

The Trial of Anne Hutchinson

Source: www.annehutchinson.com/anne_hutchinson_trial_010.htm

This is the transcript of the trial of Anne Hutchinson. In 1638, she was found guilty of heresy (believing in false Gods) and banished from (forced to leave) the Puritan colony in Massachusetts Bay.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: If you please to give me leave I shall give you the ground of what I know to be true. Being much troubled to see the falseness of the constitution of the Church of England, I had like to have turned Separatist. Whereupon I kept a day of solemn humiliation and pondering of the thing; this scripture was brought unto me--he that denies Jesus Christ to be come in the flesh is antichrist. This I considered of and in considering found that the papists did not deny him to be come in the flesh, nor we did not deny him--who then was antichrist? Was the Turk antichrist only? The Lord knows that I could not open scripture; he must by his prophetic office open it unto me. So after that being unsatisfied in the thing, the Lord was pleased to bring this scripture out of the Hebrews. he that denies the testament denies the testator, and in this did open unto me and give me to see that those which did not teach the new covenant had the spirit of antichrist, and upon this he did discover the ministry unto me; and ever since, I bless the Lord, he hath let me see which was the clear ministry and which the wrong.

Since that time I confess I have been more choice and he hath left me to distinguish between the voice of my beloved and the voice of Moses, the voice of John the Baptist and the voice of antichrist, for all those voices are spoken of in scripture. Now if you do condemn me for speaking what in my conscience I know to be truth I must commit myself unto the Lord.

Mr. Nowel (assistant to the Court): How do you know that was the spirit?

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: How did Abraham know that it was God that bid him offer his son, being a breach of the sixth commandment?

Dep. Gov. Thomas Dudley: By an immediate voice.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: So to me by an immediate revelation.

Dep. Gov. Thomas Dudley: How! an immediate revelation.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: By the voice of his own spirit to my soul. I will give you another scripture, Jeremiah 46: 27-28--out of which the Lord showed me what he would do for me and the rest of his servants. But after he was pleased to reveal himself to me I did presently, like Abraham, run to Hagar. And after that he did let me see the atheism of my own heart, for which I begged of the Lord that it might not remain in my heart, and being thus, he did show me this (a twelvemonth after) which I told you of before.... Therefore, I desire you to look to it, for you see this scripture fulfilled this day and therefore I desire you as you tender the Lord and the church and commonwealth to consider and look what you do.

You have power over my body but the Lord Jesus hath power over my body and soul; and assure yourselves thus much, you do as much as in you lies to put the Lord Jesus Christ from you, and if you go on in this course you begin, you will bring a curse upon you and your posterity, and the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Dep. Gov. Thomas Dudley: What is the scripture she brings?

Mr. Stoughton (assistant to the Court): Behold I turn away from you.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: But now having seen him which is invisible I fear not what man can do unto me.

Gov. John Winthrop: Daniel was delivered by miracle; do you think to be deliver'd so too?

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: I do here speak it before the court. I look that the Lord should deliver me by his providence.... (because God had said to her) though I should meet with affliction, yet I am the same God that delivered Daniel out of the lion's den, I will also deliver thee.

Mr. Harlakenden (assistant to the Court): I may read scripture and the most glorious hypocrite may read them and yet go down to hell.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: It may be so....

Gov. John Winthrop: I am persuaded that the revelation she brings forth is delusion

(The trial text here reads:) All the court but some two or three ministers cry out, we all believe it--we all believe it. (Mrs. Hutchinson was found guilty)

Gov. John Winthrop: The court hath already declared themselves satisfied concerning the things you hear, and concerning the troublesomeness of her spirit and the danger of her course amongst us, which is not to be suffered. Therefore if it be the mind of the court that Mrs. Hutchinson for these things that appear before us is unfit for our society, and if it be the mind of the court that she shall be banished out of our liberties and imprisoned till she be sent away, let them hold up their hands.

(All but three did so)

Gov. John Winthrop: Mrs. Hutchinson, the sentence of the court you hear is that you are banished from out of our jurisdiction as being a woman not fit for our society, and are to be imprisoned till the court shall send you away.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: I desire to know wherefore I am banished?

Gov. John Winthrop: Say no more. The court knows wherefore and is satisfied.

Questions:

1. Why did Mrs. Anne Hutchinson break with the Church of England?
2. What claims does she make during her testimony?
3. What decision does the court make in this case?
4. In your opinion, why did the court take this action?

