

# Why We Should Study the Puritans

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[ 0 : 00 ] So, this is me, the introducer. This is a unique situation to be in, introducing myself. I just want to, you know me, administer via. A couple of things I wanted to say.

First of all, I want to thank Dr. Packer and me for being... Yay! I also want to thank you for...

This has been an inspiring reading for me. The administrivia is... Today's thought for the day is...

We have book club coming up. So, does everybody know what the title of the book is?

No. Unbroken. Unbroken, which can be purchased at... Regent of the Storm. Is it in the library program you just said? I doubt it, because I'm giving you months of notice, because I'm a teacher. You could read it twice. I'll read it now. And you could buy it now and share it with a friend and encourage them to read it. And if you're squeamish, I've been told to skip the war years, which is hell. Skip the war years.

[ 1 : 06 ] Parsley, you don't like. Yeah, skip the bits you don't like. Skip the whole 20th century.

Yeah, I skipped much of my degree that I didn't like. I'm pleased to agree with that.

Well, I actually changed my major so I didn't have to do statistics in my undergraduate degree. Are you related to who Richmond was named after? By any chance?

No. But thank you. Yeah. It's possible. I mean, I do aspire to be the unknown only heir of the Earl of Richmond, but I think it's highly unlikely.

Okay, the second thing I wanted to remind you, just notify you, is that Michael, our very faithful and dedicated refreshment person, has committed to helping us until the end of the year.

We need someone to replace him. So if you could think about, as we move into the Puritans, inspired to dedicate your lives to service, feel free to talk to me, and it would be great.

[ 2 : 03 ] Thank you. And Michael will let whoever is going to join the team know how a rewarding and actually doable task that they're going to sign on the dotted line for for the rest of their lives.

No, no, we just invented you for five years. I think in the world we're glad I see. That's another exciting benefit. All right.

With no further ado, let me start by saying, when you pray, rather let your heart be without words than your words without heart.

You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you. Or, prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer.

These are three of my favorite quotes from John Bunyan. And if that doesn't inspire you to read the Puritans, I'm hoping that our little talk will.

[ 3 : 19 ] So let's just take a moment to pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for this opportunity to gather together. I pray that you will give us open hearts and wise words to learn what you would have us to learn today.

And be ever mindful of those around us. In Jesus' name, amen. All right. So. What do you do when you're asked to speak on a subject with an internationally renowned theologian who spent 50 years studying the subject?

You quote him. So today, what I have, what I've tried to do is to, to draw from some of the many, many fascinating and, and, uh, learned and informative things that Dr. Packer has written on the Puritans and try to put it into a brief presentation about some of the things that we can learn from the Puritans.

It'll be a shorter presentation than usual because the great opportunity then is to, to talk to Dr.

Packer about those ideas. So I just want to give you a flavor of the Puritans and around the theme that I've chosen is what we can learn.

And the book that I drew on mostly is A Quest for Godliness, the Puritan Vision of the Christian Life by Dr. Packer. So let's talk about what was Puritism.

[ 5 : 08 ] Puritanism was at heart a spiritual movement passionately concerned with God and godliness. It began with William Tyndall, the Bible translator, Luther's contemporary, a generation before the word Puritan was coined.

And it continued to the latter years of the 17th century, some decades after the word Puritan had fallen out of use. Puritanism was essentially a movement for church reform, pastoral renewal and evangelism, and spiritual revival.

And in addition, indeed, as a direct expression of a zeal for God's honor, it was a worldview. A totally Christian philosophy, in intellectual terms, as only Dr. Packer can say this, in intellectual terms, a Protestantized and updated medievalism, and in terms of spirituality, a reform to monasticism outside the cloister and away from monkish vows.

The Puritan goal was to complete what England's Reformation began, to finish reshaping Anglican worship, to establish, to introduce effective church discipline into reshaping Anglican worship, to introduce effective discipline into Anglican parishes, to establish righteousness in the political, domestic, and socioeconomic fields, and to convert all Englishmen, English people, English, to a vigorous evangelical faith.

[ 6 : 57 ] So why should we study them, if that doesn't tell you enough? Dr. Packer has a wonderful analogy, and I just, maybe I think in pictures, I hope that you do too, I hope this helps you.

He used the analogy of the redwoods, and he said, some of them are over 360 feet tall, and some trunks are more than 60 feet around.

They don't have much foliage for their size, all their strength is in huge trunks, with foot-thick bark, that rise sheer for almost half their height, before branching out.

Some of them have actually been burned, but are still alive and growing. They dwarf you, making you feel your smallness, as scarcely anything else does. California's redwoods, make you think of the English Puritans, another breed of giants, who in our time, have begun to be newly appreciated. Between 1550 and 1700, they lived unfriiled lives, in which, speaking spiritually, strong growth and resistance to fire and storm, were what counted.

[ 8 : 12 ] As redwoods attract the eye, because they overtop other trees, so the mature holiness, and seasoned fortitude of great Puritans, shine before us as a beacon light.

They overtop the stature of the majority of Christians, in most eras, and certainly so in this age, of crushing urban collectivism, when Western Christians sometimes feel, and often look like ants, in the anthill, and puppets on a string.

So, and this is me now, why wouldn't we study the Puritans? And so I did some reading, of people, and some reading of the Puritans, and I think there are three, three things that we look at.

One is that their literature is long, it's not short. Imagine 900 pages. So, it takes dedication. It's written in Old English, so it takes application.

And it's not easy. You have to think about it. But I think, you know, the thing probably, and this is my own personal first reaction, was just the, what do you think of when you think of a Puritan?

