A vibrant, stylized illustration of a 17th-century village scene. At the top, a large, curved banner with a parchment-like texture contains the text "PLYMOUTH: YEAR 1621" in large, black, serif capital letters, with "A HARVEST FESTIVAL FILLED WITH THANKSGIVING" written below it in smaller, black, serif capital letters. The central scene depicts a bustling village square with several wooden houses, some with smoking chimneys. In the foreground, a group of people in period clothing are gathered around a long wooden table, engaged in various activities like eating, talking, and carrying food. The people are dressed in a mix of European-style clothing (hats, long dresses, tunics) and Native American-style clothing (loincloths, moccasins). The background shows more houses and a small bridge over a stream. The overall style is reminiscent of a children's book illustration or a folk-art style painting. At the bottom, another curved banner with a parchment-like texture contains the text "GREETINGS FROM MAIN STREET, PLYMOUTH, YEAR 2000" in black, serif capital letters.

PLYMOUTH: YEAR 1621  
A HARVEST FESTIVAL FILLED WITH THANKSGIVING

GREETINGS FROM MAIN STREET, PLYMOUTH, YEAR 2000

# A Harvest Celebration Filled with Thanksgiving



Four hundred years ago, just across the sea, something was stirring in the hearts of a handful of men and women which would permanently mark history. Though they were not the noble or noteworthy of English society, this small band found the courage to stand for what they felt was right in the face of great odds.

History tells the rest of the story. Names such as Bradford, Winslow, and Carver have become famous in America. But few realize what these men actually stood for, and even died for. However, it is these very values which they held so dear that makes the celebration of thanksgiving more than just a day of sports and eating lots of food. For that first harvest celebration filled with thanksgiving was more of a victory celebration than just an acknowledgment of the blessing of abundant food they had received from the Creator. It was a victory celebration, not because everything had gone so well for them that year, but on the contrary, they had endured hardship after hardship. They could have rather “cursed God and died,” accusing Him of being unjust to them.

The Pilgrim men and women who sat at the table on that cool autumn day had lost their wives, their children, and friends (fourteen of the nineteen wives that had come on the Mayflower had died that first winter). Only half of those who boarded the Mayflower in their homeland were alive to sit around the table one year later. They had faced and endured dangers and tragedies that most humans don't even imagine, yet they sat at the thanksgiving table at a victory celebration.

Truly it was a victory, for their personal lives were not the most important thing that they had come to establish in this new land. No, it was for the sake of values that they endured. They cherished something beyond their own lives. Most people today are only faintly aware of such a noble concept. The tendency is to look for personal advantage. So, what was it that motivated these men and women that we have been taught to admire all our lives? We must first understand from whence they came.

## — A LARGE MOVEMENT OF UNSATISFIED PEOPLE —

It was in the countryside of England that they began to band together. There, as well as all of Europe had just come through a time of great change. The ruling force in all men's lives had been the Catholic religion for centuries and just recently the Protestant Reformation had turned things around. This new movement was supposed to correct the abuses of Catholicism which ruled society. Many still thought that the Protestants, though they protested loudly, had only re-formed the system, altering it slightly, without thoroughly changing it. Those who wanted such radical change called for a complete reform in what their religion had become. It grew to quite a large movement of unsatisfied people who were called Puritans.

*But the tiny band in this story are not those Puritans*, for the simple country people of the thanksgiving story were not interested in purifying anything old. They wanted something altogether new. That is where their trouble started. For that old system, reformed as it was supposed to have been by the Protestants, had no room for their zeal. Soon they were called *Non-conformists* or *Separatists*, but they referred to themselves as *Pilgrims*.

The hostility to this small band, that never rose to more than three hundred people became a thorn in the side of the Protestant religion that ruled the politics of England. Jailed, and even killed by those who believed that religious persecution would cause the Pilgrims to conform, the small committed group finally fled from their homeland in search of something better. The most hardy were picked to go first, to prepare a place where a man could stand for what is right, free from the bonds of religious conformity.

