

Pilgrim's Progress (Part 5)

Quote: "I have given Him my faith, and sworn my allegiance to Him; how, then, can I go back from this, and not be hanged as a traitor?"
—John Bunyan

- **Recap Previous Lesson**

- Palace Beautiful
 - The Church of God (local congregation)
 - Many rooms (much learning)
 - Met elders
- Valley of Humiliation
 - fought with Apollyon (false religion of all ages)
- Tree of Life

- **Valley of the Shadow of Death**

- Christian must needs go through this valley
 - only way to the Celestial City
 - only through dark trials can certain spiritual growth come
 - 19 Scriptures that talk about the "shadow of death"
- "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death . . ." (Psalm 23:4).
 - This is not a valley of Christian's death
 - valley of things & persons that accompany death
 - "those who traffic in death, beings justly consigned to death, and the chilling atmosphere of death that arises from hell to threaten the soul"¹
- Solitary place (lonely)
 - "A wilderness, a land of deserts and pits, a land of drought, and of the Shadow of Death, a land that no man [but a Christian] passeth through, and where no man dwelt" (Jeremiah 2:6).
- Dark place
 - "dark as pitch" (Two Men)
 - "A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness" (Job 10:22).
- This valley is harder on Christian than his fight with Apollyon. (Why?)
 - fight with Apollyon exciting, visual
 - this is a valley of shadows and quiet lonely hours

- **The Two Men**

- Children of the spies of Canaan
 - "them that brought up an evil report of the good land" (Numbers 13:32).
 - told Christian to go back
 - described the valley:
 - "hobgoblins, satyrs, and dragons of the pit"
 - * hobgoblins = not Biblical (as the others); wicked spirit
 - * satyrs = demon-possessed goat (Isaiah 13:21; Isaiah 34:14)
 - * dragons = fire-breathing serpent (Psalm 91:13)
 - "continual howling and yelling"
 - "people bound in chains and afflictions"

¹ http://www.bunyanministries.org/pp_commentary/17_com%20christian_at_valley_of_shadow_of_death.pdf

- "over that valley hang the clouds of confusion"
 - "Be it thy way; we will not choose it for ours."
- **Description of the Valley**
 - Right hand – very deep ditch
 - the ditch where the blind have led the blind (Matthew 15:14)
 - religious leaders (Pharisees) deceived and led the people astray
 - Left hand - dangerous quagmire (a soft wet area of low-lying land that sinks underfoot)
 - no bottom for one's foot to stand on
 - King David once fell into this very quagmire and was plucked out (Psalm 69:14)
 - "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings" (Psalm 40:2)
 - quagmire of sin
 - Very narrow pathway
 - "ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left" (Deuteronomy 5:32)
 - the danger of overbalancing (ditch of error versus the mire of moral failure)
 - Very dark pathway
 - dark cloud hides the light (Christ)
 - "when darkness veils his loving face"
 - Place of uncertainty
 - "when he lifted up his foot to go forward, he knew not where, or upon what he should set it next"
 - The mouth of hell was in the middle of this valley
 - Christian heard (at Interpreter's house) from a man who had a dream about hell
 - flame and smoke came out, with sparks & hideous noises
 - wailing and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 13:42)
 - weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 25:30)
 - * "gnashing of teeth" = a phrase denoting the extreme anguish and utter despair of men consigned to eternal condemnation; to grind or clench one's teeth
 - **Choosing the Right Weapon**
 - Christian's sword was no good against these
 - * sometimes the Word isn't what we need; there's another weapon that works better
 - Christian was forced to put up his sword & use another weapon
 - All-prayer (Ephesian 6:18)
 - "O Lord . . . deliver my soul" (Psalm 116:4)
 - dreadful noises were heard for several miles (by Christian)
 - the devil can put out accusations that haunt the Christian for miles (days)
 - A company of fiends (evil spirits; demons) coming to meet Christian
 - Christian stops
 - He has half a thought to go back, but:
 - (1) He might be halfway through this valley
 - (2) He remembers that he has already vanquished many a danger
 - (3) The danger of going back might be greater than the danger of going forward
 - Christian tells the fiends: "I will walk in the strength of the Lord God."
 - "I will go in the strength of the Lord God" (Psalm 71:16)
 - "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7)
 - firmly tell the enemy that you are determined & you know God is going to help
 - the fiends came no farther