[ 9 : 31 ] Yeah. Funny people in funny clothes, doing funny things, and saying no a lot. So, that's me, this is Packer.

the belief that the Puritans, even if they were, in fact, responsible citizens, were comic and pathetic, in equal degree, being naive, and superstitious, primitive, and gullible, superstitious, over-scrupulous, majoring in minors, and unable, or unwilling to relax, die-hards.

What could these zealots give us, that we need? The answer in one word, is maturity.

Maturity is a compound, of wisdom, goodwill, resilience, and creativity. The Puritans, exemplified maturity. We don't.

We are spiritual dwarves. It has been, excuse me, it has been said, that North American Protestants, Protestantism, is manipulative, success-oriented, self-indulgent, sentimental, and blatantly, 3,000 miles wide, and half an inch deep.

[ 10 : 49 ] That was, that was Dr. Packer, quoting someone else. The Puritans, by contrast, as a body, were giants. They were great souls, serving a great God.

In them, clear-headed passion, and warm-hearted compassion combined. They were visionary and practical, idealistic and realistic, goal-oriented, and methodical.

They were great believers, great hoppers, great doers, and great sufferers. But their sufferings, both sides of the ocean, in old England, from the authorities, and in New England, from the elements, season and ripen them, till they gained a stature, stature, that was nothing short of heroic.

ease and luxury, such as our affluence, brings us today, do not make for maturity. Hardship and struggle, however, do.

And the Puritans' battles, against the spiritual, in the climactic wilderness, which God set them, produced a virility of character, undaunted and unsinkable, rising above discouragement and fears, for which the true precedent and model, are men like Moses and Nehemiah, Peter after Pentecost, and the Apostle Paul.

[12:17] So now I want to talk about, a series of lessons, that we can learn, from the Puritans. So the first lesson, is the integration of their, into their daily lives.

Their Christianity was all embracing, so their living was all of a piece. Nowadays we would call, their lifestyle holistic. All awareness, activity, enjoyment, all use of creatures, and development, of personal powers, and creativity, is integrated, in the single purpose, of honoring God, by appreciating, all his gifts, and making everything, holiness, to the Lord.

There was no distinction, for them, between sacred, and secular. All creation, so far as they were concerned, was sacred. In all activities, whatever kind, must be sanctified.

That is done, to the glory of God. So in their, heavenly minded ardor, the Puritans, became men and women, of order, matter of fact, and down to earth, prayerful, purposeful, practical, seeing the life whole, they integrated, contemplation with action, worship with work, labor with rest, love of God, with contemplation, of action, sorry, contemplation, with action, love of neighbor, and of self, personal and social identity, and the widespread, spectrum, of relational responsibilities, with each other, in a thoroughly conscious, and thought out way.

In this thoroughness, they were extreme, that is to say, far more thorough than we are, but in their blending, of the whole wide range, of Christian duty, set forth in scripture, they were, scripture, they were eminently balanced.

[14:12] They lived, by method, planning, and proportioning, their time with care. Not so much, to keep out the bad things, but as to make sure, they got all the good, and important things, in.

Necessary wisdom, then is now, for busy people. We today, who tend to live, unplanned lives, that ran, a random series, of non-communicating compartments, and who hence, feel swamped, and distracted, most of the time, could learn much, from the Puritans, at this point.

Second, their lesson for us, is in the quality, of their spiritual existence. In the Puritans, communion with God, as Jesus Christ, was central, so holy scripture, was supreme.

By scripture, as God's word, of instruction, about divine, human relationships, they sought to live.

And here too, they were met, conscientiously methodical. Knowing themselves, to be creatures, of thought, affection, and will, and knowing, that God's way, to the human heart, the will, is by the human head, the mind, the Puritans, practiced meditation, discursive, and systematic.

You have to ask, Dr. Packer, about discursive meditation. I did, I know I did. On the whole range, of biblical truth, as they thought, as they sought, to apply themselves, Puritan meditation, on scripture, was modeled, on the Puritan sermon.

[15:48] In meditation, the Puritan sought, would seek, to search, and challenge his heart, stir his affections, to hate sin, and love righteousness, and encourage himself, with God's promises, just as Puritan preachers, would do from the pulpit.

This rational, resolute, passionate piety, was conscientious, without becoming obsessive, long oriented, without lapsing, into legalism, and expressive, of Christian liberty, without any shameful, lurches into license.

The Puritans, knew that scripture, is the unalterable, rule of holiness, and they never, allowed themselves, to forget it. Knowing also, the unal, knowing also, of the dishonesty, and deceitfulness, of the human, the fallen human heart, they cultivated, humility, self-suspicion, as abiding attitudes, and examined themselves, regularly, for spiritual blind spots, and lurking inward evils.

They may not be called, morbid, or introspective, on this account, however. On the contrary, they found the discipline, of self-examination, by scripture, which is not the same thing, as introspection, let us know, followed by the discipline, of confessing, and forsaking sins, and renewing, one's gratitude, to Christ, for his pardoning mercy, to be a great source, of inner peace, and joy.

The third lesson, we can learn, from the Puritans, is their passion, for effective action. Through the Puritans, like the rest of the human, though the Puritans, like the rest of the human race, had their dreams, of what could, and should be, they were decidedly, not the kind of people, that we would call dreamy.

[ 17 : 40 ] They had no time, for the idleness, of lazy, or passive persons, who leave it to others, to change the world. They were men of action, in the pure reformed mold, crusading activists, without a jot, of self-reliance, workers for God, who depended on, utterly on God, to work in, and through them, and always, who always gave God, the praise for anything, they did in retrospect, that in retrospect, seems to have been right.

