*Differences between Puritanism and The Revolutionary Period*

PURITANISM

1. Earthly affairs are of no importance; emphasis placed on the hereafter
2. Theology is most important
3. Individual man is unimportant
4. Man has no power; he is helpless without God’s will
5. God predestines individuals to be either glorified or damned
6. Faith and revelation are important to exposing God and religion to man
7. Government by theocracy
8. Only the elect are respected
9. Man’s condition can be improved only through prayer or God’s help
10. View of nature is harsh and bleak – a destructive force working against man
11. Sentences are long; language is post-Elizabethan
12. Key word: sinners, God

 REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD

 *(also Neo-Classicism/Age of Reason/The Enlightenment)*

1. Worldly affairs are most important; “Eyes lowered from heaven to earth”
2. Politics is most important
3. Man’s freedom and individualism begin to gain importance
4. Man has the power to reason, a power that separates him from the beasts
5. Every man has the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness
6. Religion is based on reason and fact (Deism). Faith and revelation are distrusted because they cannot be proved
7. Government by democracy
8. Inventors, scientists, politicians, practical men are respected
9. Man’s condition can be improved by his own hard work. Good behavior can earn rewards in life here and now
10. View of nature is ordered and harmonious
11. Emergence of a “clear and forceful prose,” similar to today’s spoken English
12. Key words: moderation, reason

*Similarities between Puritanism and The Revolutionary Period*

1. Literary purpose is to instruct.
2. Literature is pragmatic.
3. Writing is primarily non-emotional and unimaginative.
4. Practical virtues are respected. Self-sufficiency and common sense become important.
5. Style is “plain,” yet dignified and elevated.