If they would have been satisfied to just go to church in England and not make waves, life would have been much easier and more comfortable for them. They chose, rather, to “take the waves” .... Their attitude and action have been thus described by one of their number:

*“They entered into covenant to walk with God and one with another, in the enjoyment of the Ordinances of God, according to the Primitive Pattern in the Word of God. But finding by experience they could not peaceably enjoy their own liberty in their Native Country without offence to others that were differently minded, they took up thoughts of removing.”<sup>1</sup>*

Arriving on land in America much later in the season than they had planned, spelled almost certain disaster for this party of Pilgrim farmers of faith. One hundred and two arrived to start the work after choosing their spot in late December. In Plymouth, late December is likely to be very harsh weather. These men and women, raised in the damp, but civilized countryside of England, were not prepared for the frigid and uncivilized trials of the wilderness. They faced barely enough food to survive the winter, no homes for shelter, no protection from the

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<sup>1</sup>Chronicle of the Pilgrim Fathers

rain or wind or snow. Coupled with the uncertainty of being able to have a friendly relationship with the native inhabitants who lived nearby, they met the reality of hardship head-on and without any way to escape. January, February, and March they worked together outside cutting trees and straw and building their houses. They were wet and freezing cold. At one point only seven of them were well enough to care for the rest who were deathly ill. By the spring, half of them had died.

Many do not realize that the Mayflower did not belong to the Pilgrims but was only hired to bring them across the sea from England. It was forced to stay in the harbor for the first winter, anchored quite a ways from shore because of the shallow water. Winter storms had prevented it from leaving. It served as a little protection for them, but the unsanitary crowding of the boat with its crew added to the problem of sickness. The bay was so shallow near shore that even the small boat that they used to go back and forth from the Mayflower could not come all the way in. To get to the land those who came in had to wade knee deep for a good distance. With their clothes soaked, there was no way for them to stay dry.

In April when the storms had died down, the Mayflower returned to England, leaving those weak ones that had remained through that first winter with no way of escape, nowhere to run.

Yet none of them pleaded to return to England with the ship. They would plant their seeds.

They were the seeds of something entirely new. Alone on the shores of this new land, the Pilgrims worked together with a faith that was real. Such faith had proven itself in hardship. Through summer they made gardens and built





homes. With much labor they made friends with the Native neighbors and were able to live in harmony with them. By autumn they were able to harvest a small crop, enough to take them through the coming winter. They had finished seven small houses.

#### — LOVING AND SHARING FROM THE HEART —

They lived a *common* life of love, maintaining the integrity of their faith. Their goal was to live according to the pattern of sharing that they saw in the Bible. Though some say they were striving to build a *communistic society*, this was far from their goal. The primitive pattern of the Word of God taught them to love and to share, not to force a legal system of mandatory equality. Their motive was a matter of the heart, not to be legislated. They attempted to fulfill what was in their hearts, but the implications of the innate selfishness in man raised its ugly head. In times of intense suffering, personal weaknesses interfered with, and often overshadowed, the goal at hand.

The joy of Thanksgiving is felt most deeply in those who have known hardship and endured. It seems contradictory to our thinking today. We are thankful only if everything goes our way. We have become a tepid generation, spoiled by too much prosperity. Most cannot even relate to the well-spring of thanksgiving that came forth from those who planted our land. Yet these are the forefathers to whom many Americans owe their lifeblood. While many proudly claim these righteous folk

as their ancestors, (even using DNA testing to prove one's lineage) very few remain true to the essence of what moved the hearts of these people to stay the hard course. Sadly, few of us know the determination to do good that motivated these men and women.

As the beautiful autumn leaves announced the coming of another dreaded winter, the Pilgrims found hope to increase.

#### — THE DEMANDS OF LOVE ARE TOUGH —

A month after this joyous thanksgiving celebration the sails of another ship came into the harbor. Great joy followed when the Pilgrims realized this boat carried thirty five more of their brothers from England. Just the help they would need! How much they loved these newcomers who shared their same heart to establish a new land built upon the "primitive pattern of the Word of God."

