

## Pilgrim's Progress (Part 1)

**Quote:** "You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you."  
– John Bunyan

- **The Author's Apology** (at the beginning of the book)
  - Define "apology": a formal justification or defense
  - *"like sparks from coals do fly"* – author hopes this book will "spark" conversations
  - There is an scriptural allusion or citation on almost every page
  - "This book will make a traveler out of thee"
    - Bunyan wants the reader to begin his own spiritual "pilgrimage"
    - Define "pilgrimage": a journey to a sacred place
  
- **(Read 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph)**
  - *"den"* = Bedford jail
  - *"wilderness"* = reference to Israel's wanderings in the wilderness
  - *"dream"* = Bunyan's allegory (portraying the Christian's journey in picturesque language)
  - *"a man"* = referred to as Christian (later in the story he refers back to him as "Graceless")
  - His attire: (Activity slide - match Scripture references to descriptions)
    - this corresponds with page 3 of the Handouts (Pilgrim's Progress - Part 1)
  
- **(Read 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph)**
- **Christian's Family**
  - Wife: Christiana
  - Boys: Matthew, Samuel, Joseph & James
  - They think he is mentally unwell
    - "Dad has got religion!"
  - He doesn't try to persuade them further
    - They make fun of him, scold him, and neglect him
  
- **Evangelist**
- **Questions:**
  - Who does Christian represent? All of unsaved mankind
  - What is the burden on his back? His sin
    - Why do other people in the City of Destruction not have a burden?
  - What is the book he is reading? The Bible
    - How do we know that?
  - Why does it upset him so much? It shows him that he is lost
  - Who does Evangelist represent? (Discuss further)
  
- **John Gifford**
  - Evangelist is based on the pastor of the church in Bedford
  - Does "Evangelist" today have to be a preacher?
    - What does an "Evangelist" do? Point people to Jesus
    - Who can do this?
    - 2 Corinthians 5:11 – "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."
  
- **Parchment Roll from Evangelist**
  - *"Fly from the wrath to come"*
  - *"Whither must I fly?"*
  
- **Evangelist's message:**
  - Go toward *"yonder wicket-gate"*

- small gate built into a larger door, wall, or fence
- Matthew 7:14 – "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."
- *"keep that light in your eye"*
  - Christian must keep "that light" (God's Word) in sight or he'll never find the *"wicket-gate"*
- **Application:**
  - Why does Evangelist not try to help remove the burden from Christian's back?
  - Evangelist doesn't say, "Quit doing this or that." He just points him to *"the light."*
  - How does this compare to when we are working with someone who is unsaved?
- **Fleeing the City of Destruction**
  - Regardless of the pull of family, Christian fled
  - Not even one's closest relatives should be allowed to hinder you from serving God
- **Obstinate & Pliable**
  - The City of Destruction doesn't give up its people without a fight
  - They represent the condition of most people when they hear the Gospel
    - Obstinate = wants nothing to do with it
    - Pliable = goes along with it until hardship comes along
  - It is thought that Obstinate's father was "Spare-the-Rod" and his mother was "Spoil-the-Child"<sup>1</sup>
    - he got whatever he wanted
  - Obstinate represents people who believe that the Gospel is foolish – no questions about it – they will not be moved
  - Obstinate makes fun & calls Christian names
    - *"crazy headed coxcombs"*
    - *"brain sick"*
    - *"mised"*
    - *"fantastical fellow"*
  - Obstinate becomes angry & returns to the city
  - Pliable: notice he doesn't have his own *"guidebook"* nor is he reading from Christian's book
    - he's only interested in the "rewards" of this journey
  - Christian is so excited to have a companion
    - he fails to realize that some leave the City of Destruction for the wrong reason
    - Just as many walked with Jesus for "the loaves and the fishes"
    - Christian doesn't show wisdom in what he shares with Pliable
      - \* endless kingdom
      - \* everlasting life
      - \* crowns of glory
      - \* no more crying
      - \* seraphim & cherubim
    - Notice that Pliable has no burden on his back (no awareness of sin and guilt)
      - \* Once Pliable learns of the hardships of this way, he'll leave Christian & return
- **Application**
  - When witnessing to someone, what is wrong with telling them that they'll go to Heaven, God will work everything out in their life, they'll have money & happiness, etc.?

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.bunyanministries.org/articles/pp\\_commentary/02\\_com\\_christian\\_pursued.pdf](http://www.bunyanministries.org/articles/pp_commentary/02_com_christian_pursued.pdf)

- **Slough of Despond**

- "slough" = mire
- "despond" = to be depressed by loss of hope, confidence, or courage
- it is believed that Bunyan (as a young man) lived beside a stream that overflowed in the spring and pooled in a low area, producing a basin of muck & mire
- they fail to notice the safe steps
  - **Application:**
    - Depression can take hold of you like the muck & mire of this slough
    - Psalm 69:2 – "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing."
    - Great men of God have battled depression: Martin Luther, John Bunyan, C. H. Spurgeon, George Whitefield
    - God always has a way through the miry places in your life
- Pliable doesn't sink as much as Christian. Why?
  - No burden of sin
  - No shame
  - Merely inconvenienced
- Pliable has had enough
  - doesn't care that Christian is still in the slough
- Christian cannot get out by himself, but which side of the slough did he work toward? (The side toward the City of Destruction or the side toward the wicket gate?)
- God sends "Help"
  - a song
  - a Scripture
  - a message
  - another Christian
- Christian asks why this slough isn't repaired
  - **Application:** What is the purpose for spiritual Sloughs of Despond?
    - weeds out the Pliables
    - used to awake the traveler to his/her spiritual needs
    - helps people who are following behind you
      - \* Christiana was able to avoid this mire
  - Help says that the King has tried to repair it, but the mire continues to flow

- **Mr. Worldly Wiseman from the Town of Carnal-Policy**

- thought to be modeled after a minister in Bunyan's life
  - Edward Fowler
  - liberal pastor who wouldn't stand against the rules set on pastors by the king
- Mr. Worldly Wiseman enjoys stopping pilgrims
  - he challenges & argues with them
  - **Application:** be careful of having conversations with these types of people
- Mr. Worldly Wiseman is more persuasive than Obstinate. Why?
  - He shows concern about Christian's burden
  - He asks about Christian's family
  - "Will you listen to me if I give you good advice?"
    - Going against Evangelist's advice
      - \* "There is not a more dangerous and troublesome way in the world than is that into which he hath directed thee!"
      - \* "Hear me; I am older than thou."

