

## *The Pilgrim's Progress*

### **Introduction:**

This book was first published in 1678 by the Baptist pastor John Bunyan (1628-1688). Bunyan ministered in Bedford, England, about 60 miles north of London. This book has translated into over 200 languages. It is commonly regarded as the first novel ever written in English.

We will be using Cheryl Ford's edition of Bunyan's classic. We are indebted to Dr. Wayne Mack's *Christian Life Issues* (a 2-volume study through *The Pilgrim's Progress*) for most of the basic outline.

This study will cover only the first part of Bunyan's religious allegory. The first part details the account of the husband Christian (originally named Graceless [see chapter 5]), while the second, lesser known, part details the account of his wife Christiana.

While reading through this book, look for the following themes: the gospel, sin and its dangers, temptations and pressures, sanctification, the importance of fellowship, depression, and the reality of spiritual warfare.

This book has great value for us in the following areas:

- **historical** theology—what has been taught historically, specifically the 1600's in England
- **dogmatic** theology—what Baptists (in particular) have commonly taught in their churches
- **practical** theology—what the Bible teaches about conviction of sin, salvation from sin, how to live the Christian life, how to do church, how to evangelize, how to practice the one another's, how to battle the various temptations, etc.

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## Part 1: Before Salvation (chapters 1-3)

### Chapter 1 (conviction of sin)

- 1) How are we to understand the 4-fold description of the pilgrim?
  - a) Where does he live?
  - b) What is his relationship to his world system?
  - c) What is his greatest need?
  - d) What is he reading?
    - i) How is he convicted **objectively**?
    - ii) How is he convicted **subjectively**?
  
- 2) What kind of counsel does Evangelist give to the pilgrim?
  - a) **Positively** (what Evangelist does)
    - i) Questions
      - (1) Seeking to bring greater conviction by the use of probing questions.
      - (2) "Why are you unwilling to die?"
      - (3) "Why haven't you solved your problem?"
    - ii) Instructions
      - (1) Flee from the wrath to come.
      - (2) Points him to the Narrow Gate.
      - (3) Knock, and someone will open.
  - b) **Negatively** (what Evangelist does not do)
    - i) He does not tell him to follow the opinions of men.
    - ii) He does not tell him to follow the opinions of a church or of tradition.
    - iii) He does not tell him to walk an aisle or to pray a prayer.
    - iv) He does not give him a formula to follow.
  - c) Our primary problem is not our lack of joy, peace, fulfillment or meaning; our primary problem is that we're sinners by practice and by nature.
  
- 3) Who are some hindrances to becoming a genuine Christian?
  - a) Obstinate
    - i) How is he described?
    - ii) Cf. Mark 4:3-4, 14-15; Acts 7:54-57; 17:32
    - iii) Note his methods:
      - (1) He reminded him of everyone he would leave behind.
      - (2) He mocked the Bible.
      - (3) He mocked the pilgrim and others like him.
  - b) Pliable
    - i) How is he described?
    - ii) Cf. Mark 4:5-6, 16-17
    - iii) Note his method of self-absorbed questions
    - iv) What happened to Pliable after he returned to the City of Destruction?  
(see chapter 7)

- 4) What is the Slough of Despond?
  - a) While not everyone experiences the conviction of sin with the same intensity of fear, doubts, and discouraging anxieties, everyone must experience a sense of hopelessness and despair because of their sin.
  - b) While people need to know the seriousness of their sin, they also need to be aware of God's solution to their sin.

## **Chapter 2** (evangelism)

- 1) This chapter emphasizes the importance of wise counsel
  - a) 2 Chron. 22:3-4; Ps. 1:1; Prov. 12:15; 14:15
- 2) **Negative** example: Worldly-Wiseman
  - a) Cf. James 3:15; 1 Cor. 1:19-20; 2:5-8; Gal. 1:6-7; Col. 2:16-21
  - b) Note the characteristics of this unwise counsel:
    - i) He presents himself as being very sensitive and sympathetic.
    - ii) He finds out what the pilgrim is struggling with and offers him a way of getting what he wants and getting rid of what he does not want.
    - iii) He demeans and slanders the character and advice of Evangelist.
    - iv) He attempts to scare the pilgrim with words about the hardships he will experience if he proceeds with Evangelist's advice.
    - v) He attempts to destroy the pilgrim's confidence in the Bible.
    - vi) He appeals to the pilgrim's felt needs.
    - vii) His proposed solution is mere morality and deadly legalism.
- 3) **Positive** example: Evangelist
  - a) He asks pointed, specific, and purposeful questions.
    - i) What are you doing here?
    - ii) Why aren't you following the good advice given to you?
    - iii) Describe the bad counselor and bad counsel you have listened to.
  - b) He warns and instructs the pilgrim from the Bible. (Heb. 12:25; 10:38)
  - c) He encourages the pilgrim that forgiveness is still available.
  - d) He exposes the error of Worldly-Wiseman's counsel.
    - i) He attempted to draw people away from the way of life.
    - ii) He devalued the cross-work of Christ.
    - iii) He led people to the way of death and destruction. (Matt. 7:13)
  - e) How does the pilgrim respond to Evangelist's counsel?
    - i) He expresses genuine sorrow.
    - ii) He evidences shame for being easily misled.
    - iii) He asks if he can be forgiven and if there is any hope for him.
- 4) Passages to remember:
  - a) 2 Cor. 2:16; Matt. 7:13-14; Gal 1:6-9; 1 Cor. 1:18-25; John 16:8-11

**Chapter 3** (leading to salvation)

- 1) Thoughts on the pilgrim knocking at the door:
  - a) What? Humble, earnest effort
  - b) How? Persevering effort
  - c) Why? Incredibly important, unforced effort
  
- 2) The work of Good-Will at the door (probably a reference to Christ)
  - a) Some questions are asked
    - i) Did you come by yourself?
    - ii) Does anyone else know you were coming?
    - iii) Did anyone try to follow you?
    - iv) If Pliable valued heaven so much, why was he not willing to endure difficulties to get there?
  - b) Reasons for the questions
    - i) To reinforce the importance of reflecting on our past life.
    - ii) To provide an example of discipleship.
    - iii) To provide an example for people how to think of themselves in reference to others.
    - iv) To provide an example of how people should think of themselves in reference to God's acceptance of them.
  - c) Necessary instructions
    - i) This has always been the one true way. (Rom. 4)
    - ii) This way is straight and narrow. (John 14:6; Acts 4:12)
    - iii) This way leads to deliverance from the burden of sin.
    - iv) This way leads to the House of the Interpreter.
  
