflicted upon Dr. Alexander Leighton, who had been professor of Divinity at St. Andrew and later held a lectureship in London. He died a pitiful death by Laud's hand:

He was seized by a warrant from the high commission; dragged before Bishop Laud; then without examination, carried to Newgate, where he was treated a long time with unexampled barbarity, when he was brought to trial before that arbitrary court, the furious prelate desired the court to inflict the heaviest sentence that could be inflicted upon him. He was condemned to be degraded from his ministry, to have his ears cut, his nose slit, to be branded in the face, whipped at a post, to stand in the pillory, to pay \$10,000 and to suffer perpetual imprisonment. This horrible sentence being pronounced, Laud gave thanks to God, who had given him the victory...<sup>2</sup>

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1. Brook; op. cit., p. 70.

2. Ibid., p. 73. (& Heron; op. cit., pp. 204-205.)

By the unfeeling persecution of the bishops, the Puritans were driven from one diocese to another, and many of them obliged to leave the kingdom and seek their bread in a foreign land. Many of them fled to Holland and New England.

Toward the close of this year 1633, the three were sentenced by the Star-chamber to be pilloried, branded, and to lose their ears. These men were William Prynne, who was a most voluminous writer of books, Dr. Bastwick, and Burton, who published books.<sup>1</sup>

b. The Puritan Revolution and Ascendency.

The execution of the sentences was marked by strong popular manifestations of indignation, highly disturbing to Laud. Those terrible proceedings, without serving the interest of the church, awakened universal resentment against those in power. The Puritans were first of all religious in character, but this characteristic worked itself out to political ends. Since the time when the War broke out against Scotland the parliament, where involved many Puritans, began to hold the power of the policy. During the year 1642, the King and Parliament put themselves respectively in a posture of defense, and used those military precautions which soon led to all the horrors of a Civil War and deluged the land with blood. In the year 1644, Archbishop Laud was beheaded by the house of parliament. The Iron Side of Oliver Cromwell appeared and after suffering hardships and privations, in the year 1648 Cromwell got the victory. The King was taken and beheaded, January 30, 1649.<sup>2</sup>

.....  
1. Ibid., pp. 75-78. & Heron; op. cit., pp. 209-210.  
2. Ibid., pp. 85-96.

The King being taken out of the way, December 16, 1653, Oliver Cromwell was installed Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland, when an instrument of government was adopted and subscribed. The thirty-seven articles observes "that all who profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, shall be protected in their religion."<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Puritan Decline and the Restoration.

### a. The Persecution of Charles II to Puritans.

For five years during the reign of Cromwell, the commonwealth of England progressed so much in religion and morality that it ranked with the strong nations of the world. But the protector Cromwell died on the third of September, 1658, aged fifty nine years. His son Richard succeeded him, but since he was not to be at the helm in such boistrous times, he resigned his position. The nation being tired of change, the parliament assembly voted Charles II home, thus beginning the Restoration. Many of the Puritans were in great persecution. "The Puritan ministers have been decided as ignorant mechanics, canting preachers, enemies to learning, and no better than public robbers."<sup>2</sup>

In order to crush the Puritans in every corner of the land, and strike dumb all nonconformists at once, the famous "Act of Uniformity" was passed, and "the unmerciful act took place August 24, 1,662, justly denominated the BLACK BATHOLOMEW-DAY....By this act

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1. Ibid., p. 97.

2. Ibid., pp. 97-98.

nearly 2,500 faithful ministers of the Puritan faith were silenced. and it is affirmed, that it procured the untimely death of 3,000 non-conformists, and the ruin of 60,000 families."<sup>1</sup>

b. The Everlasting Victorious History of the Puritans.

"Puritan apparently defeated but really victorious," says Dr. Heron, "the expulsion of the Puritans though at the time disastrous was in the long run fruitful in many good results for the nation and the world."<sup>2</sup> First of all the great spiritual leaders appeared in great numbers in this age. The eminent scholars and theologians are as follows:

John Milton (1608-1674), the author of Paradise Lost; John Bunyan (1628-1688), the author of Pilgrims' Progress; Richard Baxter (1625-1691), the author of Saints' Everlasting Rest; John Owen (1616-1683), who was the Chaplain of Oliver Cromwell; Colonel Hutchinson (1616-1664), one of the famous literary men.<sup>3</sup>

They were the men who themselves greatly contributed not only to Christian history but also to the human spirit in every age. They were the great men who showed the power of faith by their lives sacrificed to the Lord Jesus Christ, and "they were the ancestors of the great Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century."<sup>4</sup> Thus slowly but steadily the Puritans introduced seriousness and purity into English society, English literature, and English politics.

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1. Ibid., p. 97.
2. Ibid., pp. 97-98.
3. Ibid., p. 100. & Heron; op. cit., pp. 225-28.
4. Heron; op. cit., pp. 230-31.

## F. THE PROSPERITY OF THE PURITAN IN THE NEW WORLD

### 1. The Preparation for the New Nation.

Why did these Puritans have to suffer so much unjust persecution? Before a man can perform any great task, he must be prepared for it by a special course of training. Mencious, the wise man and the greatest disciple of Confucious, said that Heaven first puts the great hardship upon those to whom He intends to give great mission. The Puritan must have his character tested. It must be proved that the man can meet and overcome difficulties. Just as it is with a individual so it is with a class of men or a nation. If the Govern- or of the universe has a great task for them, he must test them, as the children of Israel in Egypt were tested in being prepared to carry to the world the knowledge of the true God. God had revealed to the Old World a New Continent. He must prepare a people to carry to the New Land true and pure ideas of Himself, and we believe that the Puritans were that people.

### 2. Founding of New Plymouth.

The history of the world has great and memorable events and dates; so has each country and nation. One of the most memorable dates connected with American history is September 6, 1620, on which the Mayflower set sail from Plymouth to the great Western World. "She had on board not more than one hundred and two souls,"<sup>1</sup> but they were the advance guard of a vast army that was to follow.

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1. Gregory; op. cit., p. 237.

In the minds of many these men were Separatists, but what else than the spirit of Puritan caused them to withdraw from the national Church of England? What but the same spirit enabled them to endure the persecution, inflicted on them in England? What strengthened their hearts when turning their back on home, friends and property, and facing an almost unknown sea, at the far edge of which awaited them a wild, barren and unknown land?<sup>1</sup>

This small handful of men, forty-one in number, - the others in the company being women and children, - with giant hearts and arms of steel, and fearing nought but God, set about with wills like flint, to hew out of a vast wilderness a home for themselves and posterity, where they could enjoy the freedom of conscience and reap the reward of the labor of their hands.<sup>2</sup>

It was on the 21st day of November, 1620, that the Pilgrims set foot for the first time on the soil of the New World. Just before the Mayflower dropped anchor, "They fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the perils and miseries thereof, again to set their feet on the firm and stable earth, their proper element."<sup>3</sup>

"The next day after they dropped anchor in Cape Cod Bay was Sunday and as their custom was they rested and observed it as a day

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1. Ibid., pp. 231-35.
2. Ibid., pp. 238-39.
3. Ibid., 239-40. & Heron; op. cit., p. 193.

of worships."<sup>1</sup> The first winter was a severe one, the numbers of the little company had been greatly reduced by disease and death. When Spring came with its sunshine and songs of birds, there were scarce fifty left of the original one hundred. They had but little difficulty entering upon friendly relation with the Indians excepting one tribe. "Great things have been produced, and as one small candle may light a thousands, so the light here kindled hath shone to many; yea, in some sort, to our whole nation."<sup>2</sup>

Congregationalism or Independency was the prevailing form of church government in New Plymouth. John Robinson of Leyden had exercised a lasting influence upon these people so they held to the Leyden form of worship. All who came over in the Mayflower were not Separatists. Some of these who joined them, when they stopped at Southampton, were non-separatist; others followed later on, and for this reason much trouble came up in the church their opposers were ruled out and "the first free church of America established."<sup>3</sup> The sun of prosperity was beginning to shoot its rays over the eastern horizon and under its influence their hearts began to warm to the work before them.

### 3. The Founding of Massachusetts.

Another band of exiles, unable to longer endure the persecution of the mother country, set out for the New World, about nine years after New Plymouth was found. They secured from the King a

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1. Ibid., p. 240.
2. Ibid., pp. 242-44.
3. Ibid., pp. 246-47.



charter permitting them to form themselves into a Corporation called "the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England." King Charles I gave them the charter very willingly that he might rid himself of a class of people that were giving him much trouble. Like Pharoah of old, he afterwards repented that he let the people go.<sup>1</sup>

The members of this settlement were between three and four hundred. They were a mixed body of emigrants, consisting mainly of Puritans. Driven out as they were from their native land by the high-handed tyranny of Laud, they remembered only, as it faded out of their sight, that it was the land of their birth and their father's sepulchers. We can assume their feeling, which is different from that of the Independents, from the following:

We will not say - such are the words ascribed to Higginson, - as the Separatists were wont to say at their leaving of England, Farewell, Babylon! farewell, Rome! but will say, Farewell, our dear England! Farewell the church of God in England, and all the Christian friends there; we do not go to New England as Separatists from the Church of England, though we can not but separate from the corruptions of it; but we go to practise the positive part of Church reformation, and propagate the Gospel in America.<sup>2</sup>

John Endicott, a sturdy Puritan, was made Governor of the settlement. He was to be aided by a goodly supply of godly ministers. The Salem (or Peace) Colony soon rose to strength and importance second to none in New England. The colonists of Massachusetts went far ahead of the New Plymouth colony in their religious zeal. They said

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1. Ibid., p. 251.

2. Ibid., p. 252.

that no man who was not a member of one the churches within the limits of the colony could be elected to the Commons.<sup>1</sup>

There were many leading men who came to Massachusetts, and gave much character to the settlement. Francis Higginson was of high standing in the Church of England but could not conform to the corruptions of the church, so had to emigrate to America. John Cotton and Thomas Hooker, both were fellows of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Hugh Peters, John Harvard, Henry Vane, John Winthrop and Thomas Dudley left ease and luxury of surroundings for the wilderness and a free conscience.

The accession of such men to the leadership of Massachusetts was the means of setting in motion a stream of emigration to New England that ceased to flow only with the uprising of the people against Charles and Laud. Roger William founded the first Baptist Church of America in this age.<sup>2</sup>

"Thus was founded the theocratic commonwealth of Massachusetts, with none like it to be found in history, except the republic of Calvin; like it, brave, austere, but intolerant of inquiry, persecuting heresy without mercy."<sup>3</sup>

#### 4. The Growth of New England.

The leaders of the early settlers were men of clear convictions and indomitable wills. If it had been otherwise they could not

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1. Ibid., p. 260.  
2. Ibid., pp. 270-285.  
3. Ibid., p. 265.

have overcome the existing difficulties. Because of the inflexibility of the wills of these men, they were divided into many settlements, all with one supreme aim in life, that of rendering to God the devotion their conscience led them to believe was right.

