



1 John

Godly Love

- Godly love is self-sacrificial
- 1 John 4:9–11 and 1 Corinthians 13:1–8
- John described what love looks like.
- This was important because of what the false teachers were saying about God and love.
- In modern American culture, romantic love is typically considered an emotion rather than an action.

Godly Love

- Our modern version of “love” is fairly self-centered.
- Even loving our friends and family can have a self-centered quality to it. We only stay connected to friends who make us feel good.
- Biblical love is unconditional, selfless and giving to the point of sacrifice.
- John wrote that God’s love was “made manifest,” or made visible in God, sending His only Son into the world as a sacrifice for our sins.
- “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us” (1 John 3:16).

Godly Love

- Jesus was saying the same thing to His disciples at the Last Supper when He washed their feet.
- To love is to humble yourself and serve the other person (John 13:1–35).
- Then He explicitly said it: “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13)
- This is the kind of love Jesus showed us, and it’s the kind of love those who love Jesus will show to others.

Godly Love

- This is the kind of love described in 1 Corinthians 13. All the qualities of love listed there are self-sacrificial – patient, kind, not arrogant, and so on. As we go through that list, we can quickly see that agape love is others-focused, not one that insists on its own way.
- Greeks had four words for love: eros (desire), storge (an instinctive love for one's family), phileo (brotherly love or close friendship), and agape (the God kind of love).
- Only phileo and agape appear in Scripture, and it's agape that is used in these passages.

Godly Love

- Agape is specifically used of love of God (whom you could never repay) and love of the poor (who could never repay you). No amount of repayment should enter an agape relationship.
- A godly spouse does good things for his or her partner without expecting anything in return. A godly friend doesn't do an unkind thing to get back at a friend for a wrongdoing.
- Godly relationships are about choosing to love and serve others, regardless of whether they "deserve" it. None of us deserved Christ's sacrificial love for us.

Godly Love

- Agape love is a love that can only come from God.
- It's not natural human "love."
- It's not an impulse generated by feelings.
- It's an exercise of the will, a deliberate choice.
- When God commands us to love our enemies, He's not telling us to have good feelings about them but to choose to act in a loving way toward them.

Godly Love

- This is what it means to be a follower of Jesus, to love others as He did.
- We can do all the “religious stuff” in the world, but it means nothing if it’s done without self-sacrificing love (1 Corinthians 13:1–3).
- As believers, agape love must be central to everything we do for our friends, family, neighbors, church and even our enemies (Matthew 5:44; 1 Corinthians 16:14).

Abiding in God

- Abiding in God means abiding in agape love
- 1 John 4:12–16 and Galatians 5:1, 13–26
- Our faith isn't just about believing in a theological concept; it's about fellowship with God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- When we abide in Christ and His Spirit dwells in us, we live in agape love because God is love.
- If we abide in God and God is love, then we abide in love.

Abiding in God

- Obviously, none of us is perfect at loving others. We all fall short sometimes.
- But in general, if we really know God, we will live in His love for the world. The focus in this passage is on abiding in God/love. “Abide” is used six times in these five verses.
- This agape kind of love is not just something we do here and there, like random acts of kindness.
- It's not something we do when we feel like it or when it's convenient. It's a way of life. It's day-in, day-out, choosing to love others, even when it's hard.

Abiding in God

- This is why John wrote that God's love is "perfected" in us. This doesn't mean believers will love others perfectly.
- When we love God and one another, God's love reaches its goal. It doesn't mean God needs us to experience love fully. God was completely satisfied in relationship with Himself, the perfect communion of the three persons of the Trinity, before He created us. He didn't need to create us to be complete.
- Yet He created us out of His great love. Then, when our sin broke that relationship, out of His great love, He sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice.

Abiding in God

- When we abide in love with God and others, we are fulfilling God's purpose for His creation.
- Because that's what God's consummated kingdom will be like, a place where everyone loves God and one another in perfect unity.
- This is why Jesus said the whole law can be summed up by loving God and loving others.
- When we abide in love with God and others, we are fulfilling God's purpose for His creation.

Abiding in God

- Because that's what God's consummated kingdom will be like, a place where everyone loves God and one another in perfect unity.
- This is why Jesus said the whole law can be summed up by loving God and loving others.
- When we abide in love with God and others in the here and now, we are living as if we were in God's perfect consummated kingdom even though we're in a fallen world.
- We're bringing a taste of heaven to earth.

