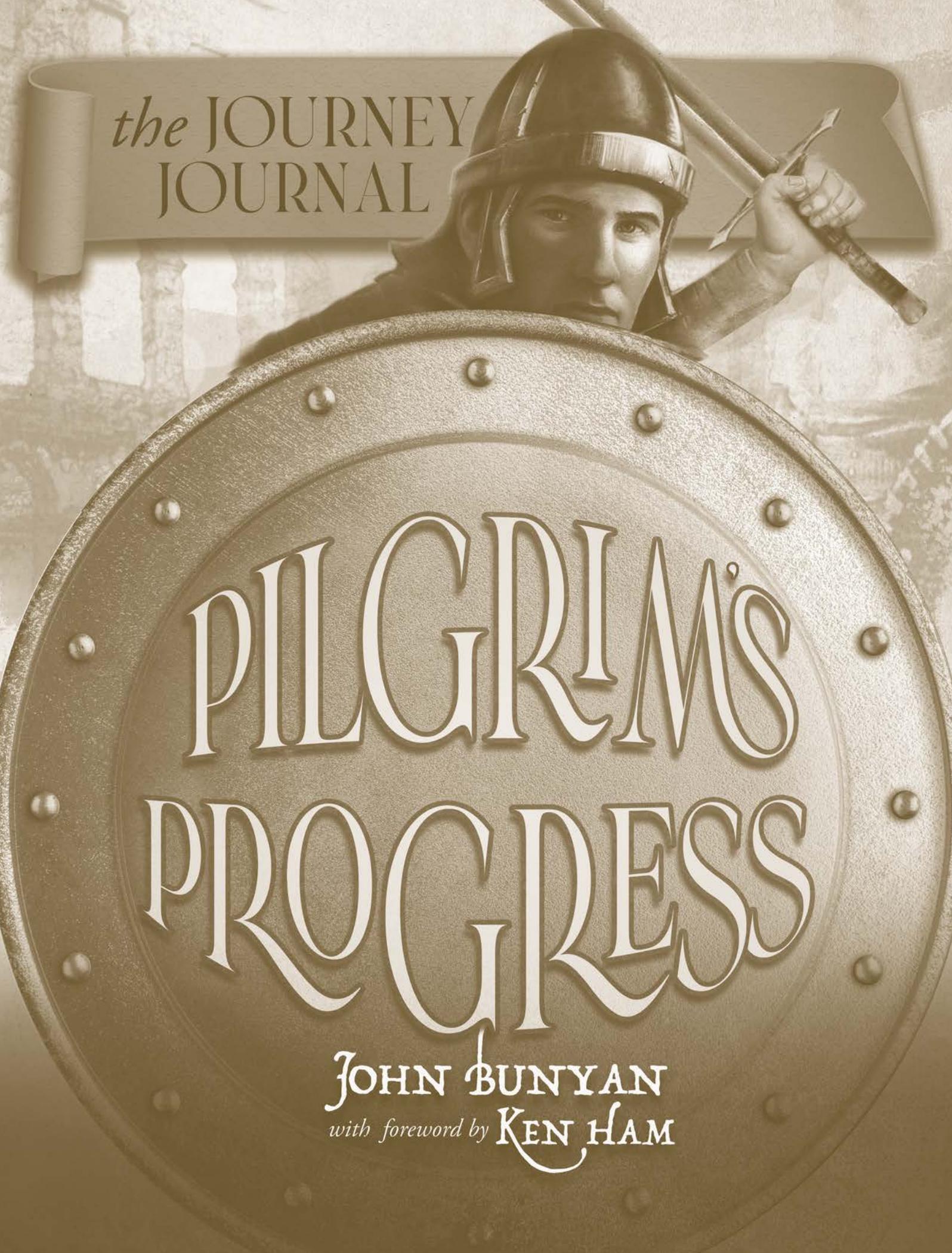


the JOURNEY
JOURNAL

PILGRIM'S
PROGRESS

JOHN BUNYAN
with foreword by KEN HAM



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First printing: August 2023

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Based on the all-in-one curriculum for
The Pilgrim's Progress by Answers in Genesis