X Connecticut, New Hampshire, and New Haven were settled by those who were unable to agree with the older colonies.<sup>1</sup> The great freedom enjoyed by the colonies and the fruitfulness of the soil induced many to come over from England. The emigration was so great that in twenty years after the Mayflower cast anchor in Cape Cod Bay, there was a population of twenty-four thousand in New England.<sup>2</sup>

X This sketch of the historical background of the Puritan's devotional life has been all too brief. An exhaustive treatment was not contemplated. What was purposed here was to trace the great lives of these leaders in order to show their heroic struggle of faith through events which in the long run issued in lives of intense religious devotions. The characteristics of these devotional lives will now be treated in our next chapters.

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1. Ibid., pp. 289-298.  
2. Ibid., p. 299.

CHAPTER III  
THE SPECIFIC ASPECTS  
OF  
THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE OF THE PURITAN

### CHAPTER III

#### THE SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE OF THE PURITAN

##### A. INTRODUCTION

The zealous puritan, the man of faith, the high-born adventurers, the practical businessman, the classical scholar, and the ordinary common man, had certain characteristics of the devotional life, which furnished the motive power of their activity. Some of them lasted but a short time. No characteristics of the Puritan life can be treated here exhaustively, much less all of them. We are thus compelled to make a choice, out of many possibilities, of what seem to us the most important aspects in their life. A study of these aspects has led us to the conviction that there are primarily four fundamental characteristics - Devout Love of the Bible, An Exalted Idea of God, the Daily Practice of Prayer, and Self-Examination.

##### B. DEVOUT LOVE OF THE BIBLE

###### 1. The Bible as the Source of Truth.

Wherever the palm-tree is, there is water, says the Eastern proverb; and so, wherever the godly flourish, there, we are sure, must the Word of God be found. The palm-tree speaks of the existence of water at its root; the pure Word of God taught the Truth to the Puritans.

As we have seen, the Anglican church neglected the Scripture. Many a minister among the Conformists was ignorant of the Bible.

"Some of the earliest slept with the Bible under their pillows."<sup>1</sup>  
This shows their mistaken attitude to the Bible. But the Puritans loved the Bible as "the source of truth."<sup>2</sup> They knew little of higher criticism, but from every part of the Bible they eagerly threshed out the literal and figurative meaning of the words and text as if each word were a grain of gold. They studied the Bible as men study a map for a projected journey into a new country. "To most of them it was their only book. How they pored over their treasure one can well imagine. Buried long in an unknown tongue, it came to them with all the freshness of a new revelation, producing effects very different from those produced upon adult readers in the nineteenth century."<sup>3</sup> Even when they were taking refuge from the persecution they did not neglect to read the Bible; rather, encouraged through the reading of it, "They had knelt on the greensward and studied their Bible under the shadow of the old trees."<sup>4</sup> They faced daily the grim realities of frontier life, and were prepared for it by a daily early morning reading of the Bible. Thus it was the only Book which was loved among rich and poor, educated and ignorant. To the hungry mind of the Puritan people who abjured all art except that of literature, the Bible supplied not only religious instruction and sacred history but secular learning, folklore, anecdote, proverbial wisdom and romance.

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1. Gordon S. Wakefield; Puritan Devotion, p. 11.
2. Miller and Johnson; The Puritans, p. 55.
3. Campbell; The Puritan in Holland, England, and America, II, p. 139.
4. John Stoughton, Spiritual Heroes, p. 54.

2. The Bible as the Supreme Criterion of Life.

As we saw in the last chapter there were various denominations of Christianity in the Puritan party. They were not the same as to doctrine, worship, and church government, but all these matters were overshadowed by the importance which every group attached to the Bible as their final authority on matters of doctrine and as the ultimate source of God's revelation. Only the Bible could be taken as a guide for faith and life. The biblical word provided an adequate criterion for every problem. "Thus said the Lord" ended all doubt in their minds.

"First, the Puritans were the champion of the authority of the 'Pure Word of God' as the criterion not only for the church but also for church worship, church government."<sup>1</sup> At the opening of the History of Plymouth plantation, Governor Bradford referred to Satan "as being loath his kingdom should go down, the truth prevail; and the church of God revert to their ancient puritie; and recover their primitive order, libertie, and bewtie. ... the right worship of God, and discipline of Christ. ... according to the simplistic of the Gospel; without the mixture of men's inventions."<sup>2</sup>

The authority of the Bible had two facets to the Puritan.<sup>3</sup> In the first place, it was only through the Bible that one obtained and experienced knowledge of the God who is related to every aspect

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1. Horton Davies; the Worship of the English Puritans, p. 49.
2. Ralph B. Perry; Puritan and Democracy, p. 87.
3. Dillenberger and Welch; Protestant Christianity; pp. 99-100.

of man's life. They felt that they had had religious experience, and they then tried through the Bible to get at a working knowledge of God in order to make their religion more vital and vitalizing. In the second place, they believed that the Bible was a document which reflected the organization of the early Christian community. In it, then church order and the vitality of the faith went hand in hand.

The Puritans, like Calvin, stand for the absolute sufficiency and supreme authority of the Scripture. The Scriptural citations warranting their main thesis are derived from both testaments:

Thus II Peter 1:19-21 and II Timothy 3:15-17 urge the perfection of the Scripture; while Matthew 15:9,13 and Rev. 22:19 are taken to forbid any man-made additions to the worship of God. Even more relevant and stronger proof-texts are found in the Old Testament. Exod. 22:4-6 (the Second Commandment), Josh. 1:7, Deut. 4:2, 12:32, and Prov. 30:6 assert that God will not tolerate any additions to his worship since He is a jealous God.<sup>1</sup>

"But the Puritan generally observed the spirit of the Scripture rather than the letter."<sup>2</sup> This is clearly seen in their controversies with the Anglicans, as we saw in the last chapter. In the disputed problems of vestments, ceremonies and forms of prayer, they, rather than their opponents, observed the general simple liturgical principles formulated in the Scripture.

### 3. The Daily Practice of the Reading of the Bible.

Nothing was more important in the practice of Puritan piety

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1. Davies; op. cit., p. 50.

2. Ibid., p. 55.



than the reading of the Scripture. In the thirteenth century, there was a change in the technique of Christian devotion even for the clergy, and the emphasis came to be laid more on the hearing of Mass than on the reading of the Bible. But the Puritan attached much importance to the reading of the Bible. They were not satisfied with the ceremony of the Established Church, and they asserted the need for a devotional life which was based on the doctrine of the Bible. Here we are to examine their method of the daily practice of the reading of the Bible.

To the Puritan, "the Bible was whole; every book, every chapter and every word was equally inspired, every commandment was of equal binding force, yet, consciously or unconsciously, men will take from the Bible that which suits their dispositions."<sup>1</sup> Then first, they insisted that "passages of the Scripture should not be wrested from their context."<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, they believed that the reading of the Scripture should be accompanied by prayer and meditation. They urged that all that is read in the Bible must be applied either to confirm faith or increase repentance, as though each passage were addressed particularly to the reader, and the words were spoken by God standing at his side. Richard Greenham lists eight properties for a faithful reading and hearing: "1. Diligence, 2. Wisdom, 3. Preparation, 4. Meditation, 5. Conference, 6. Faith, 7. Practice, 8. Prayer."<sup>3</sup>

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1. Campbell; op.cit., Vol. II, p. 140.  
2. Wakefield; op. cit., p. 21.  
3. Ibid., p. 22.

Thirdly, they insisted upon the private reading of the Bible. Many of them made daily reading their rule, "three times a day, a chapter at a time."<sup>1</sup> Harvard College, which was founded by the Massachusetts Legislature, made it compulsory to read the Bible regularly every day. We can find it in their "rules and precepts that are observed in the College:"

3. Every one shall so exercise himselfe in reading the Scriptures twice a day, that he shall be ready to give such an account of his proficiency therein, both in theoreticall observations of the Language, and Logick, and in Practicall and spirituall truths.

7. Every Schollar shall be present in his Tutors chamber at the 7th. houre in the morning, immediately after the sound of the Bell, at his opening the Scripture and prayer, so also at the 5th. hour at night, and then give account of his owne private reading, as aforesaid in Particular the third.<sup>2</sup>

### C. EXALTED IDEA OF GOD

#### 1. The Unifying Philosophy of Life.

"What is the chief and higher end of men? Men's chief and highest end is to glorify God and fully to enjoy him forever." This is the Puritan's expression of their faith in the Westminster Assembly in 1647. The unifying philosophy of the Puritan life was to glorify God. It was the bed-rock of all their thinking, and the controlling factor in all their actions. They were sometimes confronted with steep mountains or deep rivers of human life, but they looked unto God, in whom their faith was strongly founded. Often they walked

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1. Ibid., p. 16.

2. Miller and Johnson; op. cit., pp. 702-3.

in sorrow and always along the path of hardship, but they always walked with God. They not only spelt God with a capital "G", but each letter of the word was a capital. This spirit they carried into all departments of their lives. They were the men who went through this world with the one aim, an exalted idea of God. Reading the scripture of the Puritans we may find this fundamental idea in their life of faith. All their earnest works and daily practice were for this end. This idea can be seen from the diary of Cotton Mather, who is one of the most representative of the Puritans, son of Increase Mather who was the president of Harvard for sixteen years:

I earnestly cried unto the Lord, saying, Lord, I know not what to do, but my Eyes are into thee. Thou art a Master, most able and ready to help thy poor Servants. Oh! lett thy strength appear in my Weakness; and being strong in the Lord lett mee be carried now beyond myself. Lord, thou hast said, Thou wilt bee with thy disciples to the End of the World; I apply that Word. I rely on thee; I beleeve thou wilt enable mee to Glorify thy Name." "Here I am; afflict mee; do what thou wilt mee; kill mee; for thy Grace hath made willing to dy; only, only, only, help mee to Delight in thee, and to Glorify the Dearest Name.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Ordering All Things to God.

