

The New Testament Church
The Pilgrim Story, Part 2 – One Small Candle
November 30, 2025 - Pastor Paul Jehle

- I Prepare to be a Remnant in Rough Seas – Ro. 11:5; 1st Cor. 1:26-31; 11:1-2
- A. Review – the Pilgrim story illustrates Christian character – everything went wrong
 - 1. Immediately after their *conversion*, they were mocked and ridiculed...
 - 2. *They* formed their church, but King James said they couldn't stay or leave...
 - 3. They met in *secret* at Scrooby, were arrested in Boston, finally got to Amsterdam
 - 4. After 11 years in Leiden, about 75 (remnant) came to the new world at great risk
 - B. There are key truths about remnant influence – “left overs” in the world's eyes...
 - 1. God's grace establishes a remnant – humble few (foolish) who influence many
 - 2. Generational continuity - follow leaders *as they* follow Christ – honor, not idolize
 - C. Pastor John Robinson ***prepared his church to be a remnant – influencing many!***
 - 1. John Robinson prepared his Church for a time such as this – but how?
 - 2. His farewell letter told them how to walk with God in self-government.
 - a. To daily renew our repentance with our God for known and unknown sins.
 - b. To provide peace with all - not “giving or taking offense”
 - c. To get along with strangers in “wisdom and charity for preventing offenses.”
 - d. Avoid “taking offense at God Himself... our crosses He pleases to visit us.”
 - e. Focus on the general good, avoid the deadly plague of private advantage.
 - f. Honor civil govt with just and equal laws, choose (vote) character over royalty

II The Voyage of the Mayflower

- A. They depart Delfshaven on July 20 (30), 1620 – in the *Speedwell*
 - 1. They join the *Mayflower* in London (Brewster snuck on in a barrel?)
 - 2. Both ships departed from Southampton on August 5 (15)...
 - 3. The *Speedwell* begins to leak... they return to Dartmouth, lose time/money
 - 4. After repairs, they depart again only to have her leak again (overmasted?)
 - 5. They sell the *Speedwell* for a loss, and 20 or more have to stay

(Many) thought it was grievous and caused great discouragement... And thus, like Gideon's army, this small number was divided, as if the Lord by this work of His providence thought these few too many for the great work He had to do.
- B. Departing Sept 6 from Plymouth – voyage, overcrowded, no picnic; water rolls off
 - 1. The “cursing seamen” – yet first to be sick and put overboard...
 - 2. The Main beam cracks, will they make it? A giant screw (jack?) used to hold it
 - 3. John Howland, servant (apprentice) to John Carver, disobeys and goes overboard

“...but it pleased God that he caught hold of the topsail halyards which hung overboard... till he was hauled up by the same rope to the brim of the water, and then with a boat hook and other means got into the ship again and his life saved. And though he was something ill with it, ...he became a profitable member both in church and commonwealth.

4. After 66 days, 2,750 miles at 2.5 mph, see land Nov. 9, try to go south, turn back
Occasioned partly by the discontented and mutinous speeches that some of the strangers amongst them had let fall from them in the ship: That when they came ashore they would use their own liberty, for none had power to command them, the patent they had being for Virginia and not for New England...

5. Mayflower Compact a the result of applied theology of church to state
"In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, etc.

Having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honor of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine our selves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.

In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cape Cod, the eleventh of November, in the year of the reign of our sovereign lord, King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth. Anno Dom. 1620.

C. Didn't have to join church, "just and equal" laws, God to the people to the King

D. They land on Cape Cod (Provincetown) on Monday, November 13...

Being thus arrived in a good harbor, and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of Heaven who had brought them over the fast 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

What could now sustain them but the Spirit of God and His grace? May not and ought not the children of these fathers rightly say, 'Our fathers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilderness, but they cried unto the Lord, and He heard their voice and looked on their adversity... Let them therefore praise the Lord, because He is good, and His mercies endure forever.

II Finding a Place to Settle

A. Regarding the Natives, the Pilgrims embraced a different motive than the norm

1. The Doctrine of Discovery – 1492 – *conquest the method of sharing the gospel*
2. Their motive was to be distinct – which is why they sought to meet the Natives
 - a. You can't claim land like those in the Old Testament – Abraham

- b. You must go for God’s glory, to make peace, and not to dominate
- c. Our intention must be to share the gospel, not oppress the native
- d. Use empty land unclaimed, and procure peace, securing title to land

B. Exploration on the Cape

1. They explore Cape Cod looking for empty, cleared land, large hill for security, shallow harbor for their *Shallop*, and a spring of water – none found together
2. At “Cornill” – do they take the corn they find for survival?

