

Puritanism and Government

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Who Were the Puritans?

- Religious group members in the 16th ~ 17th centuries
- Moved from England to American colonies, specifically New England
- "Puritanism: The haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy" (Mencken).

5 Basic Beliefs

- Total Depravity
- Unconditional Election
- Limited Atonement
- Irresistible Grace
- Perseverance

Government

- Two-fold theocratic government
- Legislated by the church, which follows the moral law of God through the preaching of blessings and curses found in the Bible

Puritan Theocracy

- Theocracy: a form of government in which a religion and the government are allied.
- *Theo* means “God”
- *Cracy* means “form of government”

They Rejected Christmas!

- The puritans knew that Jesus was not born on Christmas, so they rejected the date.
- The rituals of celebrating Christmas, such as feasting, drinking, and playing games were against Puritan laws.

Fines for Celebrating Christmas

Anyone who was caught celebrating Christmas would be charged 5 shillings per offense. This means if you were caught dancing, singing, and playing games, you would be charged 15 shillings.

Other Strange Puritan Laws

- Children would be executed for cursing parents
- You cannot kiss your spouse in public
- Quakers were not allowed in Boston, Massachusetts
 - First Offense: Ear Chopped Off
 - Second Offense: Other Ear Chopped Off
 - Third Offense: Hot Poker Driven Through Tongue

Works Cited

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