

JOHN WINTHROP OR ROGER WILLIAMS? (Part-three of a six-part study)

John Winthrop was a Puritan; an English expression of the Christian faith with one primary goal in mind: purifying the Church of England from its spiritual and moral corruption. However, rather than remaining in England after several failed attempts at such a reformation from within, he made the life-changing decision to leave his beloved homeland for a fresh start in the New World of North America. There, he could establish a colony of true believers who could express a version of the Christian faith which would serve as an example to those back in England, and even the entire world, of a Christianity in its purest and most primitive form.

On the other hand, his political/religious perspective of how that could be successfully accomplished was thoroughly European. He believed in the divine authority of the king and viewed human government and its direct involvement with Christianity as perfectly compatible. Simply put, he believed in a theocracy as the best and most productive relationship between church and state. He was even more adamantly convinced that Puritanism was the best manifestation of the Christian faith in his contemporary world. As governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, his mandate was that it would be the only form of Christianity allowed, with every resident within the colony required to submit to its principles and actively participate in its everyday life. How ironic that he would flee the theocratic oppression of England, only to establish a similar system some 3,200 miles away.

The historical record reveals that the Massachusetts Bay Colony, under the governance of John Winthrop, and others who shared his point of view, proved to be a highly successful endeavor. If John Winthrop had been a participant in the Constitutional Convention, held in Philadelphia, over a century after his death, he would have been a strong advocate for the establishment of a theocratic nation, where human government and Puritanism would work together in harmony with one another. He believed that uniformity was essential to creating a spiritual unity among those who were followers of Christ, with government playing a key role.

Fast forwarding to our present day, those currently involved in the American Theocracy Movement, would look at John Winthrop and his successful efforts in merging government with religion in Massachusetts, as proof positive that the original intent of the earliest settlers of the North American continent consisted of establishing the United States as a Christian nation, in its fullest theocratic sense. But then along came Roger Williams, with his unique personality and perspective.

Henry Igras >> Acts 28:31 >> speakingtruthwithlove.com

Don't forget! Part four of this study will be posted on Saturday, September 10