They were gifted men, who prayed earnestly, that God would enable them, to use their powers, not for self-display, but for his praise. None of them, wanted to be revolutionaries, though some of them, reluctantly became such.

All of them, however, longed to be, effective change agents, for God, wherever, shifts from sin, to sanctity, were called for. Fourth, the Puritans, give us lessons, on the idea, of church renewal. To be sure, renewal was not a word, that they used, they spoke, spoke only of reformation, and reform, which would suggest, to our 20th century minds, a concern, that is limited, to the externals, of the church.

Orthodoxy, order, worship forms, and disciplinary code. But when the Puritans, preached, published, and prayed, for reformation, they had in mind, not indeed less than this, but far more.

[ 19 : 15 ] The essence, of this kind of reformation, was enrichment, of understanding, of God's truth. Arousal, of affections, Godward. Increase, of ardor, in one's devotions, and more love, joy, and firmness, of Christian purpose, in one's calling, and personal life.

In line with this, was the ideal, for the church, that was through, reformed clergy, all the members, of each congregation, would be reformed. Brought, that is, by God's grace, without discord, into a state, that would be called, revival.

So as, to be truly, and thoroughly converted, theologically, orthodox, and sound, spiritually alert, and expectant, in character terms, wise and steady, ethically enterprising, and obedient, and humbly, but joyously, sure of their salvation.

This was the goal, at which, Puritan pastoral ministry, aimed throughout, both in England, in English parishes, and in the gathered churches, of the congregational type, that multiplied, in the 17th century.

Fifth, the Puritans teach us, to see, and feel, the transitoriness, of this life.

[ 20 : 39 ] To think of it, with all its richness, as essentially, the gymnasium, and dressing room, where we are prepared, for heaven, and to regard, readiness to die, as the first step, in learning to live.

Because of their own, suffering and persecution, as well as, the age in which, they lived, pain and death, were their constant companions.

They would have been lost, had they not, gotten their eyes, on heaven, and known themselves, as pilgrims, traveling home, to that celestial city.

The Puritans' awareness, that in the midst of life, we are in death, just one step, from eternity, gave them, a deep seriousness, calm, yet passionate, with regard, to the business, of living, that Christians, today, rarely manage, to match.

And the knowledge, that God would eventually, decide without consulting them, when their work, on earth was done, brought energy, for the work itself, while they were still being, given time, to get on with it.

[ 22 : 02 ] The Puritans, also taught us, from their knowledge, of man, sin, and scripture. The Puritan writers, in the Puritan writers, mental habits, fostered by sober scholarship, were linked, with a flaming zeal, for God, and a minute acquaintance, with the human heart.

All this work, displays this fusion, of gifts and graces. In thought, and outlook, they were radically, God-centered. Their appreciation, of God's sovereign majesty, was profound, and the reverence, and handling, his written word, was deep, and profound.

They were patient, thorough, and methodical, in searching the scriptures, and the grasp, of the various threads, and linkages, and the web, of revealed truth, was firm, and clear.

They understood, most richly, the ways of God, with men, the glory of Christ, the mediator, and the work, of the spirit, in the believer, in the church.

And their knowledge, was no mere, theoretical orthodoxy. They sought, to reduce, to practice, all that God taught them. They yoked, their consciences, to his word, disciplining, themselves, to bring, all activities, under the scrutiny, of scripture, and to demand, a theological, as distinct, from a merely, pragmatic, justification, for everything, that they did.

[ 23 : 37 ] Knowing God, the Puritans, also knew man. They saw him, as in origin, a noble being, made in God's image, to rule God's earth.

But now, tragically, brutally, brutally, brutally, and brutalized, by sin. They viewed sin, in the triple light, of God's law, his lordship, and his holiness.

And they saw it, as transgression, and guilt, as rebellion, and usurpation, as uncleanness, corruption, and inability, for good.

Seeing this, and knowing the ways, whereby the spirit, brings sinners, to faith, and new life, in Christ, and leads saints, on the one hand, to grow into their Savior's image, and on the other, to learn their total dependence, on grace.

The great Puritans, became super pastors. From scripture, they map, the often, bewildering terrain, of the life of faith, and fellowship with God, with great thoroughness, and their acuteness, and wisdom, in diagnosing, diagnosing spiritual malaise, and setting out, thereby, appropriate, biblical remedies, was outstanding.

[ 24 : 57 ] They remain, the classic, pastors, of Protestantism. So, in closing, the Puritans, are giant, compared, with us.

Giants, whose help we need, if we ever are to grow. Learning, from the heroes, of the Christian past, is in any case, an important dimension, in edifying, of the edifying fellowship, for which the proper name, is the communion of saints.

The great Puritans, though dead, still speak to us, through their writings, and say things to us, that we badly need to hear, in this present time. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Is that your speech, you're made up, or Dr. Packer?

This is Dr. Packer. Meat packaged, in a 20, 25 minute, plan. Wow, that's fantastic. So, at this time, I would like to ask, if there are any questions.

[ 26 : 07 ] Not directed, to me. No. I heard our slang speech, got affected by the Puritans, like when people wanted to, say something derogatory, you could only be, using religious words, and that's where people, tend to take the Lord's name, in vain, in our culture now.

And so, our language, slang, got affected, in that historical, buttress, with Puritan, possibly, that's what I heard. I don't know, that's a new one for me, but how did Puritanism, affect what people use, with slang, and swear words, and stuff, that we use, that we hear today?