- 3) The House of Interpreter
  - 7 images related to a church
  - a) **Scene 1:** pastors (1 Pet. 5:1-4; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; Acts 20:29-31)
    - i) A pastor's **characteristics**: intense and serious; looking toward heaven; the best book in his hand; the law of truth on his lips; the world behind his back; pleads with people; crown of gold upon his head
    - ii) A pastor's **functions/ministries**: gives birth to spiritual children; suffers birth pains with his people; nurses people following their spiritual birth; knows and reveals hidden things to sinners; loves and serves his Master; possesses and exercises authority; teaching and counseling ministry
  - b) **Scene 2:** The Room Filled with Dust (the human heart; Jer. 17:9)
    - i) First sweeper: the law of God (Rom. 3:20; 5:20; 7:7-9)
    - ii) Second sweeper: the virtuous evangelist with the Gospel
  - c) **Scene 3:** Two Children (the importance of patience)
    - i) Passion: *professing* Christians
      - (1) The present things and our fleshly appetites are so compatible.
      - (2) The things to come and our fleshly senses are such strangers.

- ii) Patience: *possessing* Christians (Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:16-18; Heb. 11:8-11, 24-26)
  - (1) How does one develop patience? By focusing on eternity; as a fruit of the Spirit; by prayer; through a desire to be patient; dedication and commitment and discipline; through trials; through practice; by looking at Christ.
- d) **Scene 4:** The Fire by the Wall (preservation of the saints)
  - i) The Fire: the work of the Spirit
  - ii) The one throwing water: Satan
  - iii) The One pouring oil: Christ dispensing God's grace
- e) **Scene 5:** The Beautiful Palace (Heaven)
  - i) An awareness of heaven's glory motivates us. (2 Cor. 4:16-18)
  - ii) Too many have a superficial desire to go to heaven. (Luke 13:24)
  - iii) The fear of man is a serious deterrent to becoming a Christian. (Prov. 25:29; John 7:12-13)
  - iv) Heaven is obtained only through conflict. (Acts 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:12)
  - v) The battle for heaven may be fierce but God has given us the necessary weapons to obtain it. (2 Cor. 10:4)
  - vi) The Christian life is not one of passive resignation but a dangerous journey in which the stakes are high. (1 Tim. 6:12; 1 Cor. 9:27)
- f) **Scene 6:** The Man in the Iron Cage (the tortured conscience of those who lack assurance and perseverance)
  - i) Remember this significant point: the man in the cage is only giving his subjective perception and interpretation of his situation.
- g) **Scene 7:** The Man with the Terrifying Dream (coming judgment)
  - i) Lessons to learn
    - (1) The coming judgment is real. (Rev. 20:11-15; Heb. 9:27)
    - (2) God knows who belongs to Him and who does not. (2 Tim. 2:19)
    - (3) All preparation for judgment must be done before He arrives.
    - (4) Thought of judgment is a powerful motivation. (Acts 17:30)
    - (5) It is a fearful thing to stand unprepared. (2 Thes. 2:8-12)
    - (6) God uses various means to make people think about judgment.
    - (7) God reaches our conscience with Biblical truth.
  - ii) The pilgrim's impatient response
    - (1) The pilgrim is in a hurry to continue his journey.
  - iii) Additional Interesting issues
    - (1) The Interpreter instructs the pilgrim
      - (a) He **questions** the pilgrim, "Have you paid close attention?"
      - (b) He **exhorts** the pilgrim
      - (c) He **reminds** the pilgrim of the Spirit's ongoing work.
    - (2) The pilgrim's response
      - (a) He is filled with both hope and fear
      - (b) He prepared himself

- (c) He expressed gratitude toward his teacher and committed himself to meditate of what he had heard.

## Part 2: Salvation Takes Place (chapter 4)

- 1) The pilgrim reaches the Cross
  - a) Forgiveness of sins, ministry of angels, new clothes, identifying mark, received a scroll
  
- 2) He meets false Christians along the Way
  - a) The two groups
    - i) Group 1: Simple, Sloth, and Presumption
    - ii) Group 2: Formality and Hypocrisy
  - b) His concern for them all:
    - i) He attempted to awaken them to their need by asking questions.
    - ii) He explained the difference between false and genuine Christians.
    - iii) He explained the wrong basis of their decisions.
    - iv) He identified them as idolaters.
  
- 3) Three ways from which to choose
  - a) The Hill of Difficulty (physical, social, financial, or emotional struggles)
  - b) The way to Danger
  - c) The way to Destruction
  
- 4) Pleasant Arbor
  - a) Losing the scroll
    - i) Note what the pilgrim did:
      - (1) He slowed down and rested, he reviewed the scroll, he remembered what he had received, he was tempted to be lazy, he responded rightly to rebuke
      - ii) **Principle:** the danger of sleeping rather than simply resting in God's refreshing mercy
  - b) Responding in fear (Num. 13-14)
    - i) Timorous and Mistrust act based only on their imagination
  - c) Recovering the scroll
    - i) Repentance, sorrow, personal effort, resolve
  
- 5) Facing the hostile lions on the way to Palace Beautiful
  - a) Note the process: heard a negative report from others, emotional response, remembered Biblical principles, observation of hostility, emotional response, contemplation, encouragement from pastor Watchful, obedience
  - b) Note how pastor Watchful assisted the pilgrim:
    - i) He gives a gentle rebuke through a question
    - ii) He explains why Pilgrim shouldn't be afraid (Is. 41:10; Ps. 23:4)
    - iii) He explains the purpose of the lions (James 1:2-5)
    - iv) He told Pilgrim what to do and how
    - v) He gave Pilgrim a promise (James 1:12; Job 23:10; Ps. 56:3)

## Part 3: Sanctification (chapters 5-17)

### Chapter 5 Arriving at Palace Beautiful (the importance of the local church)

- 1) Two facts about the Palace
  - a) Built by the Lord of the Hill (Jesus) (Matt. 16:18)
  - b) Built only for pilgrims (genuine Christians)
  
- 2) Three functions/purposes of the Palace
  - a) To worship and glorify God (Eph. 3:21)
  - b) To evangelize the lost (Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8; 1 Thess. 1:8)
  - c) To provide relief and security for pilgrims (genuine Christians) (Acts 2:44-47; 4:23)
    - a) See Wayne Mack's book, *Life in the Father's House*, chapter two, for 12 reasons why church membership is a requirement for every believer.
  