Now we are to study how the Puritans could glorify God in their hardships and tribulations in this world. The Puritan looked upon God as a real personality, whose attributes are infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. "The analysis of the divine attributes of omnipotence and omniscience brings(them) back to the attribute of goodness. Obedience, therefore, was not blind (to them), any more than

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1. Dairy of Cotton Mather; pp. 6-7, 11.

it was prudential."<sup>1</sup> Like Calvinists, the Puritans believed that God ordered everything on the world. At the same time they asked men to be active Christians whose lives would show forth the glory of God in the transformation of life and society under his name. They also believed "that nature and history, the world and man were governed by God."<sup>2</sup> This concept focused the Puritan concern for ordering all life under God. They believed that everything is to be understood and ordered from the standpoint of the divine. "This may be the aim of most Christians; but never before or after the Puritan has it been so consciously or self-consciously expressed."<sup>3</sup>

This dominant Puritan thought of faith led to a high degree of sobriety and inflexibility. This was not a dour pessimism, but they could possess their mind of peace and quiet by this faith when they were surrounded by great danger. Much more, by this faith, they were led to challenge tyranny and abuse of power, whether in state or church. They did not fear any earthly powers but only God who judges the unjust, and they provided the spiritual foundation for a domestic society. Ordering all things to God is one of the great characteristics of the Puritan sense of faith. By this they could exalt the Name of God, through life or death.

3. A Keen Sense of Responsibility to God for Themselves and for  
Other Men.

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1. Ralph B. Perry; op. cit., p. 370.
2. Dillenberg & Welch; op. cit., p. 100.
3. Ibid., p. 105.

The Puritans had a keen sense of responsibility to God for themselves and for other men. "They lived their lives with deep seriousness, as in the sight of God, and in the presence of eternity."<sup>1</sup> To them it was the way to glorify God to carry out their responsibility. It starts with the demand for 'holiness' for personal allegiance to Christ within the membership of the Church, and it seeks also to build the holy community in the world. Therefore, great evangelism always arose everywhere the Puritans went. The Puritans were the revivalist of the age in which they lived. Their temper is characteristically active and not quietist. They felt that works cannot achieve salvation, but on the other hand that there is certainly something wrong with a man's salvation if he does not show his faith by his works in seeking the extension of God's Kingdom.<sup>2</sup>

Of all the exponents of American Puritanism, Jonathan Edwards has acquired the greatest fame as a great revivalist. "It was the mission of Edwards to reawaken the sense of sin, and to return men's hearts again toward God. It was the sense of this mission which goaded him, despite misgivings, to emotional preaching, and which identified him broadly with the evangelical revival represented contemporaneously by the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield."<sup>3</sup> Edwards felt keen sense of responsibility to God, and expressed the burning Judgement of God in his preaching of "Sinners in the Hand of an angry God."

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1. Hugh Martin; Puritanism and Richard Baxter, p. 83.
2. Ibid., p. 84.
3. Perry; op. cit., p. 76.

Oliver Cromwell is writing to the speaker of the house of Commons, after the astonishing victory of Dumber:

Thus you have the prospect of one of the most signal mercies God hath done for England and His people, this War: - and now may it please you to give me the leave of a few words. It is to say, The Lord hath done this. It would do you good to see and hear our poor foot to go up and down making their boast of God. But, Sir, it's in your hands, and by these eminent mercies God puts it more your hands, to give glory to Him; to improve your power and His blessings, to His praise.....  
Relieve the oppressed, hear the groans of poor prisoners in England. Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions. <sup>1</sup>

This also shows they have a keen sense to understand the grace of God and to feel their responsibility to God for other men. They had the idea to exalt God, for this end they did not spare their life or property. To them God was all in all.

#### D. THE DAILY PRACTICE OF THE SPIRITUAL PRAYER OF FAITH 2

##### 1. The Spiritual Prayer of Faith.

The deep spirituality of the Puritans is shown in their implicit faith in prayer. The Puritans were the people of earnest prayer, both individually and collectively. William Gouge defines prayer as "a right opening of the heart to God."<sup>2</sup> The prayer of the Puritans is simply a groaning out of their condition before the Lord. Puritans believed implicitly in literal answer to prayer. To them prayer was more than devout soliloquy or an exercise in spiritual gymnastics, valuable only for the reacting effects. When they prayed, they felt they moved the hand of Him who moved the world. They spoke

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1. Hugh Martin; op. cit., p.85.

2. William Gouge; Walks, I.P.167. Cited by Wakefield; op.cit., p.70.

of direct answers to prayer as one of the common and indubitable facts of almost daily experience. Now let us see this faith in their prayer. John Winthrop, man of wealth and education, the first governor of the settlers of 1630, writes thus in the history of New England:

Thus, one season their crops were imperiled. The people came together in their churches and asked the Lord to drive away the caterpillars which troubled them, and presently after these prayer, the insects vanished awat. <sup>1</sup>

And Increase Mather details the same kind of experience of prayer:

After there had been drought for months, prayer caused rain to be sent immediately. Poisonous snake bites were healed because of prayer. The Indians were defeated by the power of prayer. A house on fire was saved through timely use of prayer. Prayer restored an immoral son. It saved a boy entangled in plow irons and about to be dashed to pieces. The power of prayer prevailed on God to direct a man, who had fallen into a rocky stream and had become insensible, to grasp hold of a piece of floating ice and thus be rescued by his companions. <sup>2</sup>

The prayers of the Puritans were inward, outpourings of the soul. They set forth the importance of prayer on the spirit. They believed even the Lord's prayer could become blasphemy if uttered without spirit or understanding. Thus they urged the spiritual prayer of faith.

## 2. The Daily Practice of Private Prayer.

One of the characteristics of the Puritan life of prayer is the daily practice of private prayer. They put great emphasis on the value of private prayer. Richard Baxter says, "we seldom read of

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1. John Winthrop; History of New England; Vol. II, p. 327.
2. Increase Mather; Essay for the Recording of Illustrations, pp. 256-259.

God's appearing by himself or His Angels to any of His prophets or saints in a throng, but frequently when they are alone."<sup>1</sup> They thought that private prayer is more intimate and solitary.

And they followed a plan in their prayer practice. They set apart the time for secret prayer, sometimes with fasting. Robert Balton is said by his biographer to have prayer "sixe times a day, twice by himself in private, twice in public with his family, and twice with his wife."<sup>2</sup> Of Samuel Rutherford it is said in the "Letters", "he rises very early, at three in the morning sometimes, and spends the time before breakfast in prayer and study. He is sedulous in his duties as a country pastor, always praying, always preaching, ... at night, he says, he dreamt not seldom of Christ, ... my soul was taken up when others were sleeping, how to have Christ betrothed with a bride in that part of the land."<sup>3</sup> And one of his customs was out-of-doors prayer as he moved about the parishes, "there I wrestled with the angel and prevailed. Woods, trees, meadow, and hills, are my witnesses."<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Edwards also speaks of his private and devotional life in his boyhood days:

I spent the most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year; often walking alone in the woods and solitary places for meditation, soliloquy, and prayer, and with God.....<sup>5</sup>

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1. Richard Baxter; Walks, XXIII. pp. 333-34; cited by Wakefield; op. cit., p. 67.
2. Wakefield; op. cit., p. 69.
3. Andrew A. Bonar; Letters of Samuel Rutherford, p. 8.
4. Ibid., p. 8.
5. Ezra H. Byington; The Puritan as a Colonist and a Reformer, p. 285.



Cotton Mather also decided to pray about his daily course of duties. He writes in his diary as follows:

1. To pray at least thrice, for the most part every Day.
2. To meditate once a Day; in the Meditation proceeding after some such Method as this; that there shall be two parts of the work, doctrinal, and applicatory. The doctrinal to be dispatched in an answer to a Question. The applicatory to flow from thence into Examination, Expostulation, Resolution. <sup>1</sup>

3. The Contents of the Prayer.

William Perkins makes the nature of Prayer four-fold; "We pray to show our submission and obedience, to show our true repentance, to show that we acknowledge God as the Giver of all things, and to ease our minds by praying out hearts."<sup>2</sup> The prayer of the Puritans may be analysed into many various kinds, but we can more simply classify it into two; for himself and for another.

Firstly, the most pivotal thing in the prayer for oneself is the confession of sin. Effectual praying is what convinces us of sin. The heart is broken and humbled before the Lord. Confession is the prayer which the Spirit most of all inspires. To the Puritan, confession is not an end of struggle; no one was more aware than he of the problem of sin in believers. Samuel Rutherford writes in the letter about sorrow over sin as following:

I see nothing in the sour fruits of sin; and oh, what a burden is sin! And what a slavery and miserable bondage is it, to be at the end, and yeas and nays, of such a lordmaster as a body of sin! Truly when I think of it, it is a wonder that Christ made not fire and ashes of such a dry branch as I am. I would often lie down under Christ's feet, and bid him trample me, when I consider my guiltiness ..... <sup>3</sup>

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1. Diary of Cotton Mather; Vol. I, p. 4.
2. Wakefield; op. cit., p. 71.
3. Bonar; op. Cit., p. 535 (Letter No. 276).

Cotton Mather cries, "I found Satan buffeting of mee, with unclean Temptation; . . . I may pluck out my right Ey, and of my cutt of my right Hand. . . . Lord keep mee from mine Iniquitie. . . . If my Sin do still rage, I will spend a Day in Fasting and prayer, every Fortnight, untill I bee a Conqueror. . . ." <sup>1</sup> And he says in another day's diary, "I judge myself before God, for my horrible Transgressions of all Sorts, and on the Distress of my Soul, beholding my Miseries. . . I poured out my prayers this Day, with fasting, in my study, before the Lord, Crying to Heaven, for the Pardon of my Sins." <sup>2</sup>

Secondly, the prayer for others is an important part of the Puritan's tasks. All the Puritan models were full of petitions for others. Gouge says, "we are to ask for others what we desire for ourselves - the conversion of those not yet called, the establishment of those who are called, the forgiveness of their sins, the healing of the sick, and the deliverance of the oppressed." <sup>3</sup> The Puritan believes that "God seeks for those who pray for another," <sup>4</sup> and he knows that God never revealed his love to Moses more than when he prayed most for God's people. Thus, the Puritan not only prayed for family, friends, those in authority, the stranger, but also for enemies, according to the Lord's New Commandment. And they practiced the com-

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1. Cotton Mather; op. cit., pp. 78-79.
2. Ibid., pp. 69, 256.
3. Wakefield; op. cit., p. 76.
4. Gen: 18: & Ezek. 22:30.

mandment - "Pray constantly."<sup>1</sup> There is a wonderful description of the prayer of Cotton Mather for others in his Diary as follows:

In passing along the Street, I have sett myself to bless thousands of persons, who never knew that I did it; with secret Wishes, after this manner sent unto Heaven for them.