## Early Native Neighbors

Part of the beauty of the first thanksgiving is that the Pilgrims shared it with their Native neighbors. They had been able to win the hearts of the Natives of the land, thus it was only fitting that they shared this meal with the Pilgrims. In fact, there were many more Native guests invited to that meal than there were Pilgrims themselves. They were all friends. Without the help of their Native neighbors, the Pilgrims would never have survived in this new land. Thus the hearts of the Pilgrims were very happy to share this meal with them. In fact it was more like a modern day *pot-luck* supper with the Natives bringing a good portion of the food. Had the relationship between these two people grown and progressed as it had started that first winter, what a different story history would have told! But sadly in the years that followed, the greed of western European civilization rushed in on the heels of these *good-hearted* Pilgrims, bringing much hostility against the Native Americans, and overtaking the good foundation of love and trust that had been established that first year.

With these new arrivals, the population of the colony nearly doubled. Unfortunately, the ship brought no food or other supplies. These new settlers did not have the foresight to bring supplies for the winter. Great mixed emotions understandably arose in the first Pilgrims. Our fifty-one seasoned Pilgrim forefathers, after a full year in this land, must now open their arms to receive others. They had to share the stock of food they had grown through exceeding difficulty – a storehouse that was only enough to meet their own need. Being well acquainted with hunger and great hardship, the charity of the Pilgrims was sorely tested.

Furthermore, the Pilgrim fathers also recognized less zeal for hard labor in these newcomers than had motivated the first settlers to press through seemingly insurmountable odds they had faced entering the same bay the previous winter. This tendency toward laziness in their brothers caused a very predictable response. The first recorded “sermon” given in the colony was a speech given as a reminder of what it meant to truly live by what the primitive pattern of the Word of God demands. The speech was recorded and titled, “The Sin and Dangers of Self-Love,” warning the Pilgrims, “to love selflessly, to give to your needy brothers, and to discipline those who are idle.”

Our Pilgrim forefathers could certainly not be considered guilty of self-love after all the rigors they had just experienced, could they? *The demands of this “primitive pattern” really go far beyond the natural human power to obey.* The demands of Love from the Son of God are tough. Going the extra mile, turning the other cheek, returning a blessing for a curse, etc. sound commendable on paper but our Pilgrim fathers put themselves into the place of actually trying to live this out. Many could not pass the test.

It was an exceedingly difficult road our Pilgrim fathers chose to trod. Yet our hearts ought never cease to swell with admiration for their sacrificial lives. In the midst of a society born out of those early days of the first colony we see little resemblance today of the values they struggled so hard to plant.

Seeing the decline in these high ideals, a huge monument was erected on the hill just above Main Street in Plymouth near the graveyard that holds many of those first Pilgrims. It is an impressive statue of a woman...built so large as to be hard

to miss. We so easily set our minds on lower, more earthly cares, and neglect the heroic ideals for which the Pilgrims stood. So, this grand Lady stands with her hand raised toward the sea from which the Pilgrim fathers sailed. She beckons us to remember...

A generation fond of pleasure, disinclined towards serious thought, and shrinking from hardship will find it difficult to imagine the temper, courage and manliness of the emigrants who made the first settlement of New England. For a man to give up all things and fare forth into savagery, in order to escape from the responsibilities of life is common. Giving up all things in order to serve God is a sternness for which prosperity has unfitted us.

Some regard the settling of New Plymouth as the sowing of the seed from which the crop of Modern America has grown... But for all the Mayflower’s sailing stood there is, perhaps,\* little existing in modern England or America “according to the Primitive Pattern† in the Word of God.” It would be healthful could either country see herself through the eyes of those pioneers, or see the pioneers as they actually were. The pilgrims leave no impression of personality on the mind. They were not “remarkable.” Not one of them had compelling personal genius, or marked talent for the work in hand. They were plain men of moderate abilities, who, giving up all things, went to live in the wilds, at unknown cost to themselves, in order to preserve for their children a life in the soul.

John Masfield

(Preface to *The Chronicle of the Pilgrim Fathers*, a compilation of the writings of the early Pilgrims, 1910)

\*An ember is igniting among those who hope to once again lift up the values for which the primitive pattern of the Word of God stands. For more information, see last page.