- 3) He is interviewed by Discretion
  - a) Note the similar yet distinctive nature of her questions, ascertaining the answer to the question, "Does he have a desire to enter?"
  
- 4) He is disciplined by three members of the church
  - a) Piety/Godliness
    - i) Is his profession genuine? What is the extent of his maturity? How well does he know the basic facts of Biblical Christianity?
    - ii) Encourages Pilgrim in the progress he has made so far.
  - b) Prudence/Sobermindedness
    - i) Encourages Pilgrim to examine his attitudes, motives, and thoughts.
  - c) Charity/Love
    - i) Encourages Pilgrim to examine his relationships with others
  
- 5) He is invited to Supper
  - a) Probably a reference to participating in the Lord's Supper
  
- 6) He visits the Room of Peace
  - a) Peace with God (Rom. 5:1-5)
  - b) Peace of God (Phil. 4:6-9)
  - c) Peace with other believers (Heb. 12:14)
  
- 7) He visits the Study (Ezra 7:10; Acts 2:42)
  
- 8) He visits the Armory
  - a) The place where equipment is stored, and people are equipped.
  - b) Emphasis is on the six pieces of armor from Eph. 6:10-19.
  - c) The equipment is abundant, sufficient, and reliable.
  
- 9) He is given a glimpse of the Delectable Mountains

- a) This seems to represent those exceptional times in our lives when we have an unusual sense of God's presence.
- b) We will encounter this again later in chapter 12.

10) He resumes his journey through the Valley of Humiliation

- a) Humiliation is the common, necessary, and periodic experience of all Christians. (W. Mack)
- b) Remember 2 Cor. 12:7-10; Phil. 2:4-11; James 1:2-4; 1 Pet. 5:5-7
- c) What does Biblical humility look like? How can we develop Biblical humility? (see W. Mack, *Christian Life Issues*, vol. 1, pp. 260-265)

**Chapter 6 Apollyon and the Valley of the Shadow of Death** (real difficulties of life)

- 1) We normally encounter challenging situations soon after times of great joy. (Matt. 3:17 is followed by chapter 4; 1 Cor. 10:1-13)
- 2) Why is it important to learn these principles?
  - a) We need to be challenged and tested. (John 6)
  - b) Spiritual warfare is a reality. (Eph. 6:10-20; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; 1 Pet. 2:11)
  - c) Spiritual warfare is inevitable. (John 15:20; Eph. 6:10-20)
  - d) There is much confusion about the nature of spiritual warfare. (2 Cor. 2:11)
- 3) Remember the three enemies we face: the flesh, the world, and the devil.
- 4) Battling Apollyon.
  - a) Note the tactics of Apollyon:
    - i) Intimidation with threats of harm and suffering.
    - ii) Accusation of Christian being a traitor.
    - iii) Making promises of improved wealth, satisfaction, and rewards.
    - iv) Making promises to escape suffering and pain if Christian "comes back."
    - v) Utilizing peer pressure.
    - vi) Mocking, ridicule, and accusations.
    - vii) Promoting patterns of worldly thinking.
    - viii) Reminding Christian of past and present sins.
    - ix) Demonstrating fierce anger.
  - b) Note how Christian overcame Apollyon:
    - i) Resisting by accurate thinking and confession of sin
    - ii) Using the shield of faith
    - iii) Skillfully using the sword of the Spirit
- 5) Entering the Valley of the Shadow of Death
  - a) This is a potentially frightening place.
    - i) cf. Ps. 23:4; Is. 50:10; Job 23:1-9; 2 Cor. 4; 1 Pet. 1:6; Jms. 1:2

- b) This Valley represents those times in the life of a Christian when hard things happen to him even though he is trusting God and walking in obedience to him. (W. Mack)
- i) We can't figure out why God is allowing certain things to happen to us. We don't know what to do, and we can't make sense of what's going on around us. It is a time of weariness, a time when Christians can become discouraged and despondent. We feel alone, abandoned by people, and even by the Lord. We can't make sense of the unpleasant things, the hard things, the painful things of life. You know you ought to do something, but you don't know what to do, because no matter what you do, the problem isn't getting solved. (W. Mack)
- c) How did Christian get out of this valley?
- i) He prayed (Ps. 34:6; 50:15)
- ii) He took control of his thinking. (2 Pet. 1:3-4)
- iii) He made a commitment. (Ps. 34:1-3; 56:3; 57:7)
- iv) He received a little illumination and perspective.
- v) He was encouraged by another believer (who quoted Scripture).
- (1) He was reminded that there were others who feared God who were going through the same valley. (1 Cor. 10:13)
- (2) He was encouraged by the faith and assurance that the person ahead of him seemed to have made it through the valley.
- (3) He was encouraged by what the man ahead of him said from God's Word.
- (4) He was encouraged by the thought that if he hurried, he might be able to catch up to the person ahead and experience the joy of mutual encouragement. (Ecc. 4:9)