Abide in God

- Those who abide in God have no need to fear the Day of Judgment
- 1 John 4:17–21
- John returned to a point he had previously made, that believers who abide in Christ can be assured of their salvation.
- The false teachers had made them doubt their salvation, but John assured them they could have confidence before God in the Day of Judgment.

Abide in God

- This is one of those passages that is often taken out of context, but the phrase “perfect love casts out fear” has a very specific context.
- “Perfect love” means love that has been “perfected” or reached its goal in us, as we just learned.
- The fear it’s talking about is very specifically the fear of punishment on the Day of Judgment.
- It is saying that when we abide in God’s love, we have no need to fear the Day of Judgment. We can be assured of our salvation.

Abide in God

- Those who love God will love others.
- Someone who hates his brother doesn't really love God; he just says he does.
- John used simple logic again – if you don't love your brother whom you can see, how can you love God whom you can't see?
- More deeply than that, we are only able to love because God first loved us.
- Love comes from God. Those who know God will love. It's really that simple.

Abide in God

- This doesn't mean we have to be perfect at loving people.
- Loving people is hard! It can be messy and complicated.
- Some people are hard to love. Sometimes we must have "tough love."
- Some people are ungrateful for our love.
- Some will take advantage of it.

Abide in God

- We won't do it perfectly, but that's not what "perfect love" means in this context. It means that abiding in God means abiding in the God kind of love.
- Not the feel good, emotional, me-centered "love" of our culture, but true, agape, self-sacrificing, others-focused love.
- The "washing feet" kind of love. The "loving your enemies" kind of love. The "even when they don't deserve it" kind of love.
- The kind of love Jesus has for me. If I accept that kind of love from Jesus, I should show the same to others.



Lessons from Thanksgiving

Spiritual Lessons

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

- The Pilgrims valued their religious freedom and were willing to endure hardship in order to come to this country and freely worship.
- Among the early Pilgrims was a group of Separatists who were members of a religious movement that broke from the Church of England during the 16th and 17th centuries.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

- In 1606 William Brewster led a group of Separatists to Leiden (in the Netherlands) to escape religious persecution in England.
- After living in Leiden for more than ten years, some members of the group voted to emigrate to America to escape the decadence of the Old World and experience religious freedom.

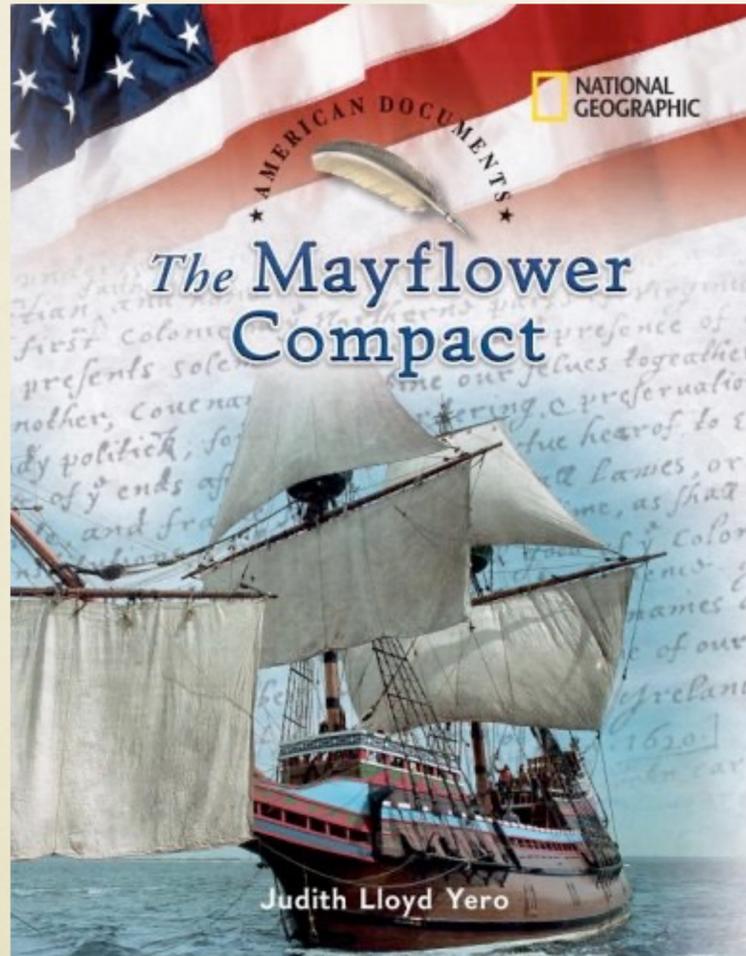
THE GOSPEL

“Last and not least, they cherished a great hope and inward zeal, or at least of making some way towards it, for the propagation and advance of the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in the remote parts of the world, even though they should be but stepping stones to others in the performance of so great a work.”