I wonder, if it did at all, or not. I think the right answer, John, really is, that, 17th century, popular speech, which is, the milieu, in which, Puritanism, well, Puritanism, was leading, the culture, it really did, for a time, it's a long, long way, from where we are, and, I can't, think, of, particular, instances, in which, Puritan, slang, has passed, into, 21st century, slang, time, I, I, think, though, it is, it is true to say, that, the Puritans, pioneered, the development, of, a way, of, teaching, with simplicity, that, simply, hadn't been seen, before, that was, the result, of some of them, being, extraordinarily, gifted, for simple speech, and,

John Bunyan, who's been referred to, is the supreme, example, of this, to my mind, and, well, if I simply tell you, that I don't, know, a better, cross-sectional, presentation, of the Christian life, than Pilgrim's Progress, and, I reckon, to read, Pilgrim's Progress, once a year, myself, I never get, tired of it, indeed, at each, journey, through it, I feel, I'm seeing, deeper, into it, that fact, perhaps, will, suggest, something, to your pure minds, Bunyan, doesn't, use, slang, but he does, use, what then, was colloquial, idiom, and yet, it's all, in, how shall I say, it, excellent, excellent grammar, and style, there's no, cheapening, of anything, in, human reality, as a result, of,

Bunyan, as Bunyan's, talking about it, in colloquial terms, I think it helps, you know, John, to, to, to distinguish, between, colloquialism, and slang, colloquialism, often, deepens, and sharpens, our vision, of the things, we're talking about, and I think, that's, what you actually have, in Bunyan's, Pilgrim's Progress, but slang, cheapens, regularly, makes, everything seem, casual, and, well, I've been told, there are going to be, a number of questions, there's another talk, there it goes, so, yes, this is the best thing, you've said this morning, thank you so much, no more, she laughed, well, they sounded like, wonderful people, the way you described them, but I don't think, history found them, easy to live with, in fact, the whole idea, of mentioning,

[ 30 : 51 ] Puritanism, calls up, images, of judgmentalism, of wanting to inflict, their lifestyle, and beliefs, on other people, we do have, examples of this, in the Republic, that was established, in England, and, they were hard, to live with, so, all this bad press, where did that come from, Dr. Packer, what made them, so hard, to live with?

Oh, the fact, that they, may I put it this, like this, they wore, their standards, on their sleeves, lives, and, by doing so, made other people, feel, uneasy, about the way, that they were living, you don't, have to, have someone, actually, vocally, condemning you, to be made, to feel, uneasy, when in fact, you're living, a life, that merits, a bad conscience, the presence, of the Puritans, just as human beings, alongside you, being natural, in their own terms, makes you feel, that you're being, condemned, and, that, is sufficient, I think, to explain, why it was, that these folk, well, from the first, were called, Puritans, it was, always, you know, a term, of abuse, a term, of mockery, these are the people, who think of themselves, as pure, ha ha ha, but, but that's, a defiant reaction, from people, with, well, consciences, that are, somewhat, defiled, but who don't, want to change, who rather, want to defy, the influence, that they feel, is encouraging them, to change, and that's, the state of mind, with which, we're very familiar, today,

I'm not saying, that there weren't, by Jove, you're right, I'm not saying, that there weren't, awkward, Puritans, difficult to live with, and so on, every, good thing, gets corrupted, by somebody, who thinks, of themselves, as supporting it, yes, you know what I mean, but, the great Puritans, were, not, difficult, to live with, great Puritans, yes, Bunyan, himself, Richard Baxter, John Owen, a long list, in fact, that's just, the beginning, of the list, but, you see, my conscience, is being pricked, by, and, so I better, stop talking, about that, Martin had a question, well actually, you've begun, to answer my question, the final answer, to the previous question,

I was going to say, that we've heard of, you, you may have talked, about the Puritans, but not mentioned, any names, except John Bunyan, but now you've mentioned, Richard Baxter, John Owen, perhaps, I'm going to ask, for a few more names, of prominent Puritans, how about a reading letter, well, I'll, I can give you a few, but, there'll probably be names, you've never heard before, Thomas Goodwin, William Gurnall, who should come next, John Owen, John, I mentioned, well I mentioned, John Owen, but I'll mention him again, because he's so, outstandingly good, and, how can I, well, yes, I'll say this, he was acquainted, with King Charles II, and they were, on conversational terms, with each other, Owen,

I think, is the only Puritan, of whom that was, that can be said, but, there it is, that's how it was, and Owen was, vice chancellor, of Oxford University, at one stage, and he wanted, some more names, William Perkins, was the pioneer Puritan, nobody nowadays, seems to know, anything about him, Richard Greenham, was the pioneer, pastor, he hadn't got, the majesty, of theology, that, Perkins had, and some of the others, that I've mentioned, but, he was, absolutely, brilliant, in ministering, to troubled, and bewildered, consciences, and bringing people, into, out of, spiritual muddle, and distress, into Christian assurance, many of the Puritans, actually excelled, at doing that, it's taking, substantially, what they're doing, is taking people, into the reality, and the dimensions, of repentance,

[ 36 : 21 ] Thomas Manton, now, is someone, you might have heard of, Thomas Watson, is someone, you might have heard of, that's my half dozen, I think, and, for fear of, yes, exactly, for fear, for fear of, this, conscience, which, rises, every, every now and then, I, I, I'll ask simply, for the next question, and, the, the, Puritans, very strongly held beliefs, didn't make them pacifists, and I wonder, if you would comment, on, the, Puritan, royalist, wars, in which, John Bunyan, took part, I, you know, well, start, with, the, the fact, that the Puritans, believed in the unity, of the Bible, and they didn't find, the New Testament, challenging, in any way, the fact, that, occasionally, there, are such realities, as wars, of the Lord, that is, wars, in which,