### Chapter 7 Christian meets Faithful (understanding and defeating temptations)

- 1) What do we learn about Faithful?
- a) He is a younger believer than Christian.
- i) But why is Faithful slightly further along the path than Christian?
- b) He refuses to slow down when Christian asks him to do so. Why?
- c) He is doing what he can to avoid the danger behind him.
- d) He does not laugh at or condemn Christian when he falls. (Prov. 16:18)
- e) He helps Christian get back up on his feet.
- 2) What did Faithful and Christian discuss as they journeyed together?
- a) Faithful told Christian how well he regarded him, how the citizens of Destruction responded when he left, and what had happened to Pliable. (see chapter 1)
- 3) What were some of the temptations Faithful faced on his journey?
- This teaches young Christians what to expect in their life of faith
- a) **Wanton**/the lust of the Flesh

- i) Her attempts to lure him: (cp. Prov. 7:15-
  - (1) With charm and attraction
  - (2) By covering over the consequences of yielding to her.
  - (3) With seductive speech
  - (4) With promises of pleasure and contentment
- ii) Faithful overcame her by:
  - (1) Remembering what the Bible says about yielding to lust.
  - (2) Knowing and meditating on God's Word. (Ps. 119:11)
  - (3) Recognizing that yielding would be defiling himself. (Gen. 39:9)
  - (4) Deciding between what he wanted and did not want. (Prov. 6:25)
  - (5) Shutting his eyes. (Rom. 13:14)
  - (6) Continuing on his journey. (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22)
- b) **The Old Man/Adam the First from the town of Deceit**
  - i) His attempts to lure him:
    - (1) By taking the initiative.
    - (2) By complementing/flattering Christian. (Prov. 26:28)
    - (3) By encouraging Christian to lower his standards.
    - (4) By being deceitful. (Heb. 3:13)
    - (5) By offering well-earned wages.
    - (6) By offering the delicacies of the world. (Heb. 11:25)
    - (7) By encouraging Christian to unite in a permanent relationship.
  - ii) Faithful overcame him by:
    - (1) Remembering what the Bible said. (Eph. 4:22)
    - (2) Resisting the Old Man.
    - (3) Rebuking the Old Man.
    - (4) Renouncing the Old Man.
- c) **Moses/condemnation (on the Hill of Difficulty)**
  - i) Cf. Rom. 3:19-26
- d) **Discontent (in the Valley of Humiliation)**
  - i) Remember Israel in the wilderness, Martha (Luke 10), Demas (2 Tim. 4)
  - ii) Faithful overcame him by:
    - (1) Remembering he had already disowned his former life and purposes.
    - (2) Reflecting on what the Bible said.
    - (3) Resisting the kind of thinking that promotes discontentment.
    - (4) Reflecting on the fact that difficulties have a good purpose. (2 Cor. 12:1-10)
- e) **Shame**
  - i) Shame is a painful emotion caused by a consciousness of guilt, caused by anything we consider to be degrading, unworthy, immodest, improper, or indecent.
  - ii) Why is shame such a powerful temptation to us?
    - (1) We fear man more than we fear God. (Prov. 29:25)
    - (2) Wickedness causes men to lack courage. (Prov. 28:1)
    - (3) We are more concerned about the body than the soul. (Matt. 10:28)

- (4) We love the approval of men more than the approval of God. (John 12:42-43)
- (5) We have a tendency to love the world more than we love God. (1 John 2:15-17)
- iii) Faithful overcame this temptation by:
  - (1) Considering that what is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight. (Luke 16:15)
  - (2) Determining that what God says is best despite the fact that the world is against it.
  - (3) Realizing that God sets forth our faith.
  - (4) Commanding Shame to go away.
  - (5) Recognizing that if he were ashamed, he would lose out on the blessing of God.
  - (6) Persisting in telling Shame that his efforts would be in vain.
  - (7) Glorifying in the things of which Shame tried to make him ashamed.
  - (8) Singing a song that reminded him of biblical truth.
  - (9) Crying out to God for help and seeking courage and strength to be valiant for the truth.

**Chapter 8 Encountering Talkative** (the importance of discernment and the dangers of hypocrisy)

- 1) Discussing Talkative's walk
  - a) He is the son of Mr. Say-well, from the town of Prating-row.
  - b) Two dangers we need to avoid:
    - i) Being overly suspicious and judgmental of anyone not in our little group. (Rom. 14:1)
    - ii) Being gullible and naïve. (Prov. 14:15)
  - c) Characteristics of Talkative
    - i) Different behavior away from home than what he does at home.
    - ii) Willing to spend time with anyone. (Ps. 1; 26:4-5)
    - iii) Willing to talk about anything. (Ps. 19:14)
    - iv) Lacks self-control. (Gal. 5:22-23; Eph. 5:18)
    - v) Doesn't spend time in prayer. (Matt. 6:5-7)
    - vi) Only talked about repentance. (Matt. 3:1-8)
    - vii) Only talked about the new birth. (1 John 3:9)
    - viii) Only talked about faith. (James 2:17)
    - ix) Engaged in ungodly business practices. (Prov. 11:1, 3)
    - x) Mocks and belittles those who are serious about sin. (Ps. 15:3)
    - xi) Causes many to fall. (Rom. 16:17-18)
    - xii) An embarrassment to real Christians. (Phil. 3:17-19)
    - xiii) The reason many unbelievers lose respect for Christianity. (Rom. 2:24)
  - d) Why does Bunyan emphasize this?
    - i) To promote discernment in believers. (Matt. 7:22-23)
    - ii) To provide a warning. (1 Cor. 15:33; Prov. 13:20)