	Ejaculations
Upon the Sight of A tall Man.	Lord, give that Man, High attainments in Christianity; lett him fear God, above many.
A lame Man.	Lord, help that Man, to walk uprightly.
A Negro.	Lord, wash that poor Soul white in the Blood of thy Son.
Children Standing together.	Lord, lett the blessing Hands of my Lord Jesus Christ, bee putt upon these Children.
A Merchant.	Lord, make that man a wise Merchant.
A very little Man.	Lord, bestow great Blessings upon that Man, and above all, thy Christ, the greatest of Blessings.
A Man carrying a Burden.	Lord, help this Man, to carry a burdened Soul, unto his Lord-Redeemer.
A Man on Horseback.	Lord, the Creatures do serve that man; help him to serve his Maker.
Young People.	Lord, help these persons to remember their Creator in the Days of their Youth.
One in mourning.	Lord, give to that Person, the Comforts, which thou hast promised for blessed Mourners.
One that was reckoned a very wicked Man.	Lord, rescue that poor Man, from Satan, who leads him captive. <sup>2</sup>

E. SELF-EXAMINATION (X)

1. As the Daily Course of Duty.

We find that true saints, or those persons who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, are those who examine their own conscience.

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1. I Thess. 5:17.

2. Cotton Mather; op. cit., p. 83-84.

It is said that Sue Tse, one of the great saints of Confucianism, examined himself three times every day. So far as we know assuredly, man is the only being that practice self-examination, and it is certainly one of the most important advances in his intellectual and moral development.

We know that the Puritan divines engaged in the exercise of self-examination as their daily practice of duty. It was the secret of their devotional life. Now let us consider our great Puritan champion, Cotton Mather. We may find the way of his spiritual practice from the diary of his early life. Under the title of "Resolution as to my Walk with God," he wrote thus:

As to my Daily Course of Duties.....to make a Custom of propounding to myself, these three Questions,  
What hath been the Mercy of God unto mee, in the Day past?  
What hath been my carriage before God, in the Day past.And,  
If I dy this Night is my immortal Spirit safe? <sup>1</sup>

Another distinguished moral athlete was Jonathan Edwards. He also recorded in a diary the course of training in self-examination which he followed. Here are a few selections:

5. Resolved, Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can .....
  38. Resolved, Never to utter anything that is sportive, or matter of laughter, on a Lord's day.
- Monday, Dec.24 (1722).....concluded to observe, at the end of every month, the number of breaches of resolutions, to see whether they increase or diminish, to begin from this day, and to compute from that the weekly account my montly increase, and out of the whole, my yearly increase, beginning from new-year days .....

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1. Cotton Mather; op. cit., p. 4.

Sunday evening, Jan. 5 (1723).....This week, have been unhappily low in the weekly account: - and what are the reasons of it? .....Resolved, That I have been negligent in two things: - in not striving enough in duty; and not forcing myself upon religious thoughts..... 1

And Thomas Shepard, the Pilgrim father and founder of Harvard said, "I kept a private fast for the conquest of my pride."<sup>2</sup> On occasion he denied himself meat and drink and sleep and recreation, and gave himself up to meditation on divine things, to self-examination, and to private prayer. He was a true seventeenth-century Puritan in the way he laid out his whole life for the salvation of his soul.

## 2. The Means and Motive.

We have understood that self-examination was to the Puritans the vital essential to the promotion of their spiritual life. Now we are to examine the means and motives of their deeply-exercised self-examination.

The Word of God is the means of self-examination for the Puritan. It is a duty commanded by God. Every word of the Bible makes us know who we are. Then we come to examine ourselves. God tells us, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith."<sup>3</sup> In self-examination reference should always be made to the Word of God as the rule of life. The words flash out again and again to haunt us. The evening before the Lord was arrested, he sat down with the Twelve. As they were eating, he said "Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall

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1. Cited from Perry, op. cit., p. 256.
2. Alexander Whyte; Thomas Shepard, p. 116.
3. I Cor. 13:5.

betray me."<sup>1</sup> One of them! The disciples looked upon one another, doubting of whom He spoke. And they began to say unto Him, every one, "Is it I, Lord?" The Word of the Lord made them examine their conscience. It is a matter of life and death to us, that we should be always searching to see what is there within us, for the evil weeds grow quickly in the garden of our soul. The Word of God is the means of true self-examination, just as is a mirror to see our physical face or body as it is. The Bible is the mirror of the human mind. The Puritans did not neglect to see the Bible as their mirror. Using it, they found ample means for the examination of themselves.

The motive of self-examination is to be brought into contact with the holiness and the love of God. He commands us to keep His Word and the Word teaches us to be holy as the Heavenly Father is holy. And the Puritan knew that to obey and follow the way taught by the Word of God is the path of life. "God is Holy" and "He is Love."<sup>2</sup> When we come face to face with the holiness and love of God we come to understand our miserable state of sin. Even Isaiah, the great prophet of God cried, when he saw the glory of God, "Woe is me! for I am undone! because I am a man of unclean lips."<sup>3</sup> Before this point he was only speaking about the sins of the people of Israel. The Puritan faith was more empirical than ideal. The Puritans lived under the throne of God, and walked with God, and their whole

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1. Math. 26:20.
2. Lev. 19:2, and I John 4:16.
3. Isaiah. 6:5.

idea of life was to exalt God. The holy life, living with God and looking upon the face of God, is the motive for examining themselves. We may find this fact from the diary of Cotton Mather: He said, "I found the Flame of that Holy Love enkindled in my Soul, ...The light of God in me condemned me as an evil thing."<sup>1</sup> The word self-examination is frequently found in his diary.

And "The more I do the worse I am, ...my mind is a bucket without a bottom, ...I did not remember the sins of my youth; nay, the sins of one day I forgot the next day," said Thomas Shepard, the lover of the Bible, the self-examining divine. He examined his inner state every morning and night with the reading of the Bible.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. The Spiritual Benefits.

"A prerequisite of genuine confession is rigorous self-examination....Labour daily more and more to see thine own misery through unbelief, self-love and wilful breaches of God's law; and the necessity of God's mercy, through the merits of Christ's passion."<sup>3</sup> Thus through self-examination we see our sin and come to confess it. Since, however, we know we are forgiven all our sins through the Cross, the self-examination of the Christians does not end in the hopelessness of the agony for all our sins which Buddhism or pagan religion gives. The saints examine themselves more than others. The spiritual life of the Christian comes to be deepened more and more,

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1. Cotton Mather; op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 135, 464.
2. Alexander Whyte; op. cit., pp. 43, 195, 75.
3. Wakefield; op. cit., p. 74.

and progresses from faith to faith through self-examination. Therefore, the quality of Christians' lives grows higher in proportion to their self-examination. We may see this truth from the Puritan life. Cotton Mather wrote in his diary, "In my self-examination, my Soul sailed forth, to these High Acts of Believing and Repenting and loving.

1. Lord, I am so satisfied in the infinite Glory and Greatness of my Lord Jesus Christ, and of thy infinite Regard unto Him, that I wholly give up myself unto that Illustrious Lord, and I pitch upon it, as my cheef Happiness, to serve Him forever.
2. Lord, I am in such ill terms with my Sin, that I most heartily give Thanks unto thee, for all the most bitter and humbling Dispensations of thy Providence towards mee, that have had any Tendency to mortify it.
3. Lord, I will bee always at Work for Thee, for thy People, and bee so far from thinking much of any Work which I may do for them, that whatever Sufferings do befall mee, for the sake of that Work, I will rejoice in the Sufferings exceedingly. <sup>1</sup>

Thus the deep spiritual life, subjectively, begins with self-examination and deepens by it. As the deeper the well the colder the water, deeper self-examination brings higher spiritual life. Thus the benefits of self-examination are great in our own life of faith just as in that of the Puritans. Self-examination is the point at which the mind arrests its native tendency to let its thoughts take their own course, or to let the will express the passing impulses. Without this power and habit of self-examination man would be a mere passive spectator of outer events, and would take no voluntary part in his own development, but would be the blind result of his environment.

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1. Cotton Mather; op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 257-58.



CHAPTER IV

THE EXPRESSION  
OF  
THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE IN DAILY PRACTICE

## CHAPTER IV

### THE EXPRESSION OF THE DEVOTIONAL LIFE IN DAILY PRACTICE

#### A. INTRODUCTION

We have seen some characteristics of that devotional life of the Puritans which constituted the spiritual power of their inner life. These characteristics were part of the essence of their walk, the roots which bore and nourished their good works. Indeed, having these strong roots, they brought forth as a result much precious fruit in its season. In any attempt to enumerate their shining achievements and learn from their good example, we should certainly have to mention their contribution in the practical field of devotional life's external expression.

Just as we found the characteristics of the devotional life of the Puritans to vary widely, so also there is broad variety in the expression of their devotional life in daily practice. We shall mention some of the main things which have greatly contributed in our own lives. These are their strictness in Sabbath observance, their bright home life, their great emphasis on religious education, and their concept of duty toward one's neighbourhood.

#### B. STRICT SABBATH OBSERVANCE AND PUBLIC WORSHIP

##### 1. Sabbatarianism in England.

During the last years of the sixteenth century in England Sabbatarianism arose as a new characteristics of Puritanism. With a re-

emphasis on Romish practice in Anglicanism came also an elevation of the importance of various holy days and Church festivals. This tended by contrast to weaken the importance of the Sabbath. Since the Puritans strove against Romanism, they favoured strict Sabbath observance.

As we have seen, the Puritan had set up the Bible as the one supreme guide of life. Their theology was strictly biblical, and in every possible way they sought to order their lives according to the biblical pattern. They were to look "to the Old Testament alone for the mode of Sabbath observance; that it was intended that men should devote one Seventh of their time to worship; that this law was moral and perpetual, and that therefore not only labor, but every form of recreation, should be given up on the Christian Sabbath."<sup>1</sup> Thus the mode of keeping the Sabbath was regulated by the Sabbatical legislation of the Old Testament, and the Puritan Sabbath tended to approximate very closely the Jewish Sabbath. The Puritan had strict idea about the observance of Sunday, "believing that it was set apart by God for His service, to be spent in hearing the Word of God truly preached, thereby to learn and to do His will; in receiving the Sacraments rightly administered; in using public and private prayers; in thanksgiving to God for all His benefits; in the singing of godly Psalms and other spiritual exercises and meditation; in collecting for the poor and in the doing of good works; and chiefly in the true obedience of the inward man."<sup>2</sup>

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1. Campbell; op.cit., Vol. II, p. 158.