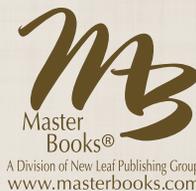


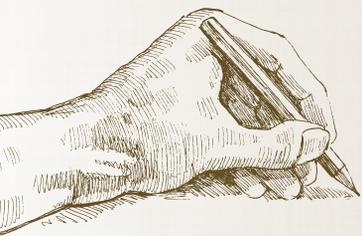
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How to Use This Journal

This journal is designed for your creative responses to the allegorical world of *Pilgrim's Progress*, as well as a companion volume to *Language Lessons 9* from Master Books. As you move forward in your own understanding of the content and your own faith, be sure to engage with the journal to save important thoughts, sketches, summaries, and reflections on the story, as well as helpful notes or related Bible verses. Color is a wonderful way to express your thoughts and imagination on the page, and it is suggested that you use colored pencils as you journey through, and meet characters from, John Bunyan's classic book.



Foreword

I MUST ADMIT, SOME PEOPLE THOUGHT my wife Mally and I were a little crazy. Within months after our children were born, we began to read them books and show them the pictures in the books. Although we didn't expect our babies at such a young age to understand what we were reading or showing them, we were applying a biblical principle that we believed was important for the future of our children:

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6).

This verse is not a guarantee of salvation if parents use a particular formula (after all, each must answer for his or her own sins), but it teaches that training in early years has a great influence on establishing lifelong habits.

Based on this verse and many others (e.g., Deuteronomy 6:6–7), we were convinced that the more we taught our children from their earliest years to acquire a taste for the things of the Lord, the more likely they were to retain this taste throughout the rest of their lives.

As toddlers, our children began to like the books we read to them, and eventually they could understand what we were reading. Although they couldn't read, they could see the pictures and follow along. Then they began to read the same books themselves, eventually progressing to other books as they matured and their reading level increased. Yes, we had taught our children to acquire a taste for reading, and in doing so, to acquire a taste for the things of the Lord, because that was the main purpose for which we used these books.

In thinking about this, I'm reminded of the fact that my parents taught me to acquire a taste for a spread called Vegemite. Now, most Americans basically gag if they try to eat Vegemite—but that's understandable. You see, they weren't taught to acquire a taste for Vegemite at a young age as I was. The taste I have for Vegemite was acquired as a child and will be with me for the rest of my life.

That is why I sometimes say that Christian parents need to train up "Vegemite children." In other words, we need to train children from a young age to acquire the right tastes—and the most important taste is for the Word of the Lord and the gospel.

Thinking back to my own childhood, I don't remember most of the books my parents provided for me, except for one book that stands out—*Pilgrim's Progress*. There is something very special about this book—the greatest allegory ever written. It's still in print and a best-seller over 300 years after it was originally published. Most books today last only a few years in print. If a book lasts 10 years it's considered out of the norm.





There is no doubt the Lord has specially blessed *Pilgrim's Progress*. I believe this is because it is a publication for the whole family so all ages can identify with our earthly struggles and understand the blessed message of the gospel.

As our children grew up, we used *Pilgrim's Progress* as a special devotion series. (Our devotion times as a family involved studying books of the Bible, reading apologetics works or studying special books like *Pilgrim's Progress*.) As I look at the wonderful teaching curriculum that goes with this edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*, I think of what an asset this would have been to us as a family had it been available 20 years or so ago. This new curriculum for one of the greatest books ever written (other than the Bible itself, of course) is available in this twenty-first century so that parents can use it in their devotional or other special family time to teach about and call to remembrance the greatest message ever given to man—the saving message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Even if you've read *Pilgrim's Progress* before, read it again—make it a yearly (or every other year) event. We should never tire of being reminded of the greatest message ever that never changes and is for all ages. As the words of that great hymn state:

*Tell me the old, old story of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and His glory, of Jesus and His love.
Tell me the story simply, as to a little child,
For I am weak and weary, and helpless and defiled.*

*Tell me the story slowly, that I may take it in,
That wonderful redemption, God's remedy for sin.
Tell me the story often, for I forget so soon;
The early dew of morning has passed away at noon.*

*Tell me the same old story when you have cause to fear
That this world's empty glory is costing me too dear.
Tell me the story always, if you would really be,
In any time of trouble a comforter to me.*

*Tell me the old, old story,
Tell me the old, old story,
Tell me the old, old story of Jesus and His love.*

As you make your pilgrimage through this life, I can't implore you enough to ensure that your family studies God's Word diligently, and also that you use this great classic called *Pilgrim's Progress* as part of your own training and equipping process so your family, friends, and others will indeed hear and understand the greatest and most important message ever.