- 2) Confronting Talkative's error
  - a) Eleven evidences of genuine salvation
    - i) There is a personal conviction of personal sin. (Jer. 17:9; Luke 18:13)
    - ii) There is repentance from sin and turning to Christ as the only hope of salvation.
    - iii) There is a conviction of the absolute necessity of agreeing with Christ and submitting to Him.
    - iv) There is a hungering and thirsting after holiness. (Heb. 12:14)
    - v) There is an ongoing struggle between the flesh and the new man.
    - vi) There is a humble disposition within the person.
    - vii) There are changes brought about in the person in whom God has been at work.
    - viii) There is a heart holiness that expresses itself through the killing of internal sin.
    - ix) There is a concern for family holiness.
    - x) There is a concern about all sin, including secret sin.
    - xi) There is a desire to promote and exalt righteousness in the world through verbal and practical expressions of faith.
  - b) Observe Faithful's response to Talkative's attack
    - i) He reproved him for having only a notional faith.
    - ii) He reproved him for having a talk but no walk.
    - iii) He told him that his life was odious to biblical Christianity.
    - iv) He told him that he was a disgrace to the body of Jesus Christ.
- 3) Parting company with Talkative
  - a) The importance of biblical speech
    - i) **Negatively:**
      - (1) We must not gossip or slander about others. (Ps. 15:3; 50:16-21; Prov. 20:19; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:18; James 4:11)
      - (2) We must not receive and believe negative report about others. (Ex. 23:1; Prov. 17:4; 14:15; 1 Cor. 13:5, 7)
    - ii) **Positively:**
      - (1) We are commanded to (or commended for) rebuke or reprove others. (Eph. 5:11; 1 Tim. 5:20; Gal. 2:11-16; 1 Tim. 1:19-20; 2 Tim. 2:16-18; 4:10; 3 John 1:9-10; Rev. 2:2, 6)
  - b) When is it right **to say** negative things?
    - i) When you have accurate first-hand knowledge.
    - ii) When you are able to evaluate a long-term pattern of life.
    - iii) When you have credible evidence to prove your statements.
    - iv) When your judgments are confirmed by other godly people.
    - v) When the negative things being said are public matters. (1 Cor. 5)
    - vi) When we are motivated by a genuine concern for the welfare of others. (Eph. 4:29)

- c) When is it right to **listen to** negative things?
  - i) When you are sure the person speaking is a godly person.
  - ii) When the person speaking is speaking as a Christian should. (Col. 4:6; Eph. 4:15)
  - iii) When the person speaking is not a bitter, complaining, or fault-finding person.
  - iv) When you are sure the person speaking really has all the facts.
  - v) When you are convinced that what the other person is saying has a positive purpose.

### Chapter 9 Vanity Fair and Faithful's martyrdom (courage to stand for Christ)

- 1) Encouragement from Evangelist (the third time they have met)
  - a) The wilderness represents those times when we are experiencing a loss of the sense of the presence of God.
  - b) What can help them?
    - i) Informal, edifying Christian fellowship with each other (Heb. 10:24-25; 1 Thess. 5:11)
    - ii) Formal Biblical counsel, instruction, and encouragement
  - c) How does Evangelist counsel them?
    - i) He greeted them warmly. (Rom. 16:16)
    - ii) He expressed interest in their lives.
    - iii) He showed appreciation for them and commended them.
    - iv) He respectfully listens to them and answers their questions.
    - v) He exhorts, instructs, challenges, and warns them.
  - d) How do they encourage Evangelist?
    - i) Christian calls him his friend.
    - ii) They express appreciation for him.
    - iii) They encourage him by asking for more teaching.
    - iv) They recognize his value for their journey.
    - v) They respond positively to his teaching. (1 Thess. 5:12-13; Heb. 13:7, 17)
  - e) See *Life in the Father's House* by Wayne Mack and Dave Swavely for practical ways to bring joy (or grief) to your pastor's heart.
- 2) Vanity Fair
  - a) Its meaning emphasizes the superficial and meaningless pleasures of the whole Fair.
  - b) Its founders were Beelzebub, Apollyon, and Legion.
  - c) What must be true of something to make it a worthless vanity?
    - i) When it is something clearly forbidden in Scripture. (Eph. 5:3-10)
    - ii) When they are pursued in the wrong way.
    - iii) When it is desired for the wrong reason.
    - iv) When it takes control and becomes the main focus of our life. (1 Cor. 6:12)
- 3) Causing a Commotion, Conflict of Opposing Sides, and Standing Trial

- a) This is the expression of Prov. 23:23 and John 3:20.
  - b) Why are Christian and Faithful noticed by the citizens?
    - i) Their unique clothing, speech, and lack of interest in the values of Vanity Fair
  - c) How could these two believers respond as they did?
    - i) They remembered the Biblical teaching of Evangelist.
    - ii) They realized that what was happening to them was not a mistake. (Rom. 8:28)
    - iii) They comforted and reassured one another. (1 Thess. 4:18; 5:11)
    - iv) They found comfort and strength in the knowledge of who and what God is.
- 4) False Witnesses, the Judge's Counsel, and The Jury's Verdict
- a) Note well the names of the three witnesses: Envy, Superstition, and Talebearer.
  - b) Note well the names of the twelve jurors: Blind-man, No-good, Malice, Love-lust, Live-loose, Heady, High-mind, Enmity, Liar, Cruelty, Hate-light, and Implacable.
- 5) What do we learn about Christian's escape and Faithful's Martyrdom?
- a) God has different ways in which He will glorify Himself through His children.
  - b) God delivers Christians from persecution in different ways.
- 6) How could Christian sing after his terrible ordeal?
- a) He had a biblical mindset. (Acts 5:41)
  - b) He believed God is sovereign and all-wise. (Eph. 4:1)
  - c) He knew the best was yet to come. (2 Cor. 5:8)

**Chapter 10** Christian meets Hopeful and Mr. By-ends (the danger of compromise)

- 1) What is the significance of Hopeful's arrival?
  - a) God is faithful in providing encouragement and fellowship when something is taken from us.
  - b) Christian fellowship is important in the Christian's life.
  - c) Hope is important in the Christian's life. (1 Pet. 1:3)
  - d) God knows what (and who) we need. (Phil. 4:19)
  - e) God often uses how we respond to difficult trials as a powerful witness to others. (1 Pet. 3:15)
- 2) Characteristics of Mr. By-ends
  - a) Liked to "go with the flow."
  - b) Wanted a refined, elegant, and comfortable religion.
  - c) Believed in his own kind of tolerance.
  - d) Believed the best religion was user-friendly.
  - e) Remember the importance of Amos 3:3.

- 3) Why did they separate from Mr. By-ends?
  - a) They did not agree on what the Christian life involved.
  - b) Mr. By-ends was not committed to a serious kind of Christianity.

