

The Pilgrims' Progress

1. The Mayflower Compact
2. A writer from perhaps the third century AD described Christians in these words: They live in their own homelands, but as foreigners. They share in everything as citizens, but endure everything as aliens. Every foreign country is their homeland, but every homeland is a strange country to them. They spend their time on the earth, but their citizenship is really in heaven. [American Pilgrims]
3. Challenges and Doubts; Perseverance and Providence – Romans 8:14-17 (NKJV) ¹⁴ For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba Father.” ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.
4. First Thanksgiving Proclamation -- 1623
 - a. The following proclamation was made by Governor Bradford in 1623, 3 years after the Pilgrims settled at Plymouth.
 To all ye Pilgrims,
 “The great Father’s abundant provisions... and inasmuch as he has protected us from the raids of the savages, has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience; now I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and ye little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, on ye hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the day time, on Thursday November ye 29th of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty three, and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on ye Plymouth rock, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings.”
5. In 1620, this group of “Pilgrims” came to America seeking religious freedom to worship according to their consciences and carry out the Great Commission. Their story is one of the Providence of God – Proverbs 3:5-6 (GNV) /DI
⁵ ¶ Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own wisdom. ⁶ In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy ways.

I. The Pilgrim Story – A Story of Providence

A. Religious Intolerance

- The Pilgrims were part of the Puritans – attempted to purify the Church of England – Separate Government from Religion and Religion from Government
- Unable to Purify, they became “Separatists” (Pilgrims)
 - By separating, they were denouncing the Monarchy (head of the Church of England)
 - This was bigger than switching churches; this was TREASON
 - King James, a tyrant, who succeeded Elizabeth, tripled the debt of the country; bankrupted; coined “Divine Right of Kings” to intimidate the people – God set up governments, therefore, whatever the king wants he gets; saw himself as devout but was killing the devout
 - Once “Separatists,” there was no going back – underground worship/study for 4 years

B. Attempts for Freedom

- Choice – Get caught and die or escape to freedom; then grow and develop as a community of faith to come back and free people from the tyrant [Scrooby Manor]
- Attempt #1 – secret negotiation with Dutch Sea Captain
- Attempt #2 – they saw the first attempt’s failure as a temporary setback, a learning experience – second attempt more dangerous. The men were separated from their families for a year.
- Attempt #3 – Back to England to sail to the New World

- Hired Mayflower and bought the Speedwell for the 150 passengers
 - Numerous incidents of Providence occurred on their journey to America
- Success?
 - Arrived in Massachusetts, not Northern Virginia
 - Needed a system of law and order – Mayflower Compact
 - The Harsh Winter
 - 47/102 died (women slept on children to keep them warm, and many died) in 3 months
 - Fear of Indians – mass grave
 - Squanto – providence of God – English-speaking Indian, a former slave, helped them survive
 - Captain offered to take them home after the winter – no takers, they had a cause and a purpose even greater than personal comfort or survival
 - The result was a foothold of freedom and self-governance in the new world

II. The Hebrew Story

- A. Joseph and His Pharaoh – Genesis 50:20-21
- B. Moses and His Pharaoh – Exodus

III. Our Story – In His Provide-ence, God has Offered:

- A. Jesus for Eternal Life – John 1:29; Matthew 3:17; 17:5
- B. Jesus for Freedom to Worship and Serve Him – Romans 12:1-2

1. I will say your name Story

2. How will we tell his name?

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles [Pilgrims, AV] to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. 1 Peter 2:11-12