2. Hugh Martin; op. cit., p. 107.

## 2. Strict Sabbath Observance in New England.

The early settlers of New England were particularly scrupulous in the observance of Sabbath. One of the reasons for the departure of the Puritans from their mother land, as we already saw, was to keep the Sabbath freely. It was liberty to worship God according to their own conscience which had brought them over the sea, and now that this liberty was theirs, they enjoyed it in no stinted measure. Their first meeting-house was a "timber fort both strong and comely, with a flat roof and battlements....The settlers were eager and glad to build their meeting-house; for these houses of God were to them the visible sign of the establishment of that theocracy which they had left their homes and had come to New England to create and perpetuate."<sup>1</sup> For many years after settlement of New England the Puritan, even in outwardly tranquil times, went armed to meeting for fear of Indian attack or wolves.<sup>2</sup>

Immediately on arrival in New England there was instituted a careful observance of the Sabbath. Endicott, the Governor, was given these instructions by the New England Plantation Company:

And to the end that the Sabeth may be celebrated in a religious manner wee appoint that all may surceese their labor every Satterday throughout the yeare at three of the clock in the afternoone, and that they spent the rest of the day in chatechizing and preparation for the Sabeth as the ministers shall direct.<sup>3</sup>

This reflects the attitude which became characteristic of New

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1. Alice M. Earle; The Sabbath in Puritan New England. p. 1-2.
2. See Ibid., pp. 19-25.
3. Ibid., p. 253.

England. The dominance of the church made the view of the church dominant. Sabbath observance was written into the laws, and violation of these requirements was severely punished:

The Vermont 'Blue Book' contained equally sharp 'Sunday laws.' Whoever was guilty of any rude, profane, or unlawful conduct in the Lord's Day, in words or action, by clamorous discourses, shouting, hallooing, screaming, running, riding, dancing, jumping, was to be fined forty shillings and whipped upon the naked back not to exceed ten stripes.<sup>1</sup>

The general attitude toward Sabbath observance is expressed by Cotton Mather in the Magnalia: "Our whole religion fares according to our sabbaths, poor sabbaths makes poor Christians, and a strictness in our sabbaths inspires a vigour into all our other duties."<sup>2</sup> The care with which the Puritans guarded the sanctity of the Sabbath was perfectly logical in view of their belief. They believed that the violation of the Sabbath was one of the causes of divine judgment upon communities and individuals. Increase Mather gives expression to the common view when he says; "If men neglect to give unto God a seventh part of their time, they bring themselves under the lash of the law. Nor have any sort of sinners been more remarkably exposed into divine judgement, that those who have neglected the due observance of the Lord's Holy Day."<sup>3</sup>

Thus the general attitude on the Sabbath was that of dedication of themselves to glorify God. "Sweet to the Pilgrims and to their descendents was the hush of their calm Saturday night and their

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1. Ibid., p. 248.
2. Cotton Mather; Magnalia, Vol. I, p. 485.
3. Increase Mather; The Doctrine of Divine Providence, p. 85.

still, tranquil Sabbath - sign and token to them, not only of the weekly rest ordained in the Creation, but of the eternal rest to come."<sup>1</sup> The universal quiet and peace of the community showed the primitive instinct of a pure simple devotion, a sincere religion which knew no compromise in spiritual things, no half-way obedience to God's word, but rested absolutely on the Lord's Day, as commanded. "From sunset on Saturday until Sunday night they would not shave, have rooms swept, nor beds made, have food prepared, nor cooking utensils and tableware washed."<sup>2</sup> Thus, no work, no play, no idle strolling was known; no sign of "human life or motion was seen except the necessary care of the patient cattle and other dumb beasts, the orderly and quiet going to and from the meeting, a visit to the churchyard to stand by the side of the silent dead. This absolute obedience to the letter as well as to the spirit of God's word was one of the most typical traits of the character of the Puritans, and appeared to them to be one of the most vital points of their religion."<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Public Worship.

The chief thing in the observance of the Sabbath was attendance at public worship. And so the Lord's day with its union of public and private worship was the grand climax of Puritan household religion. In these cold bare meeting-house the New England people gathered for worship twice each Sunday, in the morning at nine o'clock, and again in the afternoon at two o'clock. "The walk to Church will be accom-

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1. Gregory; op.cit., p. 318.

2. Ibid., p. 318.

3. Earle; op. cit., p. 258.

Panied by silent meditation on suitable Scripture, but once the sanctuary is gained, all private thoughts must be laid aside, and the whole heart and mind given over to joining in the service in the manner of the Church wherein thou livest!"<sup>1</sup>

The most important part of the service was the sermon, the "opening of the Scriptures." This was never considered as the mere "braying" of men, but as the living proclamation of God's word. Greenham says, "our hands are best employed when they are receiving the Sacrament, our eyes when they are reading, our feet when they bring us to the house of God, and our ears when we hear God's Word," and he continues, "we must also hear continually and bring a desire to Practise the things we hear. .... If in hearing the word I draw not neere to the mercie of God I shall draw neere to his wrath, if not to my salvation, sure to my destruction."<sup>2</sup> The Puritan thought that the word of the ministers was the word of the Lord, because of Christ's commision, "whoso heareth you heareth me."

In spite of the long services and the various distractions, the Puritan enjoyed the meetings. Undoubtedly, for many, the meeting-house was the place where they met God. They found peace of soul and strength for the tasks of life as they gathered in the place of worship. Those simple unattractive buildings became to them as the 'gate of heaven,' where they entered into the fellowship with the Infinite God, their Father.

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1. Wakefield; op. cit., p. 64.  
2. Ibid., p. 65.

C. THE BRIGHT HOME LIFE

1. Family Life Centered about the Fireplace.

"The service of Puritanism to the Constitution and the nation is not more noteworthy than its influence on the family and the fireplace."<sup>1</sup> Home as we now conceive it was the creation of the Puritan, and home was the center of the Puritan's social life. The Puritans regarded every household as a religious community, and the family as a little church. Thus the Puritans attached great importance to their family life. "A Christian family," says Baxter, "is a Church.....a society of Christians combined for the better worshipping and serving God."<sup>2</sup> Though they thought that a kind of monasticism may be necessary in apostolic missions, still under ordinary circumstances God's grace may be as well exercised in the family as in the cloister. Never did they imagine that discipline and communion with God demanded complete withdrawal from family life. They had a noble idea of the family. 'The Idea of Home' is the greatest characteristic of the Puritan life. The home was the place of comfort and recreation as well as a school of Christ. In the cold, dark winter night, "they gathered around the fireplace with its huge, burning logs. This was the center of the Puritan home, - and surely with the substitution of other, more effective, means of heating and lighting, something has been lost from home life in modern times."<sup>3</sup> We can scarcely imagine a family grouped

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1. Heron; op. cit., p.9.

2. Wakefield; op. cit., p. 55.

3. Mable Wade; The Light Side of Puritan Life, p. 4.



around an inanimate steam radiator enjoying an evening of pleasant companionship. But we can imagine the bright home of the Puritan, - around the fireplace with its glittering andirons, copper kettles, and utensils, the solemn and bright family worship would be offered; the events of the day could be recounted and enjoyed by all. - Tales of wild animals and Indians, of the arrival of ships with men and provisions, of the doings of the court and town officers, and of the work of the day, - These and of course the reading of the Scripture and singing of Psalms, were parts of their evening enjoyment.

## 2. The Love Between Husband and Wife.

The Puritans were scornful of those who seemed to regard celibacy as a more excellent way than marriage and yet regarded marriage as a Sacrament. The Puritan concept of marriage is biblical. "The husband is the head of the wife, but the purpose of this is that he may further her salvation and present her blameless before Christ." The accepted estimate of her capacities is revealed in the minister's exhortation the Puritan husband not only to instruct his wife in religion but to make it easy for her. She was the weaker vessel in both body and mind, and her husband ought not to expect too much from her. She should look on him with reverence, a mixture of love and fear, not however a slavish fear but a noble and generous fear. Though he governs her, he must not treat her as a servant, but as his own flesh; he must love her as himself.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Wakefield; op. cit., p. 56.

2. Edmund S. Morgan; The Puritan Family, pp. 11-13.

In describing the husband's authority and the wife's submission, it is necessary again and again to use the word 'Love'. Love was more than a fortunate accident to the Puritans. "It was a duty imposed by God on all married couples. It was a solemn obligation that resulted directly from the marriage contract. If husband and wife failed to love each other above all the world, they not only wronged each other, they disobeyed God, because the great God commanded us to love our wife."<sup>1</sup>

In spite of these views, the ministers hastened to warn husbands and wives that their love for each other required moderation. The highest love of all Christians was reserved for God Himself; to prize husband or wife too highly was idolatry to them. Man and wife forget their Maker when they are so absorbed in affection for each other that they aim at no higher end than marriage itself. "True conjugal affection demanded that such as have wives look at them not for their own ends, but to be better fitted for God's service, and bring them near to God."<sup>2</sup>

Oliver Cromwell's letters to his family are pervaded with an almost extravagant ardor, but this must take second place - after the love of God. Thus he writes to his wife, "Truly, if I love you not too well, I think I err not on the other hand much. Thou art dearer to me than any creature; let that suffice."<sup>3</sup> When Thomas Shepard's

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1. Ibid., p. 14.
2. Ibid., p. 15.
3. Perry; op. cit., p. 234.

wife died he observed that "this made me resolve to delight no more in creatures but in the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

In sum, the Puritans were not ascetics. They knew how to laugh, and they knew to love; yet it is equally clear that they did not spend their best hours in either love or laughter. They had fixed their eyes upon the heavenly goal. Their love between husbands and wives was noble more than that of the Christian of modern time. The home life of the Puritan was bright with the holy love of the Lord.

### 3. Responsibilities of the Puritan Parent.

There is no bright life where there is no responsibility. The Puritans had a strong sense of responsibility for their children's faith and education. They took the education of children very seriously, insisting upon education in order to insure the religious welfare of their children. This motive certainly explains the requirement that children learn the Catechism. The children were taught to read in order that they might gain a first-hand knowledge of the Bible. They thought man's chief enemy ignorance, especially ignorance of the Scripture, and they thought the Roman Church had stifled true religion. "When the people finally recovered knowledge of the Scripture, the light of the Gospel broke out in the Reformation, and as long as the people had this knowledge, the light would continue to shine."<sup>2</sup> In order to be saved men had to understand the doctrine of Christianity, and since children were born without understanding,

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1. Edmund S. Morgan; op. cit., p. 23.