† The primitive pattern of which the Pilgrims so often spoke is exemplified in the Acts of the Apostles: Acts 2:40-47, Acts 4:32-37, and in many other verses of the New Testament.

So, has this “life in the soul” spoken of in the *Chronicle of the Pilgrim Fathers* been preserved?

Do we even realize that the Grand Lady of Virtue still stands on the hillside in Plymouth? She has now become hidden among the twenty-first century trappings of a civilization that seems embarrassed that she is even there — a symbol of the virtues long ago cast aside. Today these values, instead of being cherished as anything real and worthy of emulation, are called with disdain *old-fashioned* and even *puritanical*.

Or perhaps it is she who is embarrassed?... embarrassed of a nation that admires their Pilgrim fathers about as much as they appreciate the unreal elves in Santa’s workshop — but has forgotten the “life in the soul” for which the Pilgrims’ sacrifice was made... a sacrifice that birthed the freedoms that we all enjoy today... one that is truly worth giving thanks for.**h**



*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 of our whole nation. Let the Glorious name of God have all the Praise.*

Governor William Bradford  
(inscription at the base of the monument  
— Tribute to the Virtues )

# Roger Williams and the Separatist Movement... then & now

The decline that began shortly after that “first harvest celebration filled with thanksgiving” can be best understood by looking at what happened in Massachusetts ten years later with the arrival of Roger Williams in 1631 (who would eventually become the founder and governor of Rhode Island). He was a staunch Separatist whose whole motivation was to see the reality of the true church demonstrated on earth. Williams did not



believe that anything connected to the Church of England could possibly be the pure church for which he longed. This is the same view his Separatist brothers in Plymouth carried when they arrived in the New World in 1620 and endured the test of that first winter.

The Puritan colonists who had arrived in the ten years prior to Williams had no intention of establishing religious freedom for they had little value for any sort of religious toleration.

They fused religion and politics, believing that God had given them the task of protecting and promoting their religion. They were determined to use the power of the state to enforce religious orthodoxy on every citizen.<sup>1</sup> When they spoke of religious liberty, the Puritans meant the liberty to practice religion as they saw fit and to penalize anyone who disagreed with them.<sup>2</sup>

The conclusion that the life of the early church, described as the “primitive pattern of the Word of God,” was not and could not be sustained became painfully evident to those early Plymouth Pilgrims as they approached their second winter. Their Separatist ideals were not enough to overcome the power of self-life. The “primitive pattern of the Word of God” (recorded in Acts 2:42 and 4:32) was impossible for the first settlers because they didn’t have the spiritual foundation stone that could enable them to establish that pattern of life in the colonies. They learned the painful lesson that the best they could do was to try to emulate the “primitive pattern,” despite their strong belief in that way of life. Their faith and their desire was not enough to produce the same life of the early church. They were left disappointed, like Roger Williams when he realized that there was no



true church actually living according to that “primitive pattern” anywhere on the earth. There was something missing in the foundation. As the apostle Paul wrote:

*“built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with the Son of God himself as the chief cornerstone”* (Ephesians 2:20)

Roger Williams realized the contrast between true life and dead form increasingly as he saw the lifeless, disappointing, and sometimes deadly alternative to the “primitive pattern” emerging in the Puritan Church of Massachusetts Bay. Mildly reformed from the Church of England, the Puritans believed they had a mandate from God to form a Christian nation by connecting church and state. The American Puritans, like the Church of England they hoped to *purify*, had begun to wield the sword of the same religious intolerance.

Williams, unlike most of his contemporaries, never compromised his Separatist ideals. His views are summed up by legal scholar Timothy L. Hall:

*“Legal scholars have sometimes claimed that Williams’s view of church-state relations made the protection of the garden from the wilderness — or the church from the state — the principal aim. But that characterization fails to discern the true extent of his radical Separatism. According to Roger Williams, there was no garden to be protected any longer. Weeds grew where cultivated flowers once bloomed. He did not advocate a wall between church and state, he mourned the wall’s destruction and the destruction of the church. There was no church left to be separated from the state. The most that true believers could do was wait in expectation that God would one day send apostles who would replant the garden. Until that time, the world would be inhabited by Christians without a church.”*

