

# Puritan New England



God Almighty in His most holy and wise providence, hath so disposed of the condition of mankind, as in all times some must be rich, some poor, some high and eminent in power and dignity; others mean and in submission... For this end, we must be knit together, in this work, as one man. We must entertain each other in brotherly affection. We must be willing to abridge ourselves of our superfluities, for the supply of others' necessities. We must uphold a familiar commerce together in all meekness, gentleness, patience and liberality. We must delight in each other; make others' conditions our own; rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and community in the work, as members of the same body. So shall we keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace... For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. So that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world. We shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God... shall shame the faces of many of God's worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into curses upon us till we be consumed out of the good land whither we are going.

John Winthrop, *A Model of Christian Charity*  
(Written and delivered on board the *Arbella* on the Atlantic Ocean, 1630)

1. What is the main idea of Winthrop's sermon?
2. *A Model of Christian Charity* is a motivational speech. How is Winthrop trying to motivate his audience?
4. Why do you think Winthrop uses the image of a "city upon a hill"? What does it imply about the Puritan community's sense of mission?
5. Why do American politicians continue to use the phrase "city on a hill"? What does this image still suggest about America's conception of itself?

## Think About It:

What was the Puritan's vision of a model society?

Consider the following prompt:

**In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, New England Puritans fulfilled all of their aspirations of creating a model society.**

Read each of the following statements and decide if it shows the Puritans fulfilling their aspirations or refutes their concept of a model society. Provide some explanation for your choice.

<b>Strengthens the Idea of a Model Society</b>		<b>Creates Problems for the Idea of a Model Society</b>
	Massachusetts Bay had the highest literacy rates – male and female – of any of the English colonies.	
	A unique provision of the charter permitted the government of Massachusetts Bay Company to be located in the colony rather than in England.	
	Most New England immigrants paid their own passage, travelled in families and were from the middle ranks of English society – farmers, tradesmen, carpenters, etc.	
	Puritans believed in predestination, but also admitted the existence of “visible saints” who were most likely among God’s elect.	
	The community demanded strict conformity to religious ideals and dolled out harsh punishments for infractions.	
	People in New England tended to live longer, healthier lives than colonists in other parts of America, and had larger families.	

	<p>Churches played no direct role in the civil government of New England communities. New England town meetings practiced a level of popular participation that was unprecedented in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.</p>	
	<p>New England towns surrounded a common green where neighbors' homes faced each other.</p>	
	<p>Puritans emphasized individual Bible study.</p>	
	<p>Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson were banished from Massachusetts for religious dissent.</p>	
	<p>The Puritan Revolution allowed Oliver Cromwell to take over England.</p>	
	<p>Population grew steadily while immigration slowed, and the economy boomed.</p>	
	<p>Children of saints were not experiencing conversion and their children could not be baptized, prompting the Halfway Covenant.</p>	
	<p>Puritans treated Quakers with ruthless severity.</p>	
	<p>The Salem Witch trials of 1692 led to the execution of 19 accused witches.</p>	

Use what you learned from the previous exercise to complete a free-response outline.

**In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, New England Puritans fulfilled all of their aspirations of creating a model society.**

Timeframe	Critical Term(s) from Prompt
Rephrase the prompt in the form of a question (consider the prompt type).	
Brainstorming (Consider specific vocabulary terms.)	
Main Topics	

Thesis		
Evidence for 1 <sup>st</sup> main idea	Evidence for 2 <sup>nd</sup> main idea	Evidence for 3 <sup>rd</sup> main idea