2. Ibid., p. 34.

they had to be taught. The main business of education was to prepare children for conversation by teaching them the doctrines and moral precepts of Christianity.

The parents exercised very direct control over the intellectual and religious training of the child. But this control of the parents was not allowed to become cruel or tyrannical. "God made the covenant of grace with a believer and his seed. He promised godly parents that He would save their children as well as themselves."<sup>1</sup> If they were properly brought up, it was almost certain that the promise would be fulfilled. Holy bringing up of children is one special means of conveying the blessing of the Covenant unto them. They thought "the Children born in our Families, are Born unto God, and a strict account will one day be Required of us.....These children, Godcommitted unto us for Education.....Being therefore thus Committed us, Account concerning them may Justly, and will Certainly, be Required of us, in the Great Day."<sup>2</sup>

"Let's bring our children as near to Heaven as we can," urged Thomas Hooker, "it is in our Power to restrain them, and reform them, and that we ought to do."<sup>3</sup> When education was neglected in childhood, the error could not be redeemed in age; evil nature could be trained into good habits only if the training started early. It was never too soon to begin. To the questions "when should we begin to Teach our children, the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures?" Cotton Mather an-

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1. Ibid., p. 47.
2. Ibid., pp. 48-49.
3. Ibid., p. 52.

swered "BETIMES! BETIMES!"<sup>1</sup>

The Puritans loved their children not only as theirs but as a token that God had committed to them to their care. Therefore, they instructed their children through the impulse of their love of the Lord, not only their own human love, and they thought that the education of their children was most important responsibility given them from God.

Some of us who live in this modern age and take delight only in worldly enjoyment might suppose the Puritan home life would be gloomy and sad. But we are, as we see, to be surprised at the bright and noble home life of the Puritans. The bright light of the fireplace is the symbol of the Holy Light from Heaven. The Light of the Truth made them warm and happy. In the darkness of our world today we might well long for the Bright Home Life of the Puritans.

#### D. GREAT EMPHASIS ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

##### 1. The Enthusiasm for Education in New England.

The great religious purpose which had brought the Puritans to America was the motive which was to insure their pursuit of knowledge in the wilderness. They studied and taught in an atmosphere of religious devotion with the sole pedagogic aim of pursuing the road to Heaven. The enthusiasm for education, especially religious education, was the hallmark of their generation. Let us look at this more closely.

1. Ibid., p. 57.

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The colonist of New England would have subscribed to the opinion that "it is better to be unborn than untaught."<sup>1</sup> The history of popular education in America is a familiar story. All the early settlers of New England paid great attention to instructing their children, as we saw in the last section; first in the home or manse, then in public schools. In 1647, the Massachusetts Colony passed a law through which the system of common schools came into existence:

To the end that learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers in Church and commonwealth, the Lord assisting our endeavours, it is therefore ordered by this Court and authority thereof, that every township in this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to fifty householders, shall then forthwith appoint one within their towns to teach all such children as shall resort to him to write and read.<sup>2</sup>

These common schools came to be planted throughout the towns and villages of New England. The founding of these schools was a major contribution of the Puritan Fathers. The wages of the school master were paid by the parents or the public at large, according to the decision of the majority of the inhabitants of the area served. "He was at times exempt from poll and taxes, his house was furnished him by the town, his salary was higher than most of the local officials, and upon retirement he might be granted a pension or allowance."<sup>3</sup> "By 1665, every town in Massachusetts had a common school."<sup>4</sup> The other New England colonies followed in the wake of Massachusetts.

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1. Gregory; op. cit., p. 328.
2. Ibid., pp. 328-29.
3. Miller and Johnson; op. cit., p. 697.
4. Campbell; op. cit., Vol. I, p. 30.

In 1636, the famous Harvard College was founded by John Harvard, a graduate of Cambridge, who had crossed the Atlantic to become the minister of God's word at Charlestown. It was of his poverty that he gave to establish the college which immortalises his name. We are helped more fully to understand their faith and enthusiasm for an education founded on Christianity by the record compiled by prof.

Miller and Johnson:

As we were thinking and consulting how to effect this great work; it pleased God to stir up the heart of one Mr. Harvard to give the one half of his Estate towards the erecting of a College, and all his Library: after him another gave 300..... Over the Colledge is master Dunster placed, as president, a learned conscionable and industrious man, who hath as trained up, his Pupills in the tongues and Arts, and so seasoned them with the principles of Divinity and Christianity, that we have to our great comfort,....beheld their progresse in Learning and godliness also;<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Purpose of Education.

As we have seen already Puritan parents had a keen sense of responsibility regarding the religious education of their children. If a man considered only the educational needs of his students without attending to their spiritual need, he was, the Puritans thought, like those "who are very careful for the shoes, and take no care for the foot."<sup>2</sup> He lacked common sense. He also lacked religion! To the Puritans, the purpose of education is not only to give an education, but also primarily to surround the student with the best influences of the Christian faith, to the end that he may be established and that he may find spiritual reality. (Anything that would hinder or

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1. Miller & Johnson; op. cit., p. 701.

2. Edmud S. Morgan; op. cit., p. 45.

that would not be beneficial to the experiencing of such reality is discarded. Their attitude on learning and religion is aptly expressed in the following extract from an early New England pamphlet:

After God had carried us safe to New England, and wee had build our houses, provided necessaries for our liveli-hood, rear'd convenient places for Gods worship, and settled the Civill Government: One of the next things we long for, and looked after was to advance learning and perpetuate it to Posterity; dreading to leave an illiterate Ministry to the Churches, when our present Ministers shall lie in the Dust. <sup>1</sup>

Surely the dynamic motive in the provision of higher education, such as at Harvard, was to train up a learned ministry to take the place of Oxford and Cambridge graduates in New England as they died off. The Puritans desired that the poorest church should have a minister displyned and informed by learning, in order rightly to interpret the sacred Scriptures; and they insisted on giving the people sufficient education to receive the Word and understand the minister. Therefore, the means of educating the young for church membership, and of perpetuating a learned ministry for the congregations, immediately occupied their attention.

In view of this spirit among the Puritans, we may say without exaggeration or over-emphasis that the purpose of the first New England college was not only higher education in the broad sense, but religious education as well. We see this spiritual quality of education at first hand in the rules of Harvard College, in which it is clearly evident. The first concern of the college, beyond any doubt was divine truth.

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< 1. Miller and Johnson; op. cit., p. 701.



Let every Student be plainly instructed, and earnestly pressed to consider well, the maine end of his life and studies is, TO KNOW GOD AND JESUS CHRIST WHICH IS ETERNAL LIFE, John 17:3. and therefore to lay CHRIST in the bottome, as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning. ....

And seeing the Lord only giveth wisdom, let every one seriously set himselfe by prayer in secret to seeke it of him. Prov. 2:3.<sup>1</sup>

Now let us see further some letters of the Puritans, that we may be moved by their devotional desires and the enthusiasm of the religious education of their beloved children. First, From the Letter of Leonard Hoar to his Freshman Nephew, Josiah Flynt. This letter to Josiah Flynt emphasizes Hoar's conviction that higher education should not merely preserve the cultural past, but should advance learning as well, especially by developing the sciences; and he advises devotional life in the college life:<sup>2</sup>

I shall adde but one thing more for a conclusion: But that the crown and perfection of all the rest: which only can make your endeavours succesfull and your end blessed: and that is some thing of the dayly practice of piety and the study of the true and highest wisdom and for gods sake, and your own both present and eternall welfares sake,... Read every morning a chapter in the old Tes: and every eving one in the new: .....

Love faith fear hope joy act: For your direction and encouragement in this exercise, you may read the practise of Augustine Bernard or Gerard. Or our more modern worthyes I Ambrose, R Baxter, Bishop Hall or Mr Watson, as to the Theoreticall part.

3ly and lastly, those 2 being premised, close with prayer. for this I prescribe not whether it should be lingual or mental longer or breifer: Only let it as well as its two preparatives, be most solem and secret: and as tis said of Hannah, the speech of your heart. ....<sup>3</sup>

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1. Ibid., p. 102.
2. Ibid., pp. 707-8.
3. Ibid., pp. 713-14.

The advice which Leonard Hoar offered his nephew primarily concerned matters of curriculum. But Thomas Shephard Jr. emphasized quite different points in the letter to his son Thomas.

1. Remember the end of your life, which is acoming back again to God, and fellowship with God; for as your great misery is your separation, and estrangement from him, so your happiness, or last end, is your Return again to him;

V. Remember that these are times and Days of much Light and Knowledge that therefore you had as good be no Scholar as not excell in Knowledge and Learning; Abhorre therefore one hour of idleness as you would be ashamed of one hour of Drukenness:

IX. Remember now to be watchful against the two great Sins of many Scholars; the first is youthful Lusts, speculative wantonness, and secret filthiness, which God sees in the Dark, and for which God hardens and blinds young mens hearts, his holy Spirit departing from such, unclean Stykes. The second is malignancy and secret distaste of Holiness and the Power of Godliness, and the Professors of it, .....

X. Remember to intreat God with ears before you come to hear any Sermon, that thereby God would powerfully speak to your heart, and make his truth precious to you: neglect not to write after the preacher always, and write not in loose sheets but in handsome Paperbooks; and be carefull to preserve and peruse the Same. And upon the Sabbath days make exceeding<sup>1</sup> Conscience of Sanctification;mix not your other Studies,...

### 3. The Curriculum of the Schools.

"The child began his reading with that time-honored desire, the hornbook - a printed alphabet list of one syllable words, together with the Lord's Prayer, held in a wooded frame, the whole covered by a sheet of horn."<sup>2</sup> He next advanced to a spelling book, and thence to a primer and a catechism. They were, of course, educated under Calvin's idea of theology. The student doubtless went to church on Sunday and attended the Thursday lecture, but there was no law where-

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1. Ibid., pp. 714-20.

2. Ibid., p. 696.

by the ministers' approval of teachers or curriculum was required until 1701, and evidently then simply to assure the town of sufficiently high teaching standards.<sup>1</sup>

The students of grammar school were taught their Latin accidence and grammar. When their vocabulary was sufficient and the rudiments mastered, they passed on to Aecop's fables. By their fourth year they were reading Erasmus' Colloquies and undertaking Greek, and Cicero's Letters soon. And in their seventh and final year, they could approach classic literature and the New Testament. They composed Latin verse, and studied rhetoric and Roman history and antiquities. It is possible that some especially capable students may have begun a study of Hebrew.<sup>2</sup>

The pious college students wound up with Calvinist theology, with an occasional exercise in Hebrew. All students, whether or not candidates for the pulpit, took a prescribed course in six of the traditional Seven Arts (Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Astronomy), in the three philosophies (Metaphysics, Ethics, and Natural Science), and in Greek, Hebrew, and Ancient History. Latin was supposed to have been mastered in grammar school; it was the language of instruction, and of most of the textbooks. All these subjects were considered essential to gentlemen's education. The professional study of theology began only after taking the bachelor's degree.<sup>3</sup> The New England colonial colleges, though they were not theo-

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1. Ibid., p. 697.