God's, God's, values, justice, qualities, of that kind, were at stake, and, it was proper, therefore, to be fighting, the, the Old Testament, has quite a bit, to say, about, that, kind, of war, when, Israel, invaded, Canaan, summoned, by God, and, enabled, by God, through the, miraculous, crossing, of the Jordan, and then, what they were doing, in fact, was acting, as, God's, agents, in temporal, judgment, on, on communities, that, again, the Old Testament, tells us, in some detail, communities, that were, idolatrous, and ungodly, in practice, in, ethics, and, culture, so, and so forth, and, because, they didn't see, any, any,

New Testament, challenge, to any of that, they took, for granted, that there would be, times, when the cause, of God, and truth, would require, war, military action, as, the lesser, evil, in a, messy, situation, so, what was the Civil War, about?

It was about, the fact, that, the king, was, seen, as, disregarding, the rights, of his subjects, uh, uh, mottos, like, no taxation, without representation, uh, broke surface, at that time, in fact, this, was, uh, a great shift, from, the medieval, pattern, which, had operated, up to that point, whereby, the

king said, what was, going to, be done, uh, and, uh, the king, fixed, the money, which, uh, his subjects, were going to, provide, in taxes, and the subjects, had, nothing to say, I mean, there was no space, in the cultural pattern, for them to say anything, they just had to do, what they were told, and, that was, thought, appropriate, until, uh, Puritan, Bible study, led, people, to, question, the, appropriateness, of, taxation, without, representation, and, that's, basically, what the civil war, was about, the king, raised an army, in order to enforce, the old pattern, parliament, raised an army, in order to stop, him doing so, uh, my conscience, I think, will prevent me, from saying, anything more, about that, but, uh, but that, that is how, the Puritans, understood, uh, the war, that they, what they found, themselves involved in, they were fighting, for God's cause, and righteousness, because, justice, all round, is part, of, God's, ideal pattern, so they thought, and, so they behaved, and, uh, here comes my conscience, just as you expected, yes, next question,

[ 41 : 31 ] George Herbert, someone like, an angling, like George Herbert, would have, no doubt, been shaped, by Puritanism, by the, the times, and the, the flavor of the culture, but how did he differ, from, as an example, how would someone like, uh, Herbert differ, from the Puritans?

Well, in terms of, his, uh, aesthetic, that is, his understanding, of beauty, and, and good literature, good poetry, and so on, um, no difference, at all, um, uh, Herbert, was, especially gifted, at that, uh, in, in that department, he left Cambridge University, and became, uh, a country, country clergyman, uh, out of a sense, of, divine priority, pressing on him, and, as a country clergyman, well, he wrote, wonderful poetry, the simplicity, of it, and the profundity, of it, takes our breath away, just as it did, in fact, for at least one Puritan, who read Herbert, and regarded him, as the best poet ever, that was Richard Baxter,

Baxter, can't say enough, in praise, of Herbert, um, Herbert, then, produces this, uh, poetry of devotion, it's all, all his poetry, is poetry, of devotion, in one sense or another, um, he also, uh, wrote, for his own guidance, as much as anything, um, a brief, well, a brief book, a long essay, entitled, The Country, Past, uh, no, The Country Parson, that's right, which is, um, a breathtaking, breathtakingly, searching, um, a statement, of the ideal, of the single-minded, pastor, who gives himself, seven days a week, to the service, in one way or another, of his people, um, I don't know whether you have ever heard of Baxter's Reformed Pastor, it's a better known book, than Herbert's Country Parson, but if you set the two alongside each other, you will be struck, by the way in which, um, the, the, the, the, the principles and priorities, of pastoral ministry, as understood by Herbert, one, one, one side, and Baxter, the other, uh, do correspond, um, nothing is recorded, about Herbert, in argument, just a debate, or not, with, um,

Puritan, people with whom we would call Puritans, he simply was a quiet, country pastor, and he died young, as you probably know. All right, so we have, thank you.

Ed had a question? It's me. Oh, sorry. Sorry. Uh, Dr. Packer, I, uh, I know you touch on this in the quest for Godliness, but it might be useful to be reminded of the, the distinction in approaches to evangelizing, or evangelization, or the evangel, evangelical witness, that you touch on, the Puritan influence versus the North American, more recent tradition of the Goddard right, because it seems terribly relevant to today.

[ 45 : 22 ] Well, thank you for the question, Ed, you invite me to, um, dive into the hornet's nest, don't you? If, if, if, if, I am simple hearted enough to do that, uh, I shall get stung, so I'm not going to do it.

What I am going to do, though, is tell you, tell you how the Puritans approached what we call evangelism, as a constant commitment on the church's part.

Churches, the congregations of believers, should have, as part of their ongoing life, constant catechesis, which means, uh, use of a catechism, as a basis for instruction in two things, which were linked together, in the instruction, and in the, in the mind of the instructor, who would, who would be the clergy, the clergyman, pastor, uh, first, the truths, that Christians, are taught to live by, and secondly, the practice of living by them.

Catechisms, in the church, are documents, usually operating by question and answer, which link those two things, which are separated, so often, in Christian instruction today.

I mean, people take, uh, courses learning Christian doctrine. Yeah, but they don't learn Christian ethics, in conjunction, with the Christian doctrine.