The Trial of Anne Hutchinson (Adapted Version)

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This is an edited version of the trial of Anne Hutchinson. In 1638, she was found guilty of heresy (believing in false Gods) and banished from (forced to leave) the Puritan colony in Massachusetts Bay.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: If you please to give me leave I shall give you the ground of what I know to be true. Being much troubled to see the falseness the Church of England, I have turned Separatist. Since that time I confess he hath left me to distinguish between the voice of my beloved and the voice of Moses, the voice of John the Baptist and the voice of antichrist, for all those voices are spoken of in scripture. Now if you do condemn me for speaking what in my conscience I know to be truth I must commit myself unto the Lord.

Mr. Nowel (assistant to the Court): How do you know that was the spirit?

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: How did Abraham know that it was God that bid him offer his son, being a breach of the sixth commandment?

Dep. Gov. Thomas Dudley: By an immediate voice.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: So to me by an immediate revelation.

Dep. Gov. Thomas Dudley: How! an immediate revelation.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: By the voice of his own spirit to my soul. Therefore, I desire you to look to it, for you see this scripture fulfilled this day and therefore I desire you as you tender the Lord and the church and commonwealth to consider and look what you do. You have power over my body but the Lord Jesus hath power over my body and soul; and assure yourselves thus much, you do as much as in you lies to put the Lord Jesus Christ from you, and if you go on in this course you begin, you will bring a curse upon you and your posterity, and the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. But now having seen him which is invisible I fear not what man can do unto me.

Gov. John Winthrop: Daniel was delivered by miracle; do you think to be deliver'd so too?

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: I do here speak it before the court. I look that the Lord should deliver me by his providence.

Gov. John Winthrop: I am persuaded that the revelation she brings forth is delusion

Audience: All the court but some two or three ministers cry out, we all believe it--we all believe it.

(Mrs. Hutchinson was found guilty)

Gov. John Winthrop: The court hath already declared themselves satisfied concerning the things you hear, and concerning the troublesomeness of her spirit and the danger of her course amongst us, which is not to be suffered. Therefore if it be the mind of the court that Mrs. Hutchinson for these things that appear before us is unfit for our society, and if it be the mind of the court that she shall be banished out of our liberties and imprisoned till she be sent away, let them hold up their hands.

(All but three did so)

Gov. John Winthrop: Mrs. Hutchinson, the sentence of the court you hear is that you are banished from out of our jurisdiction as being a woman not fit for our society, and are to be imprisoned till the court shall send you away.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: I desire to know wherefore I am banished?

Gov. John Winthrop: Say no more. The court knows wherefore and is satisfied.

Questions:

1. Why did Mrs. Hutchinson become a "Separatist"?
2. What does she claim?
3. What does the court decide?
4. In your opinion, why does the court take this action?

The Trial of Anne Hutchinson (Rewritten Version)
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This is the story of the trial of Anne Hutchinson. In 1638, she was found guilty of heresy (believing in false Gods) and banished from (forced to leave) the Puritan colony in Massachusetts Bay.

A. The Testimony

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: I was much troubled to see the falseness the Church of England. I have turned Separatist (become an independent preacher). Since that time I confess God has helped me distinguish between his voice and the voice of antichrist. If you do condemn me for speaking what in my conscience, I will rely on the Lord.

Mr. Nowel: How do you know the voice you heard was the voice of God?

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: How did Abraham know that it was God that bid him offer his son for sacrifice?

Dep. Gov. Thomas Dudley: By an immediate voice.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: So to me by an immediate revelation.

Dep. Gov. Thomas Dudley: How! an immediate revelation.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: By the voice of his own spirit to my soul. You have power over my body but the Lord Jesus has power over my body and soul. If you continue to persecute me you will bring a curse upon you and your children. The mouth of the Lord has spoken it. I fear not what man can do to me.

Gov. John Winthrop: Daniel was delivered by miracle; do you think you will be saved also?

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: I look that the Lord should deliver me by his providence.

Gov. John Winthrop: I believe that the revelation she claims is a delusion

B. The Sentence

Gov. John Winthrop: Mrs. Hutchinson, the sentence of the court is that you are banished from out of our jurisdiction as being a woman not fit for our society, and are to be imprisoned until the court shall send you away.

Mrs. Anne Hutchinson: I want to know why I am banished?

Gov. John Winthrop: Say no more. The court knows why and is satisfied.

Questions:

1. Why did Mrs. Hutchinson become a "Separatist"?
2. What does she claim?
3. What does the court decide?
4. In your opinion, why does the court take this action?