*Driven by this radical Separatism, Williams eventually abandoned any hope of finding a pure church. He associated for a few months with an infant congregation of Baptists but ultimately separated from them because even they could not claim to have preserved the legacy of the apostolic church. ... He saw no alternative but to withdraw from his recently acquired Baptist brethren. They were trying to create a garden out of the barren wilderness of the world and had set*

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<sup>1</sup> J. Edward Evans, “Freedom of Religion”, (Lerner Publications Company, 1994), p. 15

<sup>2</sup> Isaac Kramnick and R. Laurence Moore, “The Godless Constitution: The Case Against Religious Correctness”, (W. W. Norton and Company, 1996), p. 47

*upon an illusive quest for a church that had died and would remain dead until God resurrected it in the last days.*<sup>3</sup>

[emphasis added]

Williams saw no alternative but to wait patiently until God sent apostles who had the power to start the new and true church. He knew that until that time there was no one available either to start a church or to sustain it.<sup>4</sup> In the following quote, Roger Williams made clear his belief that there was no true church anywhere on earth:

*“In the poor small span of my life, I desired to have been a diligent and constant observer, and have been my self many ways engaged in city, in country, in court, in schools, in universities, in churches, in old and new England, and yet cannot in the holy presence of God bring in the result of a satisfying discovery, that either the begetting ministry of the apostles or messengers to the nations, or the feeding and nourishing ministry of pastors and teachers, according to the first institution of the Lord Jesus, are yet restored and extant.”*<sup>5</sup>

Since there was no true church nor apostles to gather God’s people, Williams saw that believers would have to live separately in a hostile “wilderness” of the world until a future day. Seeing this fact led Roger Williams to his brilliant understanding of the role of the state. He saw that the affairs of the state were to be purely secular. He rejected John Winthrop’s notion that gave American Puritans their sense of duty to try to construct a “city on a hill,” where civil governments would be given the power to enforce *religious correctness*. For Roger Williams, this situation was akin to what had existed in Christendom before the Reformation. He believed that no nation had a mandate from God to bring His redemptive plan to the world.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Timothy L. Hall, “*Separating Church and State, Roger Williams and Religious Liberty*”, (University of Illinois Press, 1998), p. 26

<sup>4</sup> Roger Williams, “*The Bloody Tenent of Persecution*”, pp. 293-94

<sup>5</sup> Roger Williams, “*The Hireling Ministry*”, in the Complete Writings of Roger Williams, 7 vols. (New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), p. 160

<sup>6</sup> “*The Godless Constitution*”, pp. 50-51

Therefore, the affairs of the state should forever be separate from the affairs of religion. This meant that individual believers of all faiths should be protected from the tyranny of governments and that no religion should be given the opportunity to form an alliance with secular government.

Roger Williams established the state of Rhode Island with this in mind. Nowhere in the colonies was there more religious toleration and acceptance of diverse religious expression. In fact, it was the first state protecting freedom of conscience in 1,300

*Roger Williams believed that no nation had a mandate from God to bring His redemptive plan to the world. Therefore, the affairs of the state should forever be separate from the affairs of religion.*

years.<sup>7</sup> Williams believed that government in the nations was “merely human and civil.” He did not see government as redemptive. He saw that the political skills necessary to preserve civil peace might easily be found among Jews, or Turks, or Chinese as among people who professed *Christianity*.<sup>8</sup>

One hundred years later, the foundation of secular government laid by Roger Williams in Rhode Island came together with the social and political views of John Locke, who lived in England in the mid-1600s. Locke proposed a radical view of government that consciously separated the realms of church and state. Locke and others like him in England, who promoted this new model of government were not greatly concerned about the purity of true religion — a completely different perspective than Roger Williams. However, Locke and others contributed powerfully to the ideals that triumphed in the American Constitution.<sup>9</sup>

What is the significance of Roger Williams today and what does it mean to us as we approach this Thanksgiving season?