Ken Ham
President, Answers in Genesis

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Historical Background, Author's Apology

Words to Know:

Take some time to look up any other words you are not familiar with.

Amiss – not in the right or expected way

Strait – a position of difficulty, perplexity, distress, or need

Loath – unwilling

Palliate – to make less severe or intense

Ad infinitum – without end

Inkling – hint, whisper, insinuation

Expostulate – to reason earnestly with someone in order to correct

Carpeth – to find fault in a disagreeable way

Commixes – to become mixed

Fowler – one who hunts wildfowl

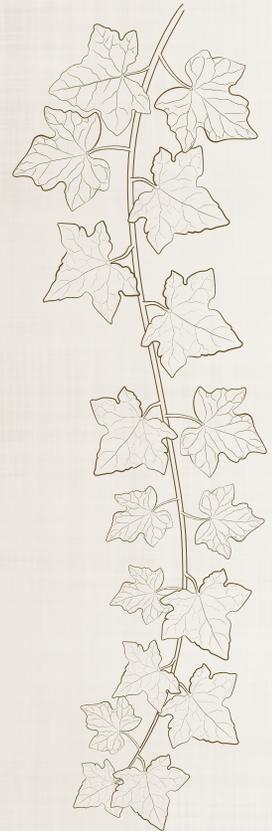
Feign – to pretend

Lustre – soft reflected light

Carper – one who finds fault in a disagreeable way

Chalketh – to mark, draw, or write

Amain – with might, with full force



Memory verses: 2 Timothy 3:14-17

We suggest writing memory verses on coil-bound index cards so that verse cards can be kept together and easily reviewed.

Historical Background



PILGRIM'S PROGRESS (FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1678) was written by John Bunyan while he was in a Bedford, England, jail. But why was an itinerant preacher who dearly loved the Word of God writing from a prison cell?

The story of John Bunyan and how he came to be imprisoned actually begins in A.D. 1324 with the birth of another baby boy named John—John Wycliffe. At that time, Catholicism was the dominant religion in most of Western Europe, including England where Wycliffe lived. Although the Catholic Church has its roots in the New Testament church, gradually over the years, it had accumulated teachings and practices that were contrary to what the Word of God teaches.

John Wycliffe studied theology, law, and philosophy at Oxford and eventually became a doctor of theology. He spent a great deal of time studying his Bible. He discovered that what he was learning from Scripture contradicted what the Catholic Church taught, and he set out calling the church back to the authority of God's Word. The "Morning Star of the Reformation," as Wycliffe is called, was responsible for producing the first handwritten version of the Bible in English, enabling thousands of people to know for themselves what God says in His Word. He and his "Bible men" (as their critics called them) preached the *true* gospel of Jesus Christ—that salvation comes through faith by the grace of God (apart from good works as the Church taught) and that the Bible alone (not the Church) was the final authority in all matters of faith and practice.

After Wycliffe's death in 1384, John Hus, one of Wycliffe's disciples, continued the call for church reformation from his home in Prague. Because of his teachings, Hus spent 73 days in confinement, was tried and then condemned to death as a heretic. When asked to recant his beliefs, he said, "In the truth of the gospel which I have written, taught and preached I will die today with gladness." As he was tied to the stake and the fire was kindled beneath him along with the very manuscripts of Wycliffe, Hus cried out, "In 100 years, God will raise up a man whose calls for reform cannot be suppressed!" That was in 1415.

A little over 100 years later, John Hus' words came true in an Augustinian monk named Martin Luther. In 1517, after searching the Scriptures and realizing that salvation came by God's grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, Luther posted 95 theses on the church door at Wittenberg, Germany. These statements listed 95 points on which

Luther believed that the Church had departed from the teaching of God's Word. When told to recant his statements (which the pope declared "heretical"), Luther said, "Unless I am convinced by proofs from Scriptures or by plain and clear reasons and arguments, I can and will not retract, for it is neither safe nor wise to do anything against conscience. Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen." He was then forced into exile, during which time he translated the Bible into the common language of the German people. Luther died of natural causes in 1546.