○ **Two Voices**

- One of the wicked ones
 - slips behind Christian undetected
 - whispers in his ear so convincingly that Christian thought these were his own thoughts
 - the devil will put horrible thoughts in our minds (thoughts against God) and then convince us that those are our thoughts
 - * he can be very deceiving, confusing the Christian
- after hearing this voice for awhile, Christian heard another voice (the voice of a man):
 - "Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me" (Psalm 23:4).
 - This made Christian glad for (3) reasons:
 - * (1) Others who feared God were also in this valley (he was not alone)
 - * (2) God was with them, so He would be with Christian as well
 - + even though Christian could not feel Him (Job 9:11)
 - * (3) He hoped to catch up with another pilgrim to have company
 - + once Christian catches up with Faithful, he has Christian companionship the rest of his journey
 - the importance of godly fellowship

○ **Morning**

- at the darkest, most dangerous place – God will send light (spiritual help)
 - he "turneth the shadow of death into the morning" (Amos 5:8)
- Christian can see more perfectly the ditch & the quagmire
- the hobgoblins, satyrs & dragons will not come close in the light of day
 - evils & dangers aren't gone, just identifiable
- 2nd part of the valley more dangerous
 - traps, nets, snares
 - without the light, Christian would have fallen
 - "His candle shineth on my head, and by his light I go through darkness" (Job 29:3).

● **The Two Giants**

- At the end of the valley, Christian found the bodies, bones, and blood of other pilgrims who had gone this way
- Christian saw a cave
 - the home of two giants (Pope & Pagan)
 - these giants were responsible for all the bodies that lay outside the cave
 - (Christian persecution & martyrdom)
 - Christian passed by without any problems
 - Pagan was dead (paganism had long lost its power over the people)
 - Pope was old and weak (papalism had lost its exclusive power in A.D. 1530)
 - * "grown so crazy and stiff in his joints that he can now do little more than sit in his cave's mouth, grinning at pilgrims as they go by, and biting his nails because he cannot come at them"
 - the fact that they lived together shows that Bunyan (rightly) believed that paganism and Catholicism have no problems living together (similar beliefs under different names)

● **Faithful's Journey**

- Notice that Faithful's temptations are different than Christian's
 - he is less proud but more fleshly
 - not bothered by the Slough (depression) but encounters others whom Christian did not

- "One whose name was **Wanton**"
 - Wanton = immoral, unchaste
 - she was just inside the Wicket Gate
 - Same woman Joseph had trouble with
 - What a flattering tongue she had
 - Faithful remembered "Her steps take hold on Hell" (Proverbs 5:5).
 - he shut his eyes so he would not be "bewitched" by her and went on his way
- **Adam the First**
 - met Adam at the bottom on the Hill of Difficulty
 - lives in the Town of Deceit
 - tells Faithful his work is "many delights"
 - tells Faithful that he can be his heir
 - has three daughters:
 - **the Lust of the Flesh**
 - **the Lust of the Eyes**
 - **the Pride of Life**
 - Adam tells Faithful that he can marry them all
 - Faithful is tempted
 - Then he notices writing on Adam's forehead:
 - "Put off the old man and his deeds" (Colossians 3:9).
 - Faithful realizes that Adam will sell him to be a slave once Faithful enters his house
 - Compare the first Adam (flesh) to the second Adam (Christ - spiritual life)
 - old man versus the new man (1 Corinthians 15:45-46)
- **Discontent**
 - met in the Valley of Humiliation (instead of Apollyon)
 - tries to persuade Faithful to go back, saying:
 - the Valley ahead is dishonorable
 - it would displease his friends if Faithful continues
 - they would think Faithful to be a fool if he continued through this valley
 - Faithful's friends:
 - * **Pride**
 - * **Arrogancy**
 - * **Self-Conceit**
 - * **Worldly Glory**
 - Faithful replies that since he became a pilgrim, these friends have disowned him and he them
- **Shame**
 - Faithful also met Shame in this Valley
 - "It is a pitiful, low, sneaking business for a man to mind religion."
 - "A tender conscience is an unmanly thing."
 - "For a man to watch over his words and his ways . . . would make him a ridicule of the times."
 - "It is a shame to ask your neighbor forgiveness for petty faults or to make restitution."
 - "Religion makes a man grow strange."
 - Faithful finally realized that the things that are thought highly of by man are an abomination to God (Luke 16:15).
 - Then he thought, "Shame tells me what men are; but he tells me nothing what God, or the word of God is."

- "Therefore, thought I, what God says is best, is indeed best, though all the men in the world are against it."
- **Valley of the Shadow of Death**
 - Faithful had sunshine the entire time
 - not as bothered by doubts and dark spiritual times
 - This comparison between pilgrims could be dangerous if jealousy arises
 - each pilgrim's walk is different (different weaknesses = different temptations/foes)

Character List

1. Faithful
2. Madame Wanton
3. Lust of the Flesh
4. Old Adam the First
5. Lust of the Eyes
6. Pride of Life
7. Discontent
8. Pride
9. Arrogancy
10. Self-Conceit
11. Worldly Glory
12. Shame