

Pilgrims

Hebrews 11:8-16

11/17/2019

The story of the Pilgrims (a term given to them years later) begins long before the Mayflower and the Plymouth Colony of 1620. King Henry VIII of England broke with the Roman Catholic church in 1534 and established the Church of England. While no longer Roman Catholic...it remained very Roman Catholic in many ways and eventually a movement arose wanting to purify the church and return to the simplicity of the early church as found in the pages of the New Testament. Known as Puritans for wanting to purify the Church of England they tried to do it from inside the existing church. A group of Puritans who saw it as fruitless to try to reform the Church of England from the inside decided to separate and start their own congregations without the hierarchy of the Papal system or the Monarchy of England using a congregational form of polity. **“Every British citizen was expected to attend the Church of England, and those who didn’t were punished by the state. One group of farmers in Northern England, known disparagingly as Separatists, began to worship in secret, knowing full well that it was treasonous.”** Their efforts made them enemies of the Throne and the Church of England and they ended up suffering great persecution to the point of genocide. Some of them left for the Netherlands and tried for 12 years to live and worship there. Though some better, it was not ideal, and they decided to move to the “New World” across the ocean and start all over. Not all who boarded the Mayflower for passage were coming for religious purposes. Some were making the journey simply for hope of financial gains in this “New World”. In a sense they were all pilgrims looking for something different and hopefully something better.

Thinking about the Thanksgiving pilgrims should remind us that we’re pilgrims, too.

- I. Pilgrims start somewhere
- II. Pilgrims sense something
 - A. We can’t necessarily see it
 - B. We can definitely sense it
- III. Pilgrims start moving
- IV. Pilgrims seek more

“Moses did not forsake Egypt because he had to or because he felt obligated to, but because he wanted to. Egypt had lost its attraction.” (MacArthur)

- ✓ Abraham was on a physical pilgrimage
- ✓ Elijah was on an emotional pilgrimage
- ✓ Solomon was on a wisdom pilgrimage
- ✓ Nicodemus was on a spiritual pilgrimage

1. You may be on an educational pilgrimage moving toward a high school diploma or college degree.
2. You may be on a marriage pilgrimage moving from being newlyweds toward a mature married love relationship becoming better husbands/wives.
3. You may be on a financial pilgrimage moving from debt to financial freedom.
4. You may be on a health pilgrimage moving forward with diet and exercise with the goal of better physical condition and mobility.
5. You may be on a disease pilgrimage moving toward healing here or healing in heaven.

6. You may be on an end of life pilgrimage waiting expectantly for God to call you to your eternal home.
7. You may be on an emotional pilgrimage moving from hurt to wholeness.
8. You may be on a career pilgrimage through additional schooling/training with the goal of a higher paying and/or more satisfying job.
9. You may be on a rehab pilgrimage moving away from addiction toward freedom from addiction.
10. You may be on a spiritual pilgrimage considering the truth of Jesus and the gospel.
11. You may be on a spiritual pilgrimage seeking to better understand the truth of God's Word and how it applies to everyday life.
12. You may be on a spiritual pilgrimage feeling the call to greater service in vocational ministry.

So What?

- Pilgrims realize that wherever they find themselves there is always room to improve.
- Pilgrims sense that God is at work and wants to lead them to a more abundant life.
- Pilgrims know that God can't "steer a parked car" and that they need to get moving.
- Pilgrims get excited about what God has in store for them and trust His wisdom.

"When any person comes to Jesus Christ, God demands of him a pilgrimage from his old pattern of living into a new kind of life, just as Abraham's faith separated him from paganism and unbelief and started him toward a new land and a new kind of life." (MacArthur