[ 47 : 18 ] uh, they also, uh, take part in, um, study projects, on all sorts of ethical subjects, but the ethical subjects, are pursued, with lots of contemporary knowledge, but very little, theological

foundation laying.

uh, and we do need, a pattern of, regular Christian instruction, all across the board, uh, teaching, uh, teaching in, Sunday school, um, teaching in sermons, teaching in, courses, that, uh, study parties, that meet, during, meet on evenings, during the week, that kind of thing.

we need, in all of that, the pattern, of doctrine, and ethics, what you need to live by, and how you are to live by it.

um, we need that conjunction, to be highlighted, and, uh, the fact that the Puritans, always linked those two things together, whereas we don't.

That's the first, and, broadest gap, it seems to me, um, to take note of, in this whole, in this whole matter.

[ 48 : 41 ] um, then, you see, with, uh, that kind of instruction going on all the time, uh, Puritan evangelism was, uh, virtually, um, equivalent to, um, basic Christian nurture.

uh, whereas we tend to think of evangelism, as, um, well, uh, bringing people, to an initial, uh, initial confession of faith, and then, you start teaching them, after they've come to that initial confession, about the Christian life.

Well, the Puritans, simply didn't see, didn't see that, as the proper way to, to go about it. and, there's an organic quality, about, Puritan, preaching, and teaching, on, repentance, and faith, and what we call conversion, um, which, uh, is in, interesting contrast, to, what we, do, what we, um, offer, what we offer people today.

And again, um, I can, I'll refer to, to Bunyan, think of Pilgrim's Progress. It's a survey of the Christian life.

What about conversion? Well, conversion starts on page one, with, um, the man called Christian, uh, in desperation, because he's read in the Bible, that as a sinner, he's condemned.

[ 50 : 26 ] And, in most editions, it's about page 40, where he comes to the cross, uh, and, is, blessed with assurance, that his sins, are forgiven, because they've already been dealt with.

And, all that's recorded, in those first 40 pages, is, um, aspects of the quest, for that knowledge.

Quest, that is, to know that one is on track, for glory. um, um, and again, um, here you have presented to you, the organic view of the Christian life, um, which we, tend, simply, not to present, to people, in our own evangelism, and then, uh, nurture, uh, as practiced today.

Well, that, I think, is all that I'm going to allow myself to say, for fear of what might happen, if I said any more.

So, okay? Um, I'm sorry, I can't hear. Um, Dr. Packer, do you know any women, uh, Puritans, who have left any writings for us?

[ 51 : 46 ] I'm sorry, I can't hear. Do you know any women, Puritans, who have left any writings for us, to read along with the men, who have written? Well, first of all, understand the culture.

women were not expected, to be, uh, teachers. They simply, didn't, teach, in, uh, schools, and they certainly didn't teach, in the church.

And, they didn't, write, all that much. They were too busy, shaping, the life of the, the life of the family, and the household. So, there isn't very much, that I can point you to.

Um, I am, trying to think, think, uh, think of, poetesses. There were, one or two, more in New England, actually, than in Old England.

And, do you think any of those names, will come to my mind? I'm sorry. Anne Bradstreet? Yes, and, thank you so much. Anne Bradstreet, is a very good example.

[ 53 : 02 ] Um, and, can you help me again? No. No, there, there, there were two or three of them, but, um, I'm sorry, I'm, I'm a broken wreath, so let's have another question.

Pardon? Susanna Moody, too late? Yes. Well, yes. Yes. I can't say I'm acquainted with her work, so we really better, I'd better move on, haven't we?

This, uh, to say that, by the way, is not intended to sound sexist, it's just that I'd like us to make best use of time. Yes, ma'am. Uh, it's just, it's just a, a comment, is, oh, is, is, is, is women taught in the home, so, so, so some of the translators in the Bible, the people that were on the communities for the King James, they learned their Greek, people that were really good at language, would be learning that in the, the home.

So it wasn't just the man and the women, the men that were fluent in these languages, the women were, and, and that's why their sons, and probably their daughters, who created another whole generation of these wonderful pastors.

So if we start looking around in the family lives, all of these people, you'll find, there, where there's wonderful men, there are wonderful women. Sorry. No, it's, it's, it's, it's all right, what, what you say is true, and it silences my conscience, because I'm going to respond to it.

[ 54 : 39 ] You understand? Yes. The Puritans had a very clear idea of the home. Now, in the home, father is the head, head of the family.

He is the pastor of the family. He is the one who's responsible for maintaining spirit, moral and spiritual standards in the home, prayer, family prayer twice a day, actually, was the Puritan ideal, morning and evening.

And it was only within that frame that these remarkable women, and yes, you're perfectly right, there were remarkable women, who spent their strength, in the family, keeping a godly home, and teaching godliness on, how can I say it, on a, on a, in a detailed form, to the, to the children.

It was expected that the, that mother, would look after the children, their instruction, after their instruction, sorry, their religious instruction, as well as, in other ways, until the children were, of an age, for father to take them over, which would be, nine or ten, something of that kind.

But, you know, the Jesuits, have always said, give us a child, to the age of seven, and we've got him for life. Well, Puritan instruction, from mother, is, an example, actually, of that.

[ 56 : 34 ] Now, Richard Baxter, he wrote catechisms, for father, a catechism, for father to use, and he wrote a simple one, titled, the Mother's Catechism, which, was, there, for mother, to use, in teaching, young children, in their youth.

A question there. Thank you, Dr. Patti, named a few names, for the Puritans. I'm just wondering, whether Charles Wesley, is to be considered, as a part of the Puritan.

Charles Wesley? Yeah. Well, he's, there's a, yes and no, is the answer there. Um, Charles Wesley, and John, and Susanna Wesley, their mother, they, all of them, exhibited, lots of Puritan qualities.