### **Chapter 11 Encountering Giant Despair and Doubting Castle (temptation and depression)**

- 1) The Plain of Ease was small and quickly traveled, reminding readers of the at times brief mercies of God.
- 2) The temptation of materialism
  - a) Lucre (from Latin, "material gain") Hill, the Silver Mine, and Demas
    - i) Cf. Luke 12:13-20; 1 Tim. 6:17-20; 2 Tim. 4:9-10; 2 Pet. 2:1-3
    - ii) The size of the hill is deceptive in relation to its potential danger.
    - iii) Demas attempts to get Christian and Hopeful to do what Jesus said we cannot do. (Matt. 6:24)
    - iv) The travelers remembered Biblical examples of failures in this area, including Gehazi (2 Kings 5:15-27), Judas (Matt. 26:15)
  - b) Remember Lot's wife (Luke 17:32; Gen. 19:1-26; Col. 3:5; Eph. 5:3)
    - i) God is serious about judgment.
    - ii) God reminds us of the coming judgment.
    - iii) Covetousness is a serious sin.
    - iv) Learn lessons from the bad examples so we don't follow their ways.
    - v) We may escape one judgment only to be overtaken by another.
    - vi) God hates all sin.
    - vii) God wants us to obey Him completely.
    - viii) God wants us to see sin for what it is and to hate it for what it is.
    - ix) The way we respond to God's warnings reveals the condition of our heart.
    - x) When we come to Christ, we must be willing to give up everything for His sake. (Luke 14:26)
- 3) The River of God (the joy of refreshment)
  - a) Cf. Ps. 46:4-5; 65:9; Rev. 22:1
  - b) How does God refresh us?
    - i) Through the regular study and meditation on the Word. (Ps. 1:1-3; 19:8; Jer. 15:16)
    - ii) Gathering with other believers for weekly worship.
    - iii) Waiting on the Lord. (Is. 40:31)
    - iv) Fellowship with and encouragement from the people of God. (2 Cor. 7:5-7; Acts 28:15)
  - c) After this time of refreshment, they are immediately tempted in By-path Meadow. We too quickly let our guard down
- 4) By-path Meadow (the many variations of temptations)
  - a) Types of temptations
    - i) Tempted to do those things which are obviously wrong.

- ii) Tempted to get the right things in the wrong way.
  - iii) Tempted because we are tired and sore, and the way is rough.
  - iv) Tempted to allow our desire for something better and easier to control us.  
(Prov. 3:5-6; 28:26)
  - v) Tempted to trust in mere mortals. (1 Cor. 11:1; Ps. 146:3-6)
  - b) Note Christian's response to Hopeful's rebuke.
  - c) Observations about their return to the right path
    - i) Going back can be very dangerous.
      - (1) Going the wrong way is usually easier than getting back to the right way.
      - (2) There are usually unpleasant consequences for our sin.
    - ii) Going only part way back to the right path is a dangerous practice.
      - (1) "It is precisely because they stop at that little shelter that they are captured by Giant Despair."
- 5) Giant Despair (battling depression)
- a) Who or what is Giant Despair? "He represents the kind of despair and depression a person may experience when he is under conviction of sin and does not deal with his sins in a biblical way."
    - i) Cf. Ps. 32:3-4; 38:3-8
    - ii) Christian battled depression in chapters 1 & 2 before he was a believer.
    - iii) This is not a minor discouragement but rather Giant Despair.
  - b) **Immediate**, circumstantial (contributing factors) causes for depression
    - These often do not or cannot change.
    - i) They lack the necessities of life for a significant period of time.
    - ii) They are uncertain about what will become of them. (2 Cor. 4:8)
    - iii) They experienced physical and verbal abuse.
    - iv) They experienced physical disability (weak, tired, exhausted).
    - v) They are distant from family and friends.
    - vi) They are experiencing extreme pain from the beatings they received.
    - vii) They have been told there is no hope and their situation will not improve.
    - viii) They received bad counsel and permission to commit suicide.
    - ix) Someone with authority threatens them with horrible additional abuse.
  - c) **Ultimate**, real causes for depression
    - i) They chose to depart from the way of faith and obedience.
    - ii) They had sinned and were aware of their guilt.
    - iii) They tried to deal with their sin in an incomplete manner.
    - iv) While they were perplexed and confused, they did not turn to God's Word or prayer.
    - v) They struggled with doubts about God and distrust in God.
    - vi) They thought there was not way of escape.
    - vii) They shifted their focus from God, His commands, His promises, etc.
    - viii) They had forgotten Satan's power is limited.
    - ix) They had forgotten there are some things worse than death.

- x) They had forgotten the sovereignty of God.
- xi) They had forgotten past victories and past deliverances.
- xii) They focused on their problems and not God.
- xiii) They had neglected their times of prayer.
- d) How did they overcome this temptation?
  - i) Christian received godly counsel from Hopeful. (Rom. 15:14; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; James 5:19-20)
    - (1) Hopeful reminds him of God's Word.
    - (2) Hopeful reminds him of God's sovereignty.
    - (3) Hopeful reminds him of 1 Cor. 10:13.
    - (4) Hopeful exhorts him to persevere. (2 Cor. 10:5)
  - ii) They both began to pray. (Ps. 50:15; Luke 18:1; James 1:5)
  - iii) They remembered and utilized the promises of God. (2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 8:28; 1 Cor. 10:13; James 1:2; Ps. 55:22; 1 John 2:1-2)
  - iv) They began to think constructively and unselfishly. (Acts 20:35; Prov. 11:24-25)

**Chapter 12 Arriving at the Delectable Mountains** (the ministry of churches and pastors)

- 1) Remember he had been given a glimpse of these Mountains in chapter 5.
- 2) Note the description of these Mountains.
  - a) They belong to the Lord of the Hill.
  - b) They are a place of refreshment.
  - c) They are a place of rest.
  - d) They are a place where Shepherds feed their flocks.
  - e) They are known as Emmanuel's Land.
  - f) They are within sight of the Celestial City.
  - g) They are inhabited by the Lord's sheep.
- 3) Four specific Shepherds are named: Knowledge, Experience, Watchful, and Sincerity
- 4) What did these Shepherds do?
  - a) Encouraged questions from them
  - b) Showed personal interest in them
  - c) Fed them
  - d) Protected them through several warnings, including Mount Error and Mount Caution.
  - e) Encouraged them

**Chapter 13 Encountering Ignorance, Mr. Turn-away, and Little-Faith** (dealing with professing Christians)

- 1) Ignorance (rejection of truth)
  - He will reappear in chapters 16-17.

