

## 10. THE 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY: CHRISTIAN DECLINE, PURITANS & CIVIL WAR

*Acts 20:26-27, Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.*

*Acts 20:32, And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

Harry was a Catholic (Henry VIII – 1509-47)  
and Eddy was a Prot (Edward VI – 1547-53)  
Mary turned the clock around (Mary – 1553-58)  
but Lizzy stopped the rot. (Elizabeth I – 1558-1603)

Jimmy persecuted both (James I – 1603-25)  
and Charlie lost his head. (Charles I – 1625-49)  
Then Olly brought the Prots a rest (Cromwell 1649-58)  
and said, “No Kings, instead.”

The people got fed up with this  
and called back Charlie’s son. (Charles II - 1660-85)  
The Pope was more than satisfied  
when Jimmy followed on. (James II – 1685-88)

Then Willy sailed across the sea (William III – 1688-1702)  
and settled things for good.  
A Bill of Rights said “Prots are in”  
and that’s how things now stood.

### 1. JAMES I (1603-25)

A Calvinist (but dodgy)... puritan Archbishop Abbot... 1605 Gunpowder plot... 1611  
Authorised Version of the Bible

BUT...

1604 Hampton Court Conference hears puritan grievances... *all* ignored by James

Divine right of kings... divine right of bishops... tries to impose bishops in Scotland...  
freezes 39 Articles in 1571 form

Influx of Arminians

### 2. CHARLES I (1625-49) AND WILLIAM LAUD

Charles married to Catholic princess Henrietta Maria

1633 William Laud appointed Archbishop: openly Arminian, possibly Catholic

Laud bans preaching on predestination... divine right of bishops... Catholic ceremonial  
re-introduced... wants to “harry” the puritans out of the land

Puritan response? Meet in secret “conventicles” ... and leave for Netherlands and the New World.

Charles and Laud alienated everyone through: tyranny, popery, Arminianism

Earl of Bedford - Arminianism was “the little thief put in at the window of the church to unlock the door to popery.”

BUT: Laudianism (and its children) has never left the CofE

### **3. THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR (1642-1651)**

1628 Charles needs cash from Calvinist House of Commons... dissolves parliament → “personal rule” from 1629-1640

1637 Charles tries to impose Prayer Book and Bishops on Scotland... English lose war in 1639-40

1640 bishops assert divine right of kings and Laud’s ceremonial innovations

Long Parliament 1640-1653: demand for Calvinist reform. E.g. eject clergy who “cherish formality and superstition”

Jan 1642 Charles fails to arrest 5 MPs in Parliament... leaves London... the nation divides... Charles raises standard at Nottingham in Aug 1642: *he* declares war

Civil War(s) follow from 1642-1651

1642-43 Bishops banned from parliament... and then abolished altogether

First War ends with victory for Parliament at Battle of Naseby. King captured.

Royalist uprisings 1648 start 2nd civil war... Charles tried for treason... executed 1649

3<sup>rd</sup> civil war – in England, Ireland and Scotland –against soldiers loyal to Charles’ son... defeated in 1651 and flees to France

THINK:

Would you be a royalist or a parliamentian? Why?

THINK:

How should a Bible-believing Christian deal with a tyrant?

Different answers...

“OK to oppose the King”: Samuel Rutherford, *Lex Rex (Law and the King)*

#### **4. THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY (1643-49)**

150 Puritans... in Westminster Abbey from 1643-1649... for 1,162 sessions

Westminster Standards, including...

Westminster Shorter and Longer Catechisms

The Directory of Worship (replaced BCP in Jan 1645)

The 1648 Westminster Confession of Faith (replaced 39 Articles)

Calvinists... but diverse:

moderate Episcopalians (church government by bishops),

Presbyterians (government by Presbytery or group of elders),

Independents (total autonomy of every local church)

Erastians (the state should govern the church).

The Episcopalians lose (or didn't try hard enough?):

Lord Falkland: "those that hated the bishops hated them worse than the devil and those that loved them loved them not so well as their dinner"!

Presbyterian church government adopted in 1646... Elizabeth Settlement abolished.

READ THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH and the SHORTER CATECHISM!!!

#### **5. THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE PROTECTORATE (1649-1660)**

Oliver Cromwell: Lord Protector... war in Ireland... a great Christian man... Puritan... favoured Independency

Growth of Independency (c.300 baptist churches by 1660)... and of radical sects and radical politics.

Oliver dies 1558... Richard Cromwell can't influence parliament and army...

#### **6. THE RESTORATION OF THE MONARCHY: KING CHARLES II (1660-1685)**

General Monck invites Charles to bring back monarchy

4 April 1660 Declaration of Breda: promises indemnity and religious freedom

Clarendon Code (1661-1665) restores Elizabeth settlement and persecutes Charles' opponents.

Act of Uniformity St Bartholomew's Day 24 August 1662... 2,000 Puritan ministers lost in the Great Ejection... Five Mile Act 1665

Plague (1665), Fire (1666) = God's judgement?

THINK:

What would you do if you lost access to a Bible-teaching church?

THINK:

What would you say in your last ever sermon?

*Sermons of the Great Ejection.*

Thomas Lye, pastor of All Hallows, Lombard Street:

*Blessed be God for such a people! [i.e. his church]... Pastors must love their people; do not blame them if their hearts are almost broken, when they are to part from such a people... It is true that it lies in the power of man to separate pastor and people, but not to separate their hearts. I hope there will never be a separation of love, but that our love will still continue. If we do not see one another, yet we may love one another, and pray for one another. I hope a husband does not cease from loving his wife because she is absent from him. But, oh! For my brethren, hundreds of them think that you are undone; but you are not undone...*

*Far be it for me to hope that those that are to take my place should not prosper. Lord, it shall be the prayer of thy servant that those that are to follow may have a double and treble portion of thy spirit, that they may be both painstaking and faithful and successful...*

*Thus I have now spoken something from this Scripture. I cannot speak what I desire; for besides the exhausting of my spirits, there is something to be done after, viz., a funeral sermon. I shall say no more, but only this: the God of heaven be pleased to make you mind these plain things. I can truly say this: I have not spoken one word that I remember that I would not have said to you if I had been a-dying and called to go to God as soon as I had gone out of the pulpit. The God of peace be with you. Only mind that one thing – when God does not find a tongue to speak, do not find an ear to hear, nor a heart to believe.*

## **7. JAMES II (1685-1688) AND THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION**

? suspected Catholic... deposed 1688... Protestant William of Orange and Mary II... Bill of rights restore some freedoms... but non-conformists still excluded

### **CONCLUSION: SO, WHEN DID PURITANISM END?**

1662... Jonathan Edwards (d.1758)... Never!?

And us?