During this time, reformation was continuing in other parts of the world as well. In England, the Roman Catholic Church's blatant disregard for the authority of God's Word can be summed up in this statement by a clergyman to William Tyndale: "We are better to be without God's laws than the Pope's." Outraged, Tyndale replied, "I defy the Pope and all his laws. If God spare my life ere many years, I will cause the boy that drives the plow to know more of the scriptures than you!"

God *did* spare Tyndale's life, which allowed him to translate the New Testament from Greek (Wycliffe had done his translation from the Latin Vulgate) into then-modern English. He used a moveable-type printing press that Johann Gutenberg had invented in the 1450s to print vast quantities of the newly translated Bible, distributing them to the English masses. His work later became the basis for the Authorized King James Version of 1611. Because of his beliefs, Tyndale was imprisoned for 500 days, tried for heresy, convicted and then strangled and burned at the stake in 1536.

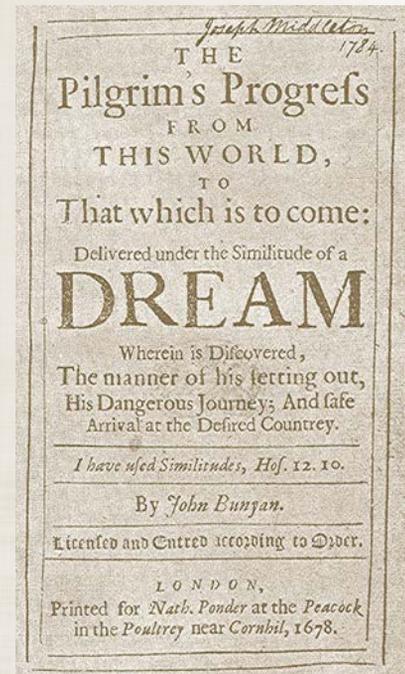
It was in 1536 that a young man named John Calvin arrived in Geneva, Switzerland, where the Reformation had already started under the direction of William Farel. Calvin had been forced to flee Paris a few years before after preaching a sermon calling the church to return to the true gospel. He provided organization to the Reformers' thoughts and ideas and wrote the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

Although there were differences between what the various Reformers taught, they all united around five main doctrines: *Sola Fide* (by faith alone), *Sola Gratia* (by grace alone), *Sola Scriptura* (by Scripture alone), *Soli Deo Gloria* (glory to God alone), *Solus Christus* (by Christ alone).

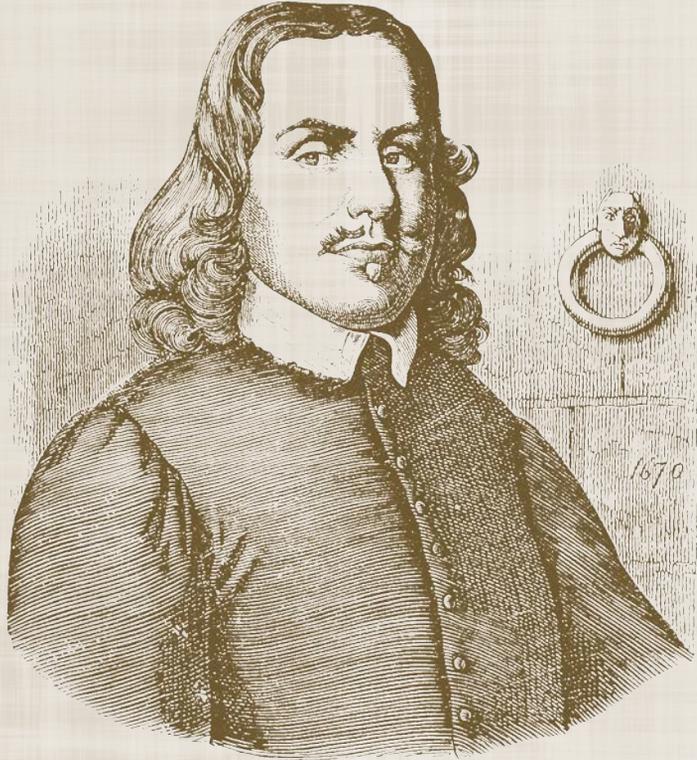
Of course, the radical reform that was sweeping through Europe did not leave governments untouched. Although there was much religious ferment going on everywhere, we'll focus on the events in England leading up to John Bunyan's time.

