Reading assignment: Baptists (Williams), Anne Hutchinson, and Quakers (Penn) – Noll 55-62b, 65m-68b; Course Reader 15-19 – (Bremer 138-9, 154-6, 158-9; Dyer 98-99)

I. Religious Challenges to Puritan Power in the American Colonies (Noll 55-62b; 65-68)

A. Baptists:

1. Shared Puritan views, but believed in adult baptism, rejecting infant baptism (antipedobaptist) (Bremer 38, 159)

   
   a) Local churches should control their own business,
   b) Magistrates should not have power over church affairs;
   c) Baptism is outward manifestation of dying to sin, so should not be administered to infants (Noll 56). *(This is in contrast to the role that infant baptism played in Protestant communities that practiced it such as Zwinglian Protestantism – the view that baptism made the child a part of the community).*
   d) General Baptists – believed that Christ died for all (rejected the “L” of TULIP – limited atonement) – more Arminian.
   e) Particular Baptists – arose c. 1630 from English Congregational churches, believed that Christ only died for the elect (more Calvinist) (Noll 56).
   f) Full immersion characteristic of all Baptists.

3. First Baptist congregation in America – 1639 in Rhode Island with Roger Williams (Noll 56). Believed church should not be governed by the state.

4. Growth of Baptists in colonies was small until the Great Awakening of the 1740s, but Puritans viewed them as a threat and they were whipped (Noll 58). Puritans threatened by Baptists’ views of separation of church and state and their baptismal practices.

5. Roger Williams – came to Massachusetts in 1631:

   a) He said Puritans didn’t have right to Indian lands
   b) Colonial charters were invalid
   c) Individuals who didn’t confess Christ were not bound to a social covenant
   d) Rejected forced church attendance and other spiritual duties (Noll 58).
   e) Williams expelled from Massachusetts and later founded Providence, Rhode Island in 1636 (Noll 59).
f) He later opposed Quakers who came to Rhode Island due to their beliefs and their pacifism.

g) Rhode Island first place in colonies where freedom of religious worship was viewed as a right and first colony to attempt separation of church and state.

B. Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643) – came to Boston with her pastor John Cotton in 1633 (Noll 60):

1. Hutchinsson began midweek meeting to discuss Cotton’s sermons, first was women only but it grew to include men. (Noll 60-61).

2. Rival ministers accused her of antinomianism (rejection of the law) (Noll 61).

3. Hutchinsson’s teachings – believer possessed the Holy Spirit and thus wasn’t bound by law; obedience of the laws of the state didn’t prove a person was a Christian; salvation was by grace, not by works of the law (Noll 61).

4. Hutchinsson’s beliefs didn’t contradict Puritan theology as much as Puritan practices in New England – they seemed to threaten society (62).

5. She was tried in court and defended herself with knowledge of scripture until she said Holy Spirit communicated with her directly, apart from scripture. She was exiled from Massachusetts.

C. Quakers (Friends):

1. George Fox (1624-1691) started the Society of Friends in England. In July 1656, two Quaker women came to Boston with their message of the inner light of Christ and criticism of formal external religion (Noll 65)

2. Quaker doctrines – belief in the inner light of Christ which guided each believer, deemphasizing of scripture as a rule of life, rejection of structured liturgy, separate ministerial clergy, and sacraments (Bremer 139).

3. Accusations that Friends disrupted Puritan worship services by interrupting sermons, strolling naked down the aisles (Bremer 155). (Rhetorical hyperbole?)

4. William Penn – founded Pennsylvania in 1682 as a place of religious freedom (Noll 67)

5. John Woolman – Quaker in 1700s who spoke against slavery, even rejecting food grown by slave labor (Noll 68). He also rejected Quaker involvement in the French and Indian War.
For Further Reading:


