

City Upon A Hill

Document Analysis Activity

30pts

Name: _____

Period: _____

Document: John Winthrop, *Model of Christian Charity* 1630

Now the only way to avoid this shipwreck, and to provide for our posterity, is to follow the counsel of Micah, to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God. For this end, we must be knit together, in this work, as one man. We must entertain each other in brotherly affection. We must be willing to abridge ourselves of our superfluities, for the supply of others' necessities. We must uphold a familiar commerce together in all meekness, gentleness, patience and liberality. We must delight in each other; make others' conditions our own; rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and community in the work, as members of the same body. So shall we keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. The Lord will be our God, and delight to dwell among us, as His own people, and will command a blessing upon us in all our ways, so that we shall see much more of His wisdom, power, goodness and truth, than formerly we have been acquainted with. We shall find that the God of Israel is among us, when ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies; when He shall make us a praise and glory that men shall say of succeeding plantations, "may the Lord make it like that of New England." For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. So that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause Him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword through the world. We shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God, and all professors for God's sake. We shall shame the faces of many of God's worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into curses upon us till we be consumed out of the good land whither we are going.

And to shut this discourse with that exhortation of Moses, that faithful servant of the Lord, in his last farewell to Israel, Deut. 30. "Beloved, there is now set before us life and death, good and evil," in that we are commanded this day to love the Lord our God, and to love one another, to walk in his ways and to keep his Commandments and his ordinance and his laws, and the articles of our Covenant with Him, that we may live and be multiplied, and that the Lord our God may bless us in the land whither we go to possess it. But if our hearts shall turn away, so that we will not obey, but shall be seduced, and worship other Gods, our pleasure and profits, and serve them; it is propounded unto us this day, we shall surely perish out of the good land whither we pass over this vast sea to possess it.

Therefore let us choose life, that we and our seed may live, by obeying His voice and cleaving to Him, for He is our life and our prosperity

1. What does the first sentence at the beginning of this quote by Winthrop mean?
2. In the next five sentences, Winthrop offers specific suggestions of how the Puritans can succeed. Explain all of Winthrop's suggestions in your own words.

3. The next three sentences offer “proof,” in Winthrop’s words, of how the Puritans will know that they are being successful (starting with “So shall we keep the unity ...”). Create three “bullet points” from the “evidence” that Winthrop pinpoints.

4. The next part of the speech has become an ageless metaphor for America. Read it and explain what Winthrop means. It is the “city upon a hill” part of his speech.

5. Over the centuries, why did many American thinkers have believed the American experience was/is exceptional when compared with the rest of the world?

6. Read the last paragraph of the speech available in the Launchpad and considering the following questions:
 - a. Why did Winthrop quote Moses?

 - b. What was he predicting would happen if they followed Moses’ advice?

 - c. What was the alternative, if they did not?