William Bradford

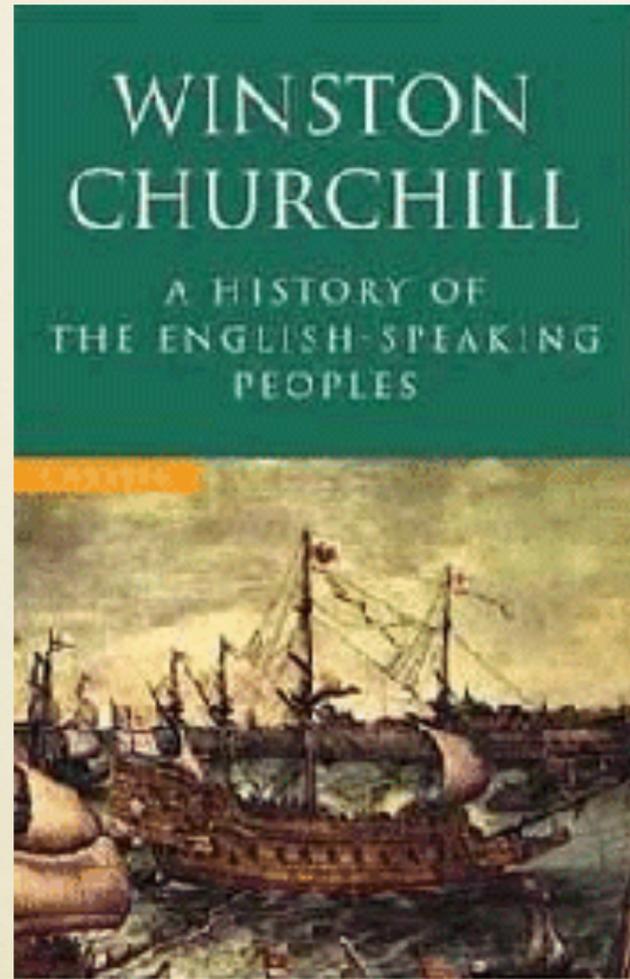
Political Lessons

MAYFLOWER COMPACT



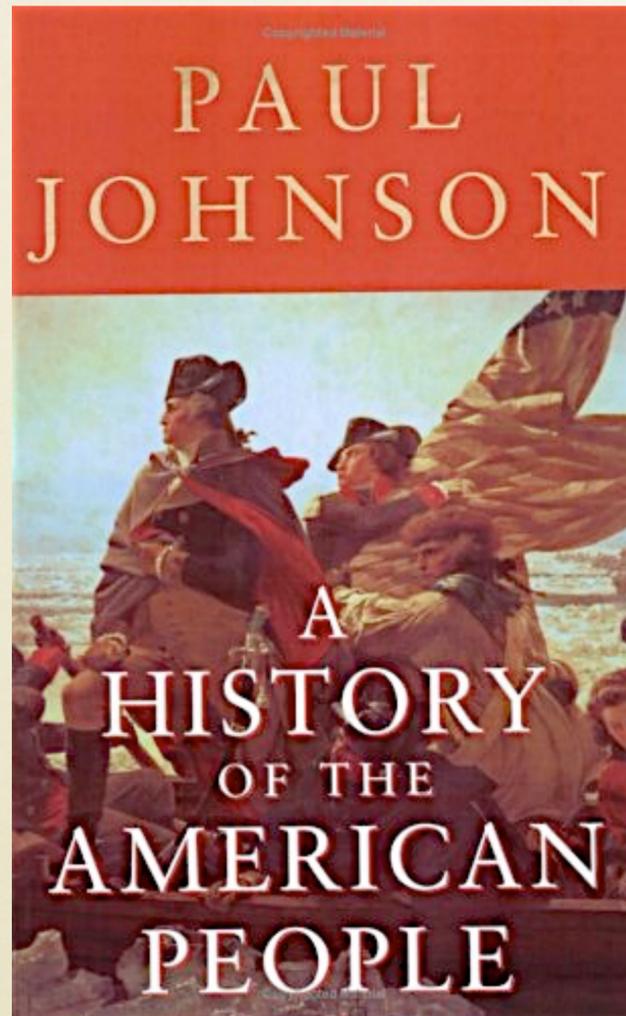
- The Mayflower Compact was the first great constitutional document and is often called “The American Covenant.”
- It set forth principles of self-government for the first time more than 150 years before our U.S. Constitution.