We were in suspense what to do with it and the kettle, and at length, after much consultation, we concluded to take the kettle, and as much of the corn as we could carry away with us; and when our shallop came, if we could find any of the people and come to parley with them, we would give them the kettle again, and satisfy them for their corn.

3. At First Encounter Beach – they are attacked by the Nauset – (in self-defense)

4. A storm of rain, sleet and snow, rudder and mast break, make it to Clark’s Island
Yet still the Lord kept us, and we bore up for an island before us, being compassed about with many rocks, and dark night growing upon us, it pleased the Divine Providence that we fell upon a place of sandy ground, where our shallop did ride safe and secure all that night, ...kept our watch all night in the rain upon that island. And in the morning, we marched about it and found no inhabitants at all, and here we made our rendezvous all that day, it being Saturday, 10th of December. On the Sabbath day we rested...

5. Landed on Plymouth Rock... found a hill, shallow harbor, cleared land, Spring...
...on Monday, we sounded the harbor and found it a very good harbor for our shipping... we marched also into the land, and found divers cornfields, and little running brooks, a place very good for situation. So we returned to our ship again with good news to the rest of our people, which did much comfort their hearts.

- a. Didn’t identify which rock they stepped on – but Thomas Faunce remembered it!
- b. Half their number die during the first winter, starting with a common house...

But...in two or three months’ time half of their company died...being the depth of winter... six or seven sound persons...spared no pains night nor day, and hazard of their own health, fetched them wood, made them fires, dressed them meat, made their beds, washed their loathsome clothes, clothed and unclothed them... all this willingly and cheerfully, without any grudging in the least, showing herein their true love unto their friends and brethren; a rare example and worthy to be remembered...

But... the boatswain (and some others) who was a proud young man and would often curse and scoff at the passengers. But when he grew weak, they had compassion on him and helped him; then he confessed he did not deserve it at their hands, he had abused them in word and deed. ‘Oh’ (saith he) ‘you, I now see, show your love like Christians indeed one to another, but we let one another lie and die like dogs.

III Peace with the Wompanoag – the providential meeting with Samoset and Squanto

A. Birth of the Militia – patterned after the Israelites – every man a soldier

B. Peace with one's Neighbors – on March 22, 1621...

1. Each nation was sovereign – punishing crimes on the basis of their laws
2. Reciprocity was agreed upon – respect, aiding each other “unjustly” attacked
3. *Probably the longest lasting peace treaty with Natives in our history – 55 years*

C. Return of the Mayflower – April, 1621 – *not one pilgrim returned*

D. Reconciliation with the Nauset who had attacked them – probably in August, 1621

1. The opportunity had come due to one of the Billington boys taken hostage
2. Apology of English for crimes of Hunt is significant – why has it been removed?

There was an old woman, whom we judged to be no less than a hundred years old, which came to see us, because she never saw English; yet could not behold us without breaking forth into great passion, weeping and crying excessively... they told she had three sons, who, when Master Hunt was in these parts, went aboard his ship to trade with him, and he carried them captives into Spain... by which means she was deprived of the company of her children in her old age. We told them we were sorry that any Englishman should give them that offense, that Hunt was a bad man... but for us, we would not offer them any such injury, though it would gain us all the skins in the country....

IV Thanksgiving – October, 1621

A. Roots of a “Harvest Festival” – England and Holland – Tabernacles or Michaelmas?

B. The doctrine of thanksgiving – thank God *in all things*, we are owed nothing...

Our harvest being gotten, our governor sent four men on fowling, that so we might, after a special manner, rejoice together after we had gathered the fruit of our labors. They four in one day killed as much fowl as, with a little help besides, served the company almost a week. At which time, amongst other recreations, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest their greatest king, Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted; and bestowed on our governor, and upon the captain and others...

1. Not the first to give thanks – many cultures have done this for centuries
2. Unique – multi-cultural, friendly athletics, a result of peace and reconciliation
3. They ate cod, seabass, duck, geese, swan, wild turkey, popcorn?
4. All dishes were wooden, children served adults, only four adult pilgrim women

V The Legacy of Plimoth

A. Changed from common field to more of a free economy in 1623

B. The legacy of self-government, free economy, just and equal laws... Bradford writes in 1630 reflecting on the influence of this small, remnant, believers...

Thus out of small beginnings greater things have been produced by His hand that made all things of nothing, and gives being to all things that are; and, as one small candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled hath shone unto many, yea in some sort to our whole nation; let the glorious name of Jehovah have all the praise!