2. Ibid., pp. 697-98.

3. Samuel Eliot Morrison; The Puritan Pronaos, pp. 30-35.

logical seminaries, trained ministers also. "Actually no more than half of all Harvard graduates during the seventeenth century became ministers."<sup>1</sup>

It is evident from all this that the contribution of the Puritan to education was great. The most intellectual Puritans were obliged to master at least one book - and that the greatest of all. They, in their desire to promote saving knowledge, built academy after academy, college after college, until their influence has been spread wide over the history of education in England and America.<sup>2</sup>

#### E. THE DUTY TOWARD THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

##### 1. As a Good Samaritan.

The fundamental principle of Christian ethics is love of God and love of one's neighbour. 'Thou shalt love the neighbor as thyself' is the royal law.<sup>3</sup> Then who is our neighbour? This is evident from the example Jesus gives, the parable of the Good Samaritan. Our neighbour is whoever is placed in our path by Providence and really needs our help. If we look carefully into the matter, as the Samaritan did, and conclude that it is a case of real need, then we should recognize the needy one as one of our neighbours, and have mercy on him. Christianity is the religion of the love of mankind. This love is a supreme order which is commanded unto us by the Lord. The Puritans,

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1. Miller & Johnson; op. cit., p. 698.
2. Alan Simpson; Puritan Old and New England, p. 113.
3. James 2:8.

like other good Christians down through the ages, were on fire with this love of their neighbour, which was the light of the Lord shining through them.

Cotton Mather lays stress on the love of one's neighbourhood as the Christian's duty. "The poor people that lie wounded," he says in the 'BONIFACIUS' (generally known by its running title, 'Essays to Do Good') "must have wine and oil poured into their wounds." He continues, "See who in the neighbourhood may deserve the favor. We are told; this is pure religion and undefiled, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the "orphans and widows," and so all the helpless and distressed in the neighbourhood, must be visited and ministered to by us with all grace and friendly kindness. Cotton Mather instructs us as follows as to what is to be done for such people in our neighbourhood:

First: you will pity them. The evangelical precept is: 'Have compassion one of another - be pitiful.' It was of old, and ever will be, the just expectation: 'To him that is afflicted, pity should be shown.' And let our pity to them flame out in our prayer for them. It were a very lovely practice for you, in the daily prayer of your closet every evening to think: 'What miserable object have I seen today that I may do well now to mention for the mercies of the Lord?

But this is not all. 'Tis possible, you may do well to visit them: and when you visit them, comfort them. Carry them some good word which may raise a gladness in an heart stooping with heaviness.

And lastly: give them all the assistances that may answer their occasions; Assist them with advice to them. ... And if it be needful, bestow your alms upon them: 'Deal thy bread to the hungry; bring to thy house the poor that are cast out; when thou seest the naked, cover him.' At least Nazianzen's charity, I pray: ..... 'If you have nothing else to bestow upon

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1. Perry Miller; The American Puritans, p. 217.

the miserable, bestow a tear or two upon their miseries.' This little is better than nothing. ....<sup>1</sup>

"Bestow a tear or two upon their miseries." Rightly understood, this is the total expression of the Puritan's love to his neighbour. Tears are more precious than pearls to the human soul. The tears of the Christian give bright lights to those who have no light in the world. The tears of the confession of sin, like those of King David or Peter, the tears of burning love for the nation or the children, like those of Jeremiah or Monica, the mother of Augustine, and the tears of our Lord Jesus Christ for humankind, are more precious than anything else in all human history. The Puritans had these tears of love, and with them they conquered souls. Out of this true love Jesus heals the troubled souls and diseased bodies of men in love and compassion. With this love in his public ministry he touched a leper in pity healed him. This simple act of touching a person who was afflicted with a loathsome disease and required to live as an out-cast says much about the quality and depth of his love for all men. The Puritans whose strong faith kings could not break possessed this gentle mind of love.

But Cotton Mather calls to our mind the real difficulties of practising our duty as a good Samaritan. He instructs us, "you must be armed against selfishness, all selfish and squinting intentions in your generous resolutions."<sup>2</sup> Self-centeredness, egoistic preoccupation with one's own affairs, and moral and spiritual pride makes us

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1. Ibid., pp. 217-18.

2. Ibid., p. 219.

weak or hypocritical in doing good to others.

The love of the Good Samaritan shows us that Christian love must be universal and so impartial. To one of the Jews, who hated and despised him as a dog, the Samaritan came with compassion. He had no obligation of morality, but felt his duty to the neighbours because in his own heart was the love of God. The love of the Good Samaritan is not based upon the expectation of a return of love of any other thing, and it is independent of the merit or worth of those upon whom it is bestowed. It is not patterned only on the imperfect love of men for each other, but upon the perfect love of God for His children.<sup>1</sup> The Puritans had this love, exemplified by the Good Samaritan who was the only one to save the miserable neighbour on the road side. This love, sacrificing all things for others, made the Puritan build up the good community.

## 2. To Build up Good Community.

The Puritans believed that they were summoned to create a holy community, but in England no such hope could possibly be realized unless first there were to be a secular revolution. In New England this idea of a holy community was fully expressed. Love of neighbour which is all-inclusive and whole-hearted requires an extension to all kinds of men. The first requisite to build up good community is the love of Christ. Paul writes to the Romans, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."<sup>2</sup> The way to overcome the neighbourhood

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1. George F. Thomas; Christian Ethics, pp. 44-50.  
2. Rom. 12:21.

is to preach the Gospel through which the love of God is shown. Therefore it is the plain duty of a Christian to disseminate his belief as is set down in the Scripture: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation."<sup>1</sup> He who has good news of God is irresistibly impelled to communicate it to others. "The puritan was nothing if not zealous, and his belief therefore possessed an abundance of this overflowingness. Having discovered a great good, he wished it to prevail, and his joy in its triumph, and in his own contribution to that triumph, was only an expression of his joy in its goodness."<sup>2</sup>

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(In promoting the good community, Cotton Mather urges that we should consult the spiritual interests of our neighbourhood as well as the temporal. Charity to the soul of men is undoubtedly the highest, the noblest and most important thing.) Let us hear his precept:

Be concerned lest the deceitfulness of sin unto any of the neighbours. If there be any idle persons among them, I beseech you, cure them of their idleness.....

If any children in the neighbourhood are under no education don't allow 'em to continue so. ....

If any in the neighbourhood are taking to bad courses - lovingly and faithfully admonish them. ... If there are any prayerless families, never leave off entreating of them till you have persuaded them to set up the worship of God. .... Whatever snare you see anyone in, be so kind as to tell him of his danger to be ensnared, and save him from it....<sup>3</sup>

Cotton Mather was true to this principle, both in instruction and in practice. (This human Puritan loved not only his neighbours but also even his servant.) He did not relieve him from his service,

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1. Mark; 16:15.
2. Perry; op. cit., p. 322.
3. Miller; op. cit., pp. 218-19.



but loved him as God's servant. He recorded in his diary:

Some gentlemen of our Church, understanding that I wanted a good Servant at the expence of between forty and fifty Pounds, purchased for me, a very likely Slave; a young man, who is a Negro of a promising Aspect and Temper, and this day they presented me. It seems to be a mighty Smile of Heaven upon my family; and it arrives at an observable Time unto me. I putt upon him the Name of Onesimus; and I resolved with the Help of the Lord, that I would use the best Endeavours to make him a Servant of Christ. ....<sup>1</sup>

On another occasion he visited the poor neighbours and sacrificed himself to save them. On yet another he resolved as follows:

I have a Neighbour, my next Neighbour, who is a very Froward, frappish, peevish Creature; and who in his ungoverned Passion commits many Offences; He is an aged Professor of Religion. I must therefore, as lovingly, as winningly, as prudently and faithfully as I can, take him into my Hands, and labour to recover him out of a Distemper, which renders him so uneasy unto himself, and unto all about him.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Cooperative Work.

In today's highly civilized life we live more and more for our selves. We do what we can, or wish to do, by ourselves, and hire someone else to do the rest. All our activities have become so commercialized that there is no bond of friendship between worker and employer, or any spirit of altruism on the part of either. Our Christian life also has been so influenced by social circumstances that the spirit of cooperation among the churches or individual Christians has been largely lost. One writer sighs that "now we have more philanthropy and less neighbourliness, more love for mankind and less for men;" also that "the personal element has been removed to a large extent

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1. Cotton Mather; op. cit., Vol. I, p.579. (& see II, p.477 & 666.)  
2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 135. (& see, 348.)

from our social ethics.<sup>1</sup> We should realize that in respect to their duty toward the neighbourhood, the Puritans cared for their neighbours as a Good Samaritan, and endeavoured to build up a good community, working together for a common goal. The Puritan's social interest was truly actuated by a sense of solidarity - by the belief, namely, that the good of each is bound up with the good of all. His idea of solidarity consisted in the association of this general principle which is accepted in all social philosophies, with the Puritan's specific idea of the supreme good. It was an application to righteousness and pity of a principle which the early Church discovered under the great persecution of the Roman Empire. The strong spirit of cooperation was clearly apparent in the community of the Pilgrim Fathers. We can see this unity of spirit through a happening on their voyage to the New World:

A compact - a solemn league and covenant it might well be called - was drawn up and signed in the cabin of the Mayflower: In the name of God, amen. .... (We do) in the presence of God and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic for our ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; .. unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.<sup>2</sup>

Within the community of the Puritans the members were conceived as so linked together as to have their spiritual fortunes in common. They were considered as a single body of which the whole must suffer from the defect of any part. They were jointly the beneficiaries of

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1. Earle; Custom and Fashions in the New England, (Home Life,) p.390.
2. Gregory; op. cit., p. 238.