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<sup>7</sup> “The Last Day”, (Parchment Press, 1999), p. 32

<sup>8</sup> “*The Godless Constitution*”, p. 54

<sup>9</sup> “*The Godless Constitution*”, p. 72

There is hardly an accurate account of what those early Pilgrims stood for. The history books in public schools emphasize the life of the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony as the foundation of America — remaining strangely uninterested in the earliest Pilgrim Separatists of Plymouth, much less the radical Roger Williams.

*We must be forever thankful for the brilliance of Roger Williams.* In establishing a secular state, he provided us with the freedom to fulfill what those early Pilgrims longed to see. Although no spiritual nation emerged from the rocky shores of Plymouth or Rhode Island, the Separatists and Roger Williams laid the secular foundation of this nation, America the beautiful, where their beliefs, as well as all other religious beliefs, would be protected.

No matter how hard he tried, Williams could not impart the Holy Spirit to people to give them the foundation upon which to build. It was not given to them or to their time. The missing building block – that essential cornerstone and necessary foundation stone – was to come later “in the days of those kings” (spoken about in Daniel 2:44, 7:24 and Revelation 17:12 as the Stone Kingdom). This Stone Kingdom is cut out of the mountain of the nations without human hands. No human institution could ever bring this about because it is the true work of God’s hand aided by angels (Hebrews 1:14).

The Pilgrims were not living in the time of “the restoration of all things” (Mark 9:11-12). As the story of that first harvest celebration in Plymouth revealed, the early Pilgrims tried, but could not do it.

Roger Williams established a state that protected man’s conscience, instead of imposed mandates of *religious correctness*. It enabled individuals to be ruled by the boundaries of conscience, providing man a basis to live by while waiting, like Williams, for the time in history when God would restore the “primitive pattern” of the church. The establishment of freedom of religion that separates church and state made the way for this pattern to be raised up at the appointed time (Daniel 2:28; Psalm 102:13-18).

The memory of what these first Pilgrims really stood for and how they were hated by the Christian establishment of England in the early seventeenth-century has faded. To be *Separatist* today in this country would be looked upon with disdain. It would probably invoke the label “cult.” The Christian Right is trying to rewrite history to erase all memory of what it means to protect

rights of the hated minorities. They are agents tearing down the historic and established wall of separation intended to protect forever the rights of the *Separatist*. Without the protection of this wall, there is no hope and there will be no opportunity for a true *separatist movement* to emerge as a prophetic voice one day. This voice is what will rekindle the fire of the early church and bring about the reality of what those beloved Pilgrims gave their lives to see fulfilled.

If a true Separatist Movement were to emerge today, it would surely be despised like the Pilgrims were in England. They would be the outcasts, the ones who would not conform to the status

quo of dead mainstream religion. They would be the ones, like Roger Williams, who would be banished from society for their disturbing and radical ideas of separation (if those rights were not protected and actually upheld under the First Amendment). Such persecution will be inevitable because these contemporary *Separatists* will rekindle the same fire that caused the early church to be despised. Being reviled is the response of darkness to the light (John 1:4). It was the response back then to their burning love of a common life that turned the world upside down. It will be the same when light appears again in the present darkness.

When the day comes that Roger Williams waited for, when true apostles are once again on the earth with true authority from God to actually baptize people into a radical new life, then those people will boldly take their stand as Separatists and will bring everyone’s remembrance back to the beloved Pilgrims. If we truly appreciate the lives and labors of those first Pilgrim Separatists, we must preserve the rights of religious freedom for which they stood. The Separatist courage we celebrate on Thanksgiving Day will not have been in vain. The hope and the opportunity for all men to gain the sweet life of “fellowship with their God and one another” will be preserved.h

*Roger Williams  
established a  
state that  
protected man’s  
conscience,  
instead of  
imposed  
mandates of  
religious  
correctness.*



## Editorial Note: Religious Freedom in the Year 2000

What does *freedom of religion* really mean in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? In the past, countries were established and wars were fought so that freedom of faith could be guaranteed, but such protection is not an issue today. Or, is it? Let us reflect on the past, particularly in this country, the United States of America.