When Tyndale was martyred, his last words were, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes!" The king on the throne at that time was Henry VIII. He had broken with the Roman Catholic Church (he was upset that the pope would not grant him a divorce from Catherine of Aragon) and declared himself the head of the Church of England. Although he was influenced by the Reformers to some extent and instituted moderate reform in the church, he "remained, in his doctrine, a Roman Catholic to the end of his life."¹

1 Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn, *From Puritanism to Nonconformity*, Evangelical Press of Wales, England, p. 12, 1962.



First edition title page



John Bunyan

King Charles and Archbishop Laud worked to enforce Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity in various ways, forcing everyone to conform to the teachings of the church. Those of a "tender conscience" were grieved by these teachings and practices and refused to conform, facing severe persecution. Eventually, Charles I and the archbishop attempted to make the Scots also conform. But instead, the Scots rebelled and introduced the National Covenant.

The religious and political turmoil caused a divide between Parliament and the king and resulted in a war between those loyal to the king (known as "Royalists" or "Cavaliers") and those (called "Roundheads") who agreed with the changes Parliament wanted to make in the government and the Church of England. Oliver Cromwell, a vibrant Puritan, became the commander of the parliamentary army (of which Bunyan was a member from 1644–1647) and eventually led them to victory over the Cavaliers. Charles I was tried for treason in 1648 and executed in 1649.

Cromwell abolished the monarchy, and England became a commonwealth with Cromwell as the Lord Protector of the Realm. The Puritans experienced great religious freedom and tolerance during his leadership (1649–1658).

During this time John Bunyan married and began an intense spiritual struggle (lasting from 1648 to 1652), which is chronicled in *Grace*

Abounding to the Chief of Sinners and reflected in *Pilgrim's Progress* in various places. At some point in his ordeal, Bunyan encountered Martin Luther's commentary on Galatians, which encouraged him greatly that he was not alone in the struggles and temptations he was facing. Of Luther's commentary, Bunyan later wrote in *Grace Abounding*:

It also was so old that it was ready to fall piece from piece if I did but turn it over. Now I was pleased much that such an old book had fallen into my hands; the which, when I had but a little way perused, I found my condition, in his experience, so largely and profoundly handled, as if his book had been written out of my heart. This made me marvel; for thus thought I, This man could not know anything of the state of Christians now, but must needs write and speak the experience of former days. ... I do prefer this book of Martin Luther upon the Galatians, excepting the Holy Bible, before all the books that ever I have seen, as most fit for a wounded conscience.

John Gifford (after whom Evangelist, in *Pilgrim's Progress*, is modeled) also served as a spiritual mentor to Bunyan. In 1653, after finally being assured that he was indeed a child of God who had been chosen from before the foundation of the world and whose sins had been forgiven, Bunyan joined Gifford's independent congregation (which was not part of the state church) in Bedford, England. He also began preaching at various places around the countryside, drawing on his own experiences and knowledge of the Scriptures since he had no formal training.

He continued preaching until Cromwell died and the monarchy, under Charles II, was restored in April 1660. The king began at once to withdraw the religious freedom the country had experienced, and those who refused to conform to the king's decrees were incarcerated under the Elizabethan Act of Uniformity. The "Nonconformists" refused to use the *Book of Common Prayer* or to attend services at "state" churches, and instead used



The Moot Hall in Elstow, Bedfordshire, England



John Bunyan's tomb

the Bible to guide them and attended local gatherings of like-minded believers.