- a) Ignorance is shown to be: conceited, enthusiastic, uninterested in the Bible, desirous of going to the Celestial City but with no concern for his sin, ignorant of God's grace, ignorant of how to be in a right relationship with God, ignorant of God's Word, ignorant of his own sinfulness, ignorant of motivations to holiness and godliness, ignorant that salvation is wholly of God, ignorant of justifying righteousness
  - b) Christian and Hopeful respond to Ignorance by:
    - i) Using the Bible as the standard to evaluate, respond to, and counsel Ignorance.
    - ii) Being very specific in the way they counsel Ignorance.
    - iii) Using questions that make Ignorance think.
    - iv) Being careful in how they address Ignorance. (Cf. Prov. 26:4-5; 1 Thess. 5:14; Titus 3:9-11)
  - c) How does Ignorance respond to their counsel?
- 2) Mr. Turn-away (temporary and external acceptance of truth)
- a) Cf. Matt. 12:43-45; 2 Pet. 2:18-20; Jude 1:4
- 3) Little-faith, from the town of Sincere
- a) We need to be slow to make a judgment between a real Christian who is struggling and a professing Christian who has never been born again.
    - i) How do they respond when they sin? (Prov. 24:16)
    - ii) Where do they come from? What progress have they made?
    - iii) Genuine believers can have doubts. (Matt. 6:30; 14:30-31)
  - b) Remember the dangers of sleeping
    - i) Chapter 4: the sleep of unbelief
    - ii) Chapter 4: the sleep of backing off of Biblical responsibilities
    - iii) Chapter 11: the sleep of falling short of full obedience
    - iv) Chapter 13: the sleep of failing to guard one's heart
  - c) The attack of the robbers Faint-heart, Mistrust, and Guilt.
    - i) They stole some things but not everything.
    - ii) They left when Great-grace appeared on the scene. (Heb. 11:33-37)
  - d) Little-faith's response to the robbery
    - i) Focused on what he lost but forgot what he had not lost.
  - e) The wrong kind of sympathy from Hopeful
    - i) Almost justifies the wrongdoing of Little-faith.
    - ii) Defends himself and Little-faith by misusing Scripture.
    - iii) Minimizes the power of discouragement, doubt, and guilt.
  - f) Christian responds to Hopeful with a gentle rebuke, an explanation of the power behind the robbers, and his own personal testimony of dealing with these robbers. He tells Hopeful what not to do and what he should do.

**Chapter 14** Being Deceived in Enchanted Ground (dealing with flattery)

- 1) Illustrates Gal. 6:1

- 2) Why do they get caught in this trap?
  - a) Because of their ignorance. (Rom. 1:13; 11:25; 1 Cor. 10:1; 12:1; 2 Cor. 1:8)
  - b) Because of their confusion
- 3) What should they have done?
  - a) They should have sought godly counsel. (Prov. 15:22; Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12)
  - b) They should have prayed. (James 1:5; Ps. 119:105)
- 4) They did what they shouldn't have done.
  - a) They followed the wrong counsel. (2 Cor. 11:13-14; Matt. 7:15; Acts 20:29-30; 1 John 4:1; Rev. 2:2-3)
  - b) They were deceived. (1 Pet. 4:7)
  - c) They believed flattery. (Prov. 29:5; 2 Pet. 2:2-3; 2 Tim. 4:3)
- 5) How did they escape the net of flattery?
  - a) They remembered the Shepherds' (chapter 12) warnings. (Prov. 27:5-6)
  - b) They remembered what the Bible says about flatterers. (Prov. 29:5)
  - c) They remembered the Shepherds' instructions.
  - d) They received help from the Shining One. (Heb. 1:14)
  - e) They composed a song to help others. (Ps. 32, 51)
- 6) Their encounter with Atheist (a self-flatterer).
  - a) Atheist mocks them and discounts their beliefs.
  - b) Christian and Hopeful respond:
    - i) By recognizing Atheist for what he really is (a flatterer)
    - ii) By reflecting on what it had cost them to listen to the previous flatterer. (Prov. 19:27; 14:7)
    - iii) By reflecting on the truth concerning unbelievers. (2 Cor. 4:
- 7) The temptation of Enchanted Ground (the difficulty of staying alert)
  - a) Cf. 1 Thess. 5:6; Eph. 5:11-17; Prov. 6:6-11; 10:5; Rom. 13:11
  - b) Cf. Eccles. 4:9; Eph. 4:29; Heb. 3:13; 10:24-25

#### Chapter 15 Hopeful Shares His Story (the benefit of edifying communication)

- 1) What he was like **before** salvation (his corruption)
  - a) A Vanity Fair lifestyle (chapter 12), focused on this life, ignoring God's Word, took pleasure in sin. (Ps. 17:14)
- 2) How he came to salvation (his conversion)
  - a) He described how God used Faithful and Christian.
    - i) They told of the serious consequences of his sin. (Rom. 6:21-23)
    - ii) He saw their changed lives. (1 Thess. 1:2-9)
    - iii) He witnessed their deep commitment to God's truth.