God's favour, and that favour was forfeited for all if its terms were violated by any:

We are knite together as a body in a most strict & sacred bond and covenante of the Lord, of the violation whereof we make great conscience, and by vertue whereof we doe hould our selves straitly tied to all care of each others good, and of ye whole by every one and so mutually. <sup>1</sup>

The spirit of cooperation can be clearly recognized in all the early New England Puritans. They had a strong sense of cooperative walk with one another, so that they concentrated together their whole strength into the propaganda of the Gospel which was their ultimate purpose. And they had this spirit not only in the spiritual works but in all the tasks of their daily lives, so that even on other than holidays or other special social occasions, they had a sociable time. Much of their work could be done more efficiently and more pleasantly by working together than separately. There were many peaceful cooperative works at that time, which we seldom see in modern days; for example, when soap was to be made, two or three neighbours might bring their materials to one home, where the day would be spent in the large living-room kitchen at what we might consider an uninteresting task; but we may very well imagine that those women while at their work, or waiting for the fats to boil, had as much pleasure in gossiping as women do now around a card table. If one Puritan lady wished to spend the day making a rag-carpet, instead of staying at home and working alone all day, she went to her neighbor's home, and together

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1. A letter written from Leyden, Holland, Dec.15, 1617 to Sir Edwin Sandys, by John Robinson and Wm. Brewster. Cited from Perry; op. cit., p. 327-28.

they worked at the carpet. Another day her friend would come to return the visit with materials for her rag-carpet. The men's work in many instances was made pleasant by social cooperation. If a clearing was to be made for a home, the men of the neighborhood came together to help in cutting down the trees, in pulling the stumps and in the task of log-rolling. House-raising and church raisings were also social occasions. <sup>1</sup>

"For the Puritan the greatest riches were of the soul, and the highest culture was moral and religious culture."<sup>2</sup> But the same principle, as we see, applied in their daily tasks. The various gifts of the spirit are distributed among men, so that no man can profit by all of them unless he belongs to a community in which they are all assembled. The spiritual cooperation of labour was urged by St. Paul to the Corinthian Church, which had great divisions:

Now there are varieties of gift, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. .... For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body.....<sup>3</sup>

We are fully persuaded that the conception of the church as the body of Christ and vehicle of the Spirit demands a commitment to cooperation in the work of salvation which is not only in Puritanism, but in the Christian teaching and tradition as a whole. For coopera-

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1. Mabel Wade; op. cit., pp. 9-12. (& see Earle; op. cit., pp. 387-89.)
  2. Perry; op. cit., p. 330.
  3. I Cor. 12:4-6, 12, 14-15.

tion is not merely an exchange and a pooling of special gifts; "there is also an elan which springs from association in a common enterprise, and which works inwardly upon each of its participants, so as to enhance both the quality and the quantity of his contribution. It is still the participants severally to whom the ultimate benefit accrues."<sup>1</sup> Our Lord earnestly prayed for the oneness of the Church and the cooperation of the disciples when he was confronting the Cross, "And now I am no more in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are one."<sup>2</sup> Those who wish to keep the sanctification of faith and keep unstained from the world have to learn the spirit of cooperation which was shown in the Puritans. Our Christian life in this crucial age might be also enjoyable and helpfully lived, as we hope for in the Ecumenical movement of our Church across the world, if we could have this cooperative spirit of the Puritans.

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1. Perry; op. cit., p. 331.
2. John 17:11.

CHAPTER V

SURVEY AND CONCLUSION

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We have in the previous chapters reviewed the varied manifestations of the devotional life of the Puritans. First we saw their inflexible spirit that desired to keep the pure and spotless life of faith; secondly we saw their sincere faith and devotional practice; and lastly we saw their expression of the devotional life in daily practice that was expressed in the church, home, education and their neighbourhood. It remains for us now to sum up the results obtained from our research. We may well summarize this thesis in terms of:

A. the heroic struggle for Freedom, B. the great emphasis upon their devotional life, and C. the contributions of the devotional life to the Christian Church today.

A. The Heroic Struggle for Freedom.

Christian history is, in a sense, the record of the struggle for toleration and religious liberty. The Christian desires to live according to the dictates of his faith and conscience. The Puritans moved in the main stream of this spirit, which was fully expressed in the Reformation, as we saw in the first chapter. They were the pioneers of the movement for religious toleration in England. The flower of religious freedom was opened in England through the struggle of the Puritans during the age of the Commonwealth of Cromwell for a while, but it was fully developed in New England by the pilgrim fathers.

The Puritans came to New England to obtain three kinds of freedom. First, they wanted freedom in action. The church of England could no longer be the keeper of their conscience. In England it was primarily each man's business to direct his own life. The Puritans stood face to face, each one of them, with the power of darkness. Secondly, they demanded freedom to govern themselves. This idea developed into democracy. As professor Perry says, "the Puritan philosophy has formed an important part of that fundamental agreement of mind and purpose by which the United States has played its peculiar role in the modern world."<sup>1</sup> And thirdly, they demanded freedom in religion which was their ultimate purpose. We know what it meant in Massachusetts. It meant the freedom of the majority to worship God as they wanted.

The spirit of freedom is the foundation of the establishment of the United States of America. The people in this country are the descendants of the Puritans, the men who fought and suffered and died for the freedom of the air which they breathed. The American people have been used by God. Today God uses this nation as His Hand - to hold other nations and countries which are suffering from the tyranny of communism. It is the will of God that the American people accomplish the great spirit today of their fathers, no matter what it costs, no matter what it means in the way of sacrifice, in the way of loss, because only through the spirit of Christ and the spirit of

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1. Ralph B. Perry; op. cit., p. 34.



self-sacrifice, are we made free indeed.

B. The Great Emphasis upon the Devotional Life.

When we study the Puritans' devotional life we discover four prominent features. The first is the serious practice of a holy life. It was rooted in their religion. Their religion was dominated by their conception of God. The attribute of God which impressed them most profoundly was holiness. They saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and heard the anthem of the Seraphim, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts!"<sup>1</sup> The Command in the Scriptures which arrested their attention was, "Be ye holy for I am holy."<sup>2</sup> Whenever they found the word holiness, they paused and meditated upon it. They believed that without holiness no one can see the Lord. "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sin,"<sup>3</sup> was a text which they loved to hear expounded. The society in which they lived was frightfully corrupt. The Church was polluted and the state was rotten. With their vision of God and their conception of duty it was inevitable that the Puritans should practice seriously their devotional life. We saw this fact in their practice of Bible reading and the practice of the spiritual prayer of faith.

The second most prominent feature of their devotional life was the spirit of devotion to Christ. This was also rooted in their religion. The pivotal concept of Christ for them was "Christ died

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1. Isa. 6:3.
2. I Pet. 1:16.
3. Rev. 18:4.

for our sin,"<sup>1</sup> and this faith controlled their whole lives. The immediate communion with Christ was expressed in the contemplation of His suffering or His finished work in His atonement. As they looked upon the figure of the Lord in the Cross, they were moved by His love; and each individual realized: "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."<sup>2</sup> They lived for Christ as well as in Him. The Puritans devoted to the Lord their whole heart, soul, and strength. Their devotion was, then, Christo-centric.

Thirdly in consequence of their devotion to Christ they were active in the work of Christ. This also was rooted in their religion. They conceived of God as the Judge before whom every man must at last stand and render an account of the deeds done in this world.<sup>3</sup> They were weighted down with the keen sense of responsibility to God for themselves and for other men. They were accountable not only for their own actions, but also for those of other men.<sup>4</sup> This idea made them conscious of other men's need for salvation. They were practical idealists. They not only had the noble vision, but also put forth efforts to work their vision into deeds with the love of Christ as an example.

Lastly, we see that the life of the Puritan was inward. This inwardness of their life was the result of the opposition to the human

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1. ICor. 15:3.

2. Gal. 2:20. 3. Rev. 20:11-14.

4. Ezek. 3:17-19.

mind from the externalism of the medieval church.) The Anglican church at that time had become increasingly ritualistic and pagan as previously noted. Christian life was more formal than spiritual. As we saw, the Puritan advocated the simplicity of worship as well as its spirituality. Puritanism entered deeply into the soul. "The formal and the external had fascination no longer. The world of color and form was not to be compared with that inner world where the spirit of man communed with his Maker."<sup>1</sup> The mind was turned in on itself. The Puritans watched themselves, analysed themselves, and kept a record of their thought and feelings. They sincerely practised self-examination in their deep prayer life.

#### C. The Contribution of Their Devotional Life.

The Puritans, indeed, contributed many more things to our modern world than any body of men who have lived since the days of the Apostles. The marks of their influence are everywhere. They have left a deep imprint on the fiber of the Church, and they have left a lasting influence on the structure of the United States of America.

Firstly, they contributed to human life the great joy of freedom, equality, and peace which come from faith. For this, as we have already mentioned, they sacrificed themselves and passed it on to us today. The spirit of the Puritans appears at the very core of the personal conscience throughout the ages of man. It arises from every corner of the world of today, and will also spring forth in the future.

.....  
1. Charles E. Jefferson; The Puritan Theology, p. 30.

Another contribution of their devotional life, as we saw, was the emphasis upon holy living. When we read their writings we are moved by their noble spirit and holy life. Man can not live by bread alone.<sup>1</sup> He first has to recover his spirit which was given from his Maker. Spiritual man can not enjoy his life without the freedom of the spirit in communion with God. The Puritan teaches us that the real joy and happiness of human life depends upon the sinless life and our peace of mind. When we read the records of their holy lives we come to understand our sins, shortcomings and vileness of life, and it makes us long for the holy light of the Lord as they did.

One of the great contributions of the Puritans is that of strong and noble leaders of the Christian Church, who have exercised a profound influence on all men. The leader whose heart is single toward God Himself, whose standard is perfection, whose task is the very purpose of life itself, gives us a power unequalled. As Heron says: "In this world there is nothing so priceless as character, and there is nothing more certain than that the Puritan faith was able to build up firm, strong character, upright and pure, to inspire it to noble aim, to heroic endurance of suffering, to heroic resistance against wrong, to deeds of heroic achievement."<sup>2</sup> Such men were the servants of God who have shown the true light of God on the earth.

There are also countless contributions of the Puritans to our church and society as we saw in the last chapter. A strict discipline

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1. Math. 4:4.

2. Heron; op. cit., p. 10.

in the Church, the influence on the home, religious education in the school, and the cooperative spirit in the society were the eminent ones we have studied.

The great Puritans died, but the Puritan spirit never dies. The form in which it clothes itself changes, must change, from age to age; for the intellectual forms of one age will never satisfy its successor. We cannot reproduce the form of life that was lived by the Puritans. The world can never go back and slavishly imitate the men of preceding generations. But the spirit of Puritans lives on, and until conscience is dethroned from its chief and controlling place in human affairs, and righteousness ceases to run down as a mighty stream, it will not perish, or cease to be a force to be reckoned with by the rulers and peoples of the world.

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