In November 1660, Bunyan was arrested for not conforming to the king's edicts and spent the next twelve years in jail. When he was questioned by a Mr. Cobb about whether or not he would "leave off" preaching, Bunyan responded by quoting the Morning Star of the Reformation, "Wycliffe saith that he which leaveth off preaching and learning of the Word of God for fear of excommunication of men, he is already excommunicated of God, and shall in the day of judgment be counted a traitor to Christ."²

During his imprisonment, he supported his family by making shoe laces and writing several books (among them *Profitable Meditations*, *Christian Behaviour*, *The Holy City* and *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*). He was released from jail because of a royal pardon in May 1672 and became pastor of the independent church at Bedford, which was meeting in a barn.

All of this finally brings us to 1677 when John Bunyan was once again jailed for preaching without license. He spent six months in a jail on a bridge over the River Ouse. It was here that Bunyan finished penning his most famous work, *Pilgrim's Progress*, which he originally wrote to entertain his children when they came to the one-room jail to visit him.

2 A Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan, Minister of the Gospel at Bedford in November, 1660, by John Bunyan, MDCCLXV. Bunyan probably knew of Wycliffe through reading John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, which was one of the only two books Bunyan had with him while in jail—the other was the Bible.

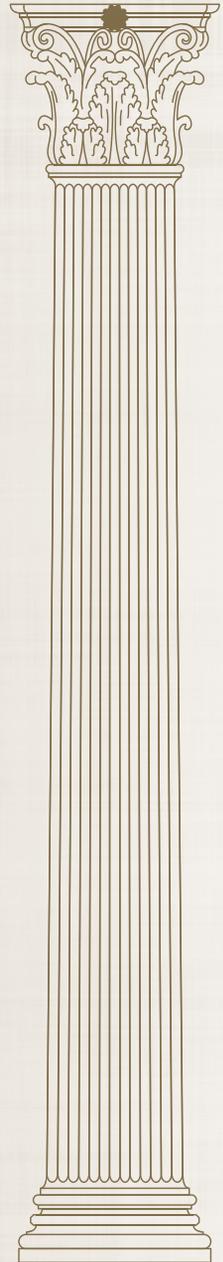
After being released from prison, John Bunyan spent his remaining years writing and preaching around the countryside. He died on September 3, 1688, from a cold he caught after being drenched in a heavy downpour while trying to reconcile a father and son. His tomb is in Bunhill Fields, outside of London, where he is buried with other Nonconformists.

Author's Apology³

When at the first I took my pen in hand
Thus for to write, I did not understand
That I at all should make a little book
In such a mode: nay, I had undertook
To make another; which, when almost done,
Before I was aware I this begun.

And thus it was: I, writing of the way
And race of saints in this our gospel-day,
Fell suddenly into an allegory
About their journey, and the way to glory,
In more than twenty things which I set down
This done, I twenty more had in my crown,
And they again began to multiply,
Like sparks that from the coals of fire do fly.
Nay, then, thought I, if that you breed so fast,
I'll put you by yourselves, lest you at last
Should prove *ad infinitum*, and eat out
The book that I already am about.
Well, so I did; but yet I did not think
To show to all the world my pen and ink
In such a mode; I only thought to make
I knew not what: nor did I undertake
Thereby to please my neighbor; no, not I;
I did it my own self to gratify.

Neither did I but vacant seasons spend
In this my scribble; nor did I intend
But to divert myself, in doing this,
From worsen thoughts, which make me do amiss.
Thus I set pen to paper with delight,
And quickly had my thoughts in black and white;
For having now my method by the end,
Still as I pull'd, it came; and so I penned
It down; until it came at last to be,
For length and breadth, the bigness which you see.



3 This section was written by John Bunyan to explain to his readership why he wrote it and to counter many of the criticisms he received about it.



Well, when I had thus put mine ends together
I show'd them others, that I might see whether
They would condemn them, or them justify:
And some said, let them live; some, let them die:
Some said, John, print it; others said, Not so:
Some said, It might do good; others said, No.

Now was I in a strait, and did not see
Which was the best thing to be done by me:
At last I thought, Since ye are thus divided,
I print it will; and so the case decided.

For, thought I, some I see would have it done,
Though others in that channel do not run:
To prove, then, who advised for the best,
Thus I thought fit to put it to the test.