In the 1600s, after fleeing to the New World from religious persecution in England, the Separatists such as Roger Williams came to the realization that the Established Church of the day was just as false as any other world religion. He saw that it had become contaminated by the world. He then decided that all religions should be treated equally, and that there should be no “favored religion” in any government, thereby excluding others. Roger Williams went on to establish Rhode Island as a colony that would allow all religious beliefs and practices. At that time, the other colonies were very intolerant of any religious opinion other than the state-established one. Rhode Island was viewed as a *zoo* for all religious *nuts* that ended up in the New World.

Roger Williams was a man who held strong personal conviction about the one “true religion” that should motivate men’s lives. True religion is described in James 1:27 as “caring for widows and orphans in their distress and remaining unstained and uncontaminated by the world.” He also knew that there was no valid witness of such religion existing in his time. He recognized that the church had started out as a sheepfold, but had sadly turned into a zoo.

Therefore he had the wisdom to begin a government in his colony which accepted all religions – no matter “which side of the head one parted his hair” (or even if parted down the middle and tied back in a pony tail, or even the growing of the beard, for some

strange reason!). His Rhode Island government later became a forerunner of the pattern for the United States government when it was later established. A man would be allowed to be free to believe and to worship according to his conscience.

Sadly enough, those first freedoms are eroding quickly in these modern times. They did not have buses in the old days to bus the children great distances into the cities to learn the *wisdom of the world*, so parents were still free to pass on the knowledge and beliefs that they felt best for their own child. They had no such idea as *public* school or college until the Organized Religion in America with its strong governmental influence brought in the concept of compulsory education regulated by the government. Eventually, state taxes were forced upon every citizen along with mandatory requirements of what would be taught. Today, public schools are a hotbed for every kind of evil peer pressure that undoes the good morals and decent path that parents try to teach their children. Instead, state-controlled education leaves the citizen no options as to what the state uniformly and unalterably teaches each parent’s child, as if they and we were all the same. Allowing this substantial interference in the personal liberties of parents — the very choices of what goes into their children by example and by indoctrination — is just *one example* of the bad fruit of allowing religion to influence secular government.

Roger Williams had prophetic insight. It has not been heeded. Is there room for the insights of the Roger Williamses of today? Who will give ear to them? Will the state-enforced standards of *religious correctness* become the rule of the day?

This man Roger Williams, who saw no valid religious expression that reflected the *primitive pattern* for which the separatists sought, gave up the struggle and was content to wait for those who would be born later on down the road in this nation he helped to establish. Will we allow them room? **h**

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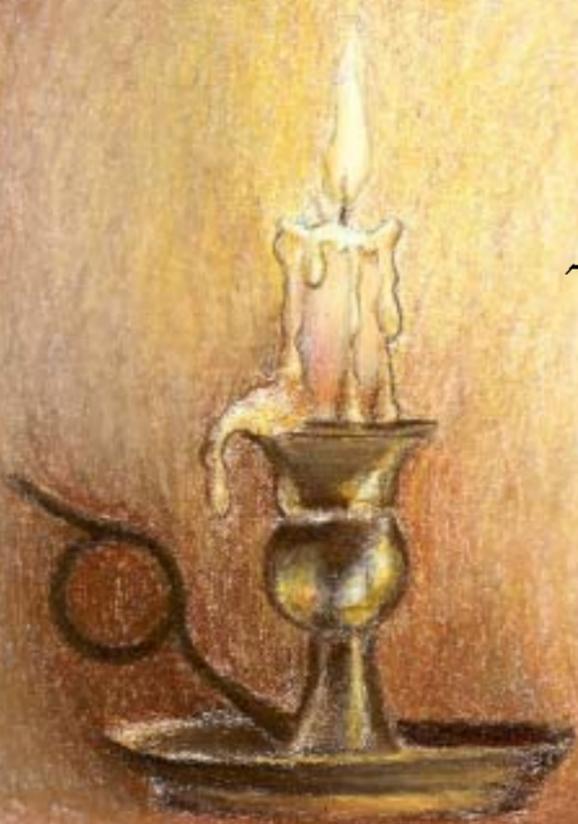


TO:

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*“...as one small candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled will shine unto many...”*