WINSTON CHURCHILL



Winston Churchill said the Pilgrims “drew up a solemn compact that is one of the most remarkable documents in history, a spontaneous covenant for political organization.”

PAUL JOHNSON



“What was remarkable about this particular contract was that it was not between a servant and a master, or a people and a king, but between a group of like-minded individuals and each other, with God as a witness and symbolic co-signatory.”

PURITAN COVENANTS

- There had been no written Constitution in England. The British common law was a mostly oral tradition.
- The Puritans determined to anchor their liberties on the written page, a tradition taken from the Bible.

PURITAN COVENANTS

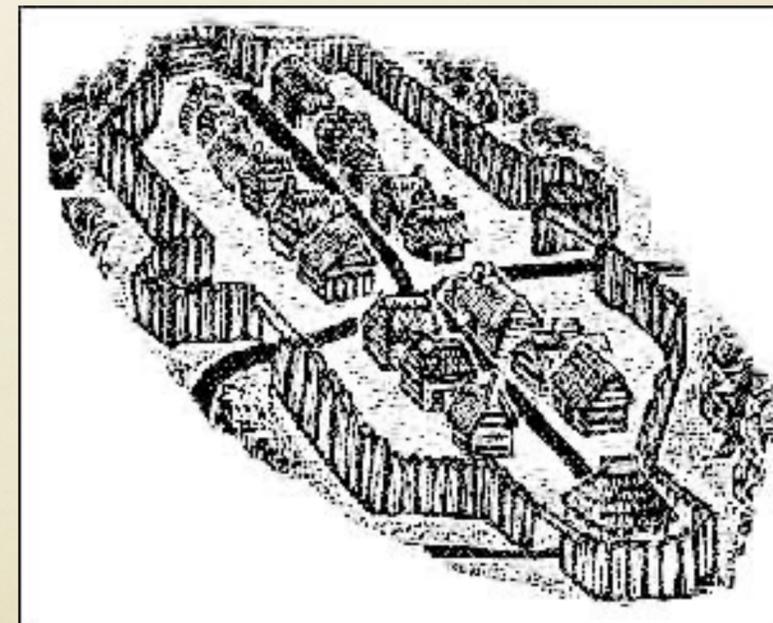


The Body of Liberties (1641) contained 98 separate protections of individual rights, including: due process of law, equal protection, trial by a jury of peers, and prohibitions against cruel and unusual punishment.

Economic Lessons

COLLECTIVE SYSTEM

- After the first year, the colony foundered because of the collective economic system. Settlers worked only for the joint partnership and were fed out of the common stores.
- Land and houses were the joint property of the merchants and colonists.



FREE MARKET SYSTEM

- William Bradford, seeing the failure of communal farming, instituted what today would be called free enterprise innovations.
- Bradford assigned plots of land to each family to work, and the colony began to flourish.
- Colonists were challenged to better themselves and their land, working to their fullest capacity.

Abraham

Lincoln

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

- Sarah Josepha Hale convinced Abraham Lincoln to declare a national day of thanksgiving.
- Lincoln's Thanksgiving Proclamation came at a pivotal point in Lincoln's spiritual life. The battle of Gettysburg occurred 3 months earlier.
- Lincoln committed his life to Christ while walking among the graves at Gettysburg.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

“When I left Springfield, I asked the people to pray for me. I was not a Christian. When I buried my son, the severest trial of my life, I was not a Christian. But when I went to Gettysburg and saw the graves of thousands of our soldiers, I then and there consecrated myself to Christ.”

Reply to Illinois clergyman

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

“We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious Hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

“of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us. It behooves us then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.”

CONCLUSION

- During this Thanksgiving season, let's return to the wisdom of the Pilgrims.
- They valued their religious freedom and were willing to endure hardship in order to come to this country and freely worship.

CONCLUSION

- They also valued their political freedom and drafted the Mayflower Compact in recognition of God's sovereign hand in their lives.
- Let us thank God for these freedoms and be willing to defend them against all who would seek to take them away.