- b) He described how God brought him to salvation
  - i) He was increasingly burdened with his sin
  - ii) He talked with Faithful and sought his help
  - iii) Faithful gives him Godward answers
  - iv) He asked God to reveal Christ to him (2 Cor. 4:6;
- 3) What he is like **after** salvation (his changes)
  - a) Note the progression of his response, sorrow then joy
  - b) He experienced new desires, motivations, and longings. (Phil. 1:20)

### Chapter 16 Fearing God and Backsliding (the fear of the Lord)

- Ignorance appears in chapters 1, 13, 16, and 17
- 1) What does the fear of the Lord look like in our life?
  - a) We will have a godly reverence for God.
  - b) We will be watchful, not complacent.
  - c) We will want to build up other believers in the faith.
  - d) We will practice self-denial.
  - e) We will walk in sincerity and integrity before God and people.
  - f) We will exercise compassion and concern for other believers.
  - g) We will practice fervent prayer.
  - h) We will have a willingness to do what God wants us to do.
  - i) We will exercise humility of mind.
  - j) We will hope in the mercies of God.
  - k) We will develop a passion for holiness.
  - l) We will increasingly delight in God's Word.
  - m) We will increase in our love for God, His people, and the lost.
- 2) Why some people (wrongly) say we shouldn't talk about fearing God.
  - a) They say fear comes from the Devil. (2 Tim. 1:7; Rom. 8:15; 1 John 4:18)
  - b) They say fear spoils their faith. (John 10:10; 15:11; Neh. 8:10; Gal. 5:22)
  - c) They say fear is unworthy of a Christian, robbing him of confidence. (Ps. 112; Prov. 14:26)
  - d) They say fear detracts from a sense of self-esteem and moral goodness. (Prov. 14:26-27; Acts 9:31)
- 3) How is the fear of the Lord produced and sustained?
  - a) It flows from the distinguishing love of God for His elect. (Jer. 32:40)
  - b) It flows from a new heart. (Jer. 32:39)
  - c) It flows from the work of God's Word in our hearts. (Ps. 34)
  - d) It flows from faith. (Heb. 11:7)
  - e) It flows from genuine repentance for sin. (2 Cor. 7:10-11)
  - f) It flows from a sense of God's love and kindness for us. (Ps. 130:3-4; Jer. 33:8-9)

- g) It flows from a sense of God's judgment to be executed in this world. (Ps. 119:120; 1 Chron. 13:12)
  - h) It flows from a Godward remembrance of our former convictions of sin. (Deut. 4:9-11)
  - i) It flows from remembering how God has answered our prayers in times of distress and when we begged for His mercy. (1 Kings 8:37-40)
  - j) It flows from a remembrance that God perfectly knows the heart. (Ps. 119:1-14; Luke 16:15)
  - k) It flows from a sense of the impartial judgment of God on people and their works. (2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 21-22; 1 Pet. 1:17)
- 4) Meeting Mr. Temporary (understanding backsliding)
- a) Hopeful and Christian explain **why** people backslide
    - i) Their consciences are awakened but their heart attitudes toward sin, self, and God remain unchanged.
    - ii) They dislike the shame of true religion.
    - iii) They dislike the genuine pain and discomfort that comes from conviction of sin.
    - iv) They have never truly been born again. (2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Thess. 1:9-10)
  - b) Christian describes **how** people backslide
    - i) They make a choice to not think seriously about God, holiness, judgment, and death.
    - ii) They gradually neglect profitable religious duties such as prayer, Bible reading, personal discipline, self-examination, etc.
    - iii) Their church involvement increasingly diminishes.
    - iv) Their loyalty to Christians grows slack and they begin to critically murmur. (Matt. 7:1)
    - v) They prefer the friendship and fellowship of godless people.
    - vi) They become increasingly ungodly in their thinking and living.
  - c) What can we do to avoid backsliding?
    - i) "Simply put, we do the opposite of what backsliders do! We maintain our relationship with God. We cultivate a desire to think about God, His judgment, His holiness, and His death. We commit ourselves and we discipline ourselves to continue in religious duties even when we don't feel like it. We long for the fellowship of zealous Christians, desiring to be around them. We devote ourselves to church attendance; we make sure that we are there at the church services and we come with our hearts prepared. We practice Proverbs 4:23 ... We avoid a critical spirit toward our Christian brothers and sisters (Philippians 4:8; Romans 12:10). We prefer the friendship and fellowship of godly people, and we are careful in terms of our associations with the ungodly (1 Corinthians 15:23). We refuse to be involved in respectable sins, or what people call little sins, such as white lies. We refused to take these "little sins" lightly, but we deal with them in a very strong way. We make sure that our thinking is

thinking that truly reflects the teaching of the Word of God. We think much of the love of God. As we do those things, God uses these means to keep us from backsliding and keep us untracked spiritually.”

**Chapter 17** The Country of Beulah, Crossing the River, and the City (the believer and death)

- 1) The Country of Beulah (cf. Is. 62:4)
  - a) Representing times of unusual sense of God's blessing; a place of peace, comfort, and joy.
  - b) Bunyan places this at the end of Christian and Hopeful's journey. Your latter years of the Christian life can be times of great joy.
  
- 2) Crossing the River
  - a) It is unavoidable for Christians.
  - b) The experience of death can be very deep for some Christians.
  - c) Christian is very troubled at this time.
    - i) He does not remember his past blessings and encouragements from God.
    - ii) He remembers his sins.
    - iii) He focuses on the difficulties he is experiencing rather than God's promises.
  - d) Christian is helped at this time by the godly, Biblical counsel of Hopeful.
  - e) They are met by two angels after they cross the river. (Heb. 1:14; Luke 16:22; 2 Cor. 5:8)
  
- 3) Entering the City
  - a) It is a **real** place, not simply a state of mind. (John 14:3)
  - b) It is a **splendorous** place. (2 Cor. 12:2-4)
  - c) It is a **large** place. (John 14:2)
  - d) It is a **fully occupied** place. (Heb. 12:22; Rev. 5:11)
  - e) It is a **delightful** place. (Luke 23:43; Rev. 2:7)
  - f) It is a **righteous** place. (Heb. 12:23; Rev. 21:27)
  - g) It is a **communal** place. (no barriers to fellowship)
  - h) It is a **loving** place. (Phil. 2:3-4)
  - i) It is a **trouble-free** place. (Rev. 7:16-17; 14:13; 21:4)
  - j) It is a **soul-satisfying** place. (Ps. 16:11)