And, it's no surprise, that that should be so, when, you realize, that, um, their, uh, well, that dad, uh, dad actually, had been, brought up, um, a non-conforming, non-conforming Christian, and became, an Anglican, by choice, at, um, years of discretion.

And, um, the, the, the, the, say, the Puritan, the Puritan, legacy is, if you think of it, as a stream, well, it was flowing, steadily, through the, Wesley understanding, of the connection, between, um, the doctrine, of godliness, and the practice, of godliness.

[ 58 : 19 ] So, that, it is, in fact, perfectly warrantable, to link, Charles Wesley, with a, Puritan, a thoroughly, Puritan, writer, of hymns, like, Isaac Watts.

and in, how shall I say it, in every really good hymn book, there are lashings, of Watts, and lashings, of Wesley, and lashings, of George, uh, sorry, lashings, of John Newton, and the rest, uh, around the, uh, around the margin, so to speak.

I have another question. Oh, sorry, were you finished? No. Don't pause too long, because I just move on. Yes, I, yes, I, I, I know. Don't breathe too deeply. Hold on.

So, Jim, your mouthpiece this morning, gave us a wonderful summary, of the reasons for the success, of your campaign, with Puritan's, which is a major contribution, to our awareness, of what went on, at that time.

But I wonder if there are any weaknesses, that can be identified. Perfection, seemed to me, to be the characteristic, that was emphasized. Did you say perfect? Perception by your mouthpiece.

[ 59 : 43 ] LAUGHTER I think that all I, all I would allow myself to say, is that Puritan weaknesses, were, simply, failures, to live up to Puritan standards.

And, I don't think, that I detect, in Puritan cultural standards, any significant weaknesses.

No, I really don't. Were you thinking, of something particular? I was thinking, of the social, and political dimension, of their activities.

In other words, many of us, have lived, in Puritan-like, congregations, which have been, extremely, assiduous, in their, following of scripture, which have alienated, or, at least, have cut themselves off, from the political, and social reality, around them.

And, of course, many Puritans, did get involved, in the politics, of the time. But it seems to me, that is, a dimension, which seems to be, to be weak, by comparison, with their, theological, and, search for holiness, emphasis, which you, sort of, let me point it out.

[ 61 : 08 ] Oh, I see what, I see what you have in mind. You're referring, to the way, in which, after the, act of uniformity, of 1662, Puritans, who were, not, in conscience, able, to contemplate, ministering, anymore, in the Church of England, this is Puritan pastors, there are about, 2000 of

them, they felt, obliged, to, gather, congregations, of their own, the government, passed, a number of, what can only be called, persecuting, acts, which authorize, magistrates, to suppress, these congregations, and, imprison, their pastors, and, there was, a little, over a quarter, of a century, of that, before, toleration came, toleration came, in the 18, sorry, in the 1680s, with what some people, call the Glorious Revolution, well, by that time, you see, nonconformity, was established, and, it was a nonconformity, which, involved, keeping your distance, from the educational, establishment, actually, fellows, who would not, who would not, conform to the Church of England, completely, were not even admitted, to Oxford and Cambridge, during the period, of persecution, so, educationally, they were cut off, politically, they, were cut off, also, what, what, what are you thinking of, that they might, they might have got into, the vote, didn't, the vote, wasn't given, at that stage, to most of the people, in nonconforming, congregations, nonconformists, couldn't become, magistrates, because magistrates, had to, be members, of the Church of England, it, it was, it wasn't a situation, in which, sociopolitical, involvement, as such, could develop, socially, mind, the Puritans, did set standards, of respectable, middle class life, but nobody, including themselves, recognized, that that's what they were doing, if you'd asked them, what they were doing, they would say, well, we're trying to live, to the Lord, in a very, unsympathetic, and, unfriendly,

British culture, we think of it, as a bad time, and we pray, that, sooner rather than later, it'll be over, but, that's something, which has to be stressed, the marks, of the persecution, which, forced, non-conformity, to develop, independently, explain, a great deal, of the, cultural heritage, that you were talking about, of relatively, independent, congregations, making a virtue, of having nothing to do, with, society, with, wider society, politics, and, the culture, of the country, more could be said, but isn't going to be, when, King James, was, bringing, the two groups, together, which, from what I've heard, the expression, of herding cast, doesn't even, begin to, describe them, but, what were the two, say, two of the issues, that the Puritans, were fighting, with the Anglican bishops, about, in, in the production, of the Baratom, in the production, of, of, of, of, of, coming to, together, and, and, you know, the, the two issues, the big issues, that they were fighting over, well, the first, big issue, that they were fighting over, was the, the, the, establishment, of, discipline, church discipline, in Anglican congregations,

