

Pilgrim's Progress (Part 3)

Quote: "Better, though difficult, the right way to go, Than wrong, though easy, where the end is woe."

— John Bunyan

- **Last Lesson:**

- Christian left Interpreter's house
- Christian went to the Cross
- Christian met Simple, Sloth & Presumption

- **Formalist & Hypocrisy**

- As Christian is walking, he is troubled by Simple, Sloth & Presumption
- Two men jumped the wall
 - The name of one was Formalist
 - 2 Timothy 3:5 – "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."
 - Great at going through the motions (forms of godliness): going to church, wearing the right clothes, saying all the right things, get baptized, sing in the choir
 - * no power – no real experience; no having the Holy Spirit within
 - The name of the other was Hypocrisy
 - Formalist will eventually grow up and become a hypocrite
 - Hypocrite: pretending to be something that you're not
- **Charles Spurgeon:** "Perhaps they had just been to a revival service, got excited, and decided to become Christians – without true repentance and a change of heart."
 - Where were they born? (Land of Vain Glory)
 - their glory is in themselves; it is vain
 - Romans 11:36 – glory belongs to God
 - * "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever."
 - Are we willing to do things for God's glory instead of our own?
 - * Be made fun of?
 - * Work hard with no recognition?
 - Christian has had a long hard journey to get to this point, but they caught up with him quickly.
 - "When a man has nothing to carry, he can run quickly."
 - "Empty drums make a great sound."
 - "Shallow brooks flow at a great rate."
- Christian asks why they didn't come through the gate
 - Don't you know that "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber" (John 10:1)?
 - "What matter is it which way we get in? If we are in, we are in."
 - In other words, "Christian, you came in your way & we came in our way. Why is your way any better than ours?"
 - They told Christian "he needed not to trouble his head thereabout."
- They laugh at Christian:
 - "the coat that is on thy back . . . was, we trow [believe], given thee by some of thy neighbors, to hide the shame of thy nakedness."
 - saint's garments = robe of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10)
 - this is one thing Formalist & Hypocrisy cannot imitate; so they make fun
- Then all three continue on their way

- **The Hill Difficulty**

- At the foot of the hill there was a spring
 - Isaiah 49:10 – *"They shall not hunger nor thirst . . . even by the springs of water shall he guide them."*
 - grace for difficulties
 - Only Christian drank (others felt no need)
- Shortcuts (they were good at this)
 - Formalist chose the road to the left
 - Didn't know that it was called "Danger"
 - led into a forest & was completely lost
 - Hypocrisy chose the road to the right
 - "Destruction"
 - wide field; he stumbled and fell
- Christian followed the path straight up the hill
 - "Difficulty"
 - perhaps it was easier for Christian to chose this way than it would have been for Formalist or Hypocrisy, since he had been through "difficulties" before
 - trials of life can prepare you for the big "Hill of Difficulty"
 - "The hill, though high, I covet to ascend; The difficulty will not me offend; For I perceive the way to life lies here: Come, pluck up heart, let's neither faint nor fear. Better, though difficult, the right way to go, Than wrong, though easy, where the end is woe."
- **A Pleasant Arbor**
 - midway up the hill
 - made by the Lord of the hill for weary travelers
 - Christian fell asleep until almost dark
 - one came to him, saying, "Go to the ant; thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise" (Proverbs 6:6).
 - Why? (Christian had rested too long; it was getting dark)
 - he had done the very thing he found troubling in Simple, Sloth & Presumption
- **Timorous and Mistrust**
 - Christian got to the top of the hill
 - Two men running "amain" (at full speed)
 - "Sirs, what's the matter? you run the wrong way?"
 - Timorous = afraid, cowardly, weak-hearted
 - Mistrust = suspicious, untrusting, unbelieving
 - * Revelation 21:8 – *"But the fearful, and unbelieving . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."*
 - What were they afraid of? (Danger & two lions)
 - Their fear affected Christian; so he decided to look again at his scroll, which was given to comfort Christian
 - discovered that he had dropped it
 - carefully, prayerfully, tearfully went back until he found his parchment
 - "O wretched man that I am, that I should sleep in the midst of difficulty!"
 - "How many steps have I taken in vain! How far might I have been on my way by this time!"
- **The Palace Beautiful**
 - Christian sees this ahead

- Palace = visible Church of God (local church)
 - * Hill of Difficulty = Mount Zion
 - * What's at the top of Mount Zion? (The Church of God)
- Notice that the Way goes by this palace, not through it
 - * church joining, card signing, baptism is not what gets you into Heaven
- Decided to ask for lodging
- Saw two lions
 - this is what Timorous & Mistrust were so afraid of
 - hard to completely identify today when there's little or no religious persecution
 - * Many in Bunyan's day were afraid of belonging/attending any church other than the state-approved congregations
 - * They were Timorous (timid) and Mistrust (untrusting)
 - + the lions weed out these types
 - * Lions weed out those who don't have faith
 - + Hebrews 11:6 – *"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*
- The porter's name was Watchful – which means "the good minister"
 - Watchful = pastor
 - "Is thy strength so small? Fear not the lions, for they are chained, and are placed there for trial of faith . . . and for discovery of those that have none: keep in the midst of the path, and no hurt shall come unto thee."
 - "Keep in the midst of the path"
 - * Walking too close to the edge is dangerous
- Christian asks, "What house is this?" and "May I lodge here?"
 - Watchful tells him the purpose of Palace Beautiful
 - * "This house was built by the Lord of the hill . . . for the relief and security of pilgrims."
 - * The Church of God was built to provide rest, protection, shelter, and spiritual food.
- Watchful calls for Discretion
 - keep in mind the light (spiritual understanding) of this time period
 - * Discretion = church elders
 - Christian is desiring to "join" the church
 - * Discretion is questioning him to check his qualifications
 - + Where have you been?
 - + Where are you going?
 - + How did you get in the Way?
 - + What have you seen & who have you met?
 - + What is your name?
 - "The two lions along the path leading to Palace Beautiful were used by Bunyan to represent the civil and ecclesiastical authorities who had been enjoined by law to suppress all nonconformist congregations. Bunyan himself had run foul of that law and been jailed for twelve years for his beliefs. But at the time he was writing *Pilgrim's Progress*, enforcement of the penal code against the Nonconformists had been somewhat relaxed. The power of the authorities had been temporarily curbed. The "lions" had been put in chains. They could still roar at Nonconformists, but if the latter watched their step in walking a straight line along the middle of the path, they could pass safely between the lions."¹

¹ http://www.cliffsnotes.com/study_guide/literature/pilgrims-progress/summary-analysis/part-1/section-4.html

Activity Answers

M Where Formalist & Hypocrisy were born
A He that cometh not in by the door is a
J The Lord gave Christian this for his rags
K Given to comfort Christian on his way
E Name of hill Christian climbed
L Formalist chose this road
F Hypocrisy chose this road

G Pretending to be what you are not
I Having a form of godliness without the Holy Spirit
D Timorous & Mistrust were afraid of this
B Palace Beautiful represents this
C Hill of Difficulty represents this
H Porter's Name