

**A Puritan Sermon**

Towards the end of Elizabeth's reign, an extreme branch of the [Protestant](http://www.historyonthenet.com/dictionary/protestant.htm) religion was becoming more popular. They called themselves Puritans.

They wore simple, plain clothing. Their clothing was usually black, white or grey and they lived a simple and religious life.
They believed that hard work was the key to gaining a place in heaven. Sundays and Holy days were strictly observed, with these days being devoted entirely to God.
The Puritans were fiercely anti-[Catholic](http://www.historyonthenet.com/dictionary/catholic.htm) and believed that churches should be plain and free from all kinds of ornament. They believed that all mankind was basically sinful, but that some would be saved because of Christ's death. Central to their belief was the act of conversion. Conversion could take two forms - either a blinding flash during which the converted could cry out or fall to the ground - or it could be the end result of a period of preparation. Puritans believed that discipline was a vital part of human life and that frivolity was a sign of giving in to temptation.

Throughout the reign of James I the Puritans gained power in [Parliament](http://www.historyonthenet.com/dictionary/parliament.htm). By the time of Charles I's reign they had gained enough support in Parliament to pass laws imposing their views about living on all English people.

Activities Banned by the Puritans:
Horse Racing, rooster-fighting and bear baiting
Any gathering of people without permission
Drunkenness and swearing
Theatre-going, dancing and singing
Games and sports on Sundays (including going for a walk)
Gambling

***Directions****- Using the information provided in today’s handouts and previous readings and discussions, write a 100 word sermon about an evil Puritan deed committed in today’s world.*
- Use at least 10 Puritan vocabulary words.
- Consider the Puritan laws and punishments.
- Consider the tone and style of the sermon “Sinners in the Hands of Angry God”.
- When you deliver your sermon, please remember to speak loudly, articulate, and emulate the emotion of the task and objective.
- You will receive a 1-4 grade based on the rubric.

 1641 Massachusetts Body of Liberties (Section 94)

***94. Capital Laws***

1*. “If any man after legal conviction shall have or worship any other god but the lord god, he shall be put to death.”*
2*. “If any man or woman be a witch (that is hath or consults with a familiar spirit), they shall be put to death.”*
4. *“If any person commit any willful murder, which is manslaughter committed upon premeditated malice, hatred, or cruelty, not in a man’s necessary and just defense, nor by mere casualty against his will, he shall be put to death.”*

Note: Self-defense and accidentally killing someone (“mere casualty against his will”) do not count. This definition is enhanced in the next law, #5, which states that slaying someone “suddenly in his anger or cruelty of passion” is a capital offense, making crimes of passion capital crimes. Law 6 in this section spells out that killing someone “through guile, either by poisoning or other such devilish practice” is a capital offense.

#9 addresses men who commit adultery with “a married or espoused wife”, saying “both of them have committed abomination [and] both shall surely be put to death.” Again, these cases came up fairly often and were often handled without recourse to execution (the offending parties were given a chance to repent), but unrepentant adultery was met with execution in most cases.
10. *“If any man steals a man or mankind, he shall surely be put to death.”*
11. *“If any man rise up by false witness, wittingly and or purpose to take away any man’s life, he shall be put to death.”*
12. *“If any man shall conspire and attempt any invasion, insurrection, or public rebellion against our commonwealth, or shall endeavor to surprise any town [or] fort therein, or shall treacherously and perfidiously attempt the alteration and subversion of our frame of polity of government fundamentally, he shall be put to death.”*

**Article Excerpt**
“The New England Colonies: Puritan Life 3d” *Independence Hall Association in Philadelphia (2008) ushistory.org*

“Church attendance was mandatory. Those that missed church regularly were subject to a fine. The sermon became a means of addressing town problems or concerns. The church was sometimes patrolled by a man who held a long pole. On one end was a collection of feathers to tickle the chins of old men who fell asleep. On the other was a hard wooden knob to alert children who giggled or slept. Church was serious business indeed.

The Puritans believed they were doing God's work. Hence, there was little room for compromise. Harsh punishment was inflicted on those who were seen as straying from God's work. There were cases when individuals of differing faiths were hanged in **BOSTON COMMON**.

Adulterers might have been forced to wear a scarlet "A" if they were lucky. At least two known adulterers were executed in Massachusetts Bay Colony. Public whippings were commonplace. The **STOCKADE** forced the humiliated guilty person to sit in the public square, while onlookers spat or laughed at them.”