Puritans, wanted, the bishops, to enforce, a godly discipline, that is, inhibiting, in one way, or another, a spiritual, apathy, and, failure, to, how do I say it, say it, failure, failure, failure, to practice, a conscientious, version, of, of, of Anglican, of Anglican, of the Anglican, prayer book, ideal, people, they had, fought about that, for, 30 years, under Elizabeth, Elizabeth, refused, to, let her bishops, do anything, in response, to these Puritan, pleas, for discipline, women, and Elizabeth, Tudor, governor, she was, a Christian queen, according to her lights, but her lights, reflected the old pattern, whereby, the, the top people, said what was to be done, and ordinary people, had no, opportunity, no opportunity, to say anything, by way of, demurrer, or, criticism, and if they, if ordinary people, did criticize, well, they came under, royal displeasure, so, all through, Elizabeth's reign, the Puritans, with their pleas, for discipline, in discipline, in the congregations, and their pleas, that bishops, should be charged, with, establishing, and maintaining, church discipline, in their, in all their parishes, all of that, got the Puritans, straight away, into very bad odor, with royalty, and, the government, and, it made not, the slightest difference, to what went on, in individual parishes, and, the, the spiritual standards, of Elizabethan parishes, were not great, the Puritan, pastors, did what they could, in their own parishes, but that was all, that they could do, there was, only, if you talk about, a Puritan movement, under Elizabeth, it was only, a movement, of consultation, Puritan, leaders, pastors, mostly, getting together, to encourage each other, in one way, or another, and, Elizabeth, did, for practical, for practical purposes, depose, one of her, archbishops, of Canterbury, William Grindale, for refusing, to lower the boom, on these, meetings, for mutual encouragement, movement, won't go into that, simply say, that it happened, and, this was still, an issue, when James, the first, James, well, James, the sixth, of Scotland, became James, the first, of England, you spoke, of two issues, as if you had, something specific, in mind, alongside that, but, no, this was the big thing, discipline, discipline, discipline, and I think, we have one last, maybe one last question, as we're wrapping up,

[ 69 : 29 ] Sheila, no, no, discipline, is something, that we don't hear much, about, in our church, that's right, yet, but, the Puritans, went, quite a lot, farther, than, imposing, discipline, on their own, community, because, at the time, of the Civil War, and the Puritans, won, Cromwell, with his army, on the field, praying, but also, saying, praise God, and keep your powder dry, yes, when he

became, the Lord protector, of England, the imposition, of that kind, of discipline, on a country, that did not, subscribe, to Puritan beliefs, openly, very much, was really, fairly disastrous, I mean, it was one thing, to close theaters, that seemed to be, centers, that were, encouraging, all kinds, of bad things, but, you know, the curfew, the,

I mean, it amounted, to martial law, and, I don't, personally, believe, that this is the way, to convert people, to your way, of thinking, and establishing, purity, within your own life, or within your own home, I don't think, you can impose it, on a nation, and they were very glad, to get rid of Cromwell, that's, I believe, Sheila, a more one-sided, presentation, of things, than the facts, warrant, well, I'd like to hear more, about that, may I have another, minute or two, yeah, Oliver Cromwell, shot into prominence, as a fellow, with a natural, genius, for, military operations, and the winning, of battles, so, in the Civil War, he, well, he, in effect, caused the war, to be won, by his reformation, of the Parliamentary Army, and, in individual battles, his, skill, at tactics, brought victory, after victory, and, by the time, that, the peace, arrived,

Cromwell, was the top man, in England, and, like, other, military, leaders, he was used, to making, his own decision, he, decisions, he was, a man, prepared, to carry responsibility, now, what was the responsibility, that, he was, looked to, to carry, now, answer, the Puritan, it was the Puritan, goal, of, a godly, country, all right, starting, from where we are, what was Cromwell, to do, well, he, developed, a pattern, for, training, and licensing, evangelical, clergy, of the Puritan, sort, and, that, was, successful, in many ways, and, Baxter, an observer, of the whole,

Cromwellian, period, Baxter, wrote, let me, see if I can quote this, more or less accurately, that, if, the Commonwealth, had, gone on, for another, quarter of a century, after, it actually, ceased to be, England, he believed, this is Baxter, would have become, a nation, of saints, and, a model, of godliness, that would amaze, the whole world, Baxter, was a great realist, and that is, the great realist, commenting, on the way, that things, had changed, spiritually, in England, since, Cromwell, took over, granted, in any country, where spiritual, life, is vigorous, there will be, lots of opposition, from unspiritual, people, and yes, in England, it was just the same, the, the other, the other, the other aspect, of,

Cromwell's, governing, it was very much, one man stuff, as I said, he was the Lord, protector, he, appointed, major generals, as he called them, that is, provincial, provincial governors, to look after, different parts, of England, and he, he established, a strong, foreign policy, and a rational, trading policy, which meant, that by the time, he died, England, was regarded, with great respect, in the rest of Europe, because it seemed, to be the strongest, nation around, and all of that, is to be, how can I say, put into the hopper, alongside, any, how can I say it, any, naive, restrictions, connected, with the, the Cromwellian order, that one, might think of, to my mind, yes,

[ 75 : 22 ] Baxter, and others, were, right, when they, said, of the Commonwealth, sort of bottom line, it was too short, because Cromwell died, and nobody could take over, effectively, from him, so, they had to have, the King back, and the old pattern, of, regal administration, which went on, until the, glorious revolution, when William III, came over, and, something, like, how can I say it, just, national order, with, with, the, the, the population, of England, not being taxed, without representation, and so on, at last, became reality, thank you, well, our time, has come, to an end, I want, to thank, all of you, for, being with us today, and for giving me, the privilege, of being Dr. Packer's, eyes for a day, conscience, is the word, conscience,

I thought you couldn't read, you can always think, yes, yes, I can, I can spell it too, well, if you think, it's been a success, this blending, we may be doing, another presentation, in the spring, it's been a privilege, for me, the discipline, of reading, and studying, we always need, a deadline, so I, I would certainly, encourage you, to read, Dr. Packer's, books on the Puritans, or to read the Puritans, yourself, and if you have any questions, please don't hesitate, to ask, thank you very much, and brothers, and sisters, I want to say, on my own account, I thought, that, Alexandra's, initial presentation, was absolutely, brilliant, and I, want to clap, her, I hope you will, thank you, Alexandra, thank you, it's easy to sound right, when you're working, with good material, say something an a be s a amazon ovat le