I further thought, if now I did deny
Those that would have it, thus to gratify;
I did not know, but hinder them I might
Of that which would to them be great delight.
For those which were not for its coming forth,
I said to them, Offend you, I am loath;
Yet since your brethren pleased with it be,
Forbear to judge, till you do further see.

If that thou wilt not read, let it alone;
Some love the meat, some love to pick the bone.
Yea, that I might them better palliate,
I did too with them thus expostulate:

May I not write in such a style as this?
In such a method too, and yet not miss
My end—thy good? Why may it not be done?
Dark clouds bring waters, when the bright bring none.
Yea, dark or bright, if they their silver drops
Cause to descend, the earth, by yielding crops,
Gives praise to both, and carpeth not at either,
But treasures up the fruit they yield together;
Yea, so commixes both, that in their fruit
None can distinguish this from that; they suit
Her well when hungry; but if she be full,
She spews out both, and makes their blessing null.

You see the ways the fisherman doth take
To catch the fish; what engines doth he make!
Behold how he engageth all his wits;
Also his snares, lines, angles, hooks, and nets:

Yet fish there be, that neither hook nor line,
Nor snare, nor net, nor engine can make thine:
They must be groped for, and be tickled too,
Or they will not be catch'd, what'e'r you do.

How does the fowler seek to catch his game
By divers means! all which one cannot name.
His guns, his nets, his lime-twigs, light and bell:
He creeps, he goes, he stands; yea, who can tell
Of all his postures? yet there's none of these
Will make him master of what fowls he please.
Yea, he must pipe and whistle, to catch *this*;
Yet if he does so, *that* bird he will miss.
If that a pearl may in toad's head dwell,
And may be found too in an oyster-shell;
If things that promise nothing, do contain
What better is than gold; who will disdain,
That have an inkling of it, there to look,
That they may find it. Now my little book,
(Though void of all these paintings that may make
It with this or the other man to take,)
Is not without those things that do excel
What do in brave but empty notions dwell.

“Well, yet I am not fully satisfied
That this your book will stand, when soundly tried.”

Why, what's the matter? “It is dark.” What though?
“But it is feigned.” What of that? I trow
Some men by feigned words, as dark as mine,
Make truth to spangle, and its rays to shine.
“But they want solidness.” Speak, man, thy mind.
“They drown the weak; metaphors make us blind.”

Solidity, indeed, becomes the pen
Of him that writeth things divine to men:
But must I needs want solidness, because
By metaphors I speak? Were not God's laws,
His gospel laws, in olden time held forth
By types, shadows, and metaphors? Yet loth
Will any sober man be to find fault
With them, lest he be found for to assault
The highest wisdom! No, he rather stoops,
And seeks to find out what, by pins and loops,
By calves and sheep, by heifers, and by rams,
By birds and herbs, and by the blood of lambs,
God speaketh to him; and happy is he
That finds the light and grace that in them be.

But not too forward, therefore, to conclude
That I want solidness—that I am rude;
All things solid in show, not solid be;
All things in parable despise not we,
Lest things most hurtful lightly we receive,
And things that good are, of our souls bereave.



My dark and cloudy words they do but hold
The truth, as cabinets inclose the gold.

The prophets used much by metaphors
To set forth truth: yea, who so considers
Christ, his apostles too, shall plainly see,
That truths to this day in such mantles be.

Am I afraid to say, that holy writ,
Which for its style and phrase puts down all wit,
Is everywhere so full of all these things,
Dark figures, allegories? Yet there springs
From that same book, that lustre, and those rays
Of light, that turn our darkest nights to days.

Come, let my carper to his life now look,
And find there darker lines than in my book
He findeth any; yea, and let him know,
That in his best things there are worse lines too.

May we but stand before impartial men,
To his poor one I durst adventure ten,
That they will take my meaning in these lines
Far better than his lies in silver shrines.
Come, truth, although in swaddling-clothes, I find
Informs the judgment, rectifies the mind;
Pleases the understanding, makes the will
Submit, the memory too it doth fill
With what doth our imagination please;
Likewise it tends our troubles to appease.

Sound words, I know, Timothy is to use,
And old wives' fables he is to refuse;
But yet grave Paul him nowhere doth forbid
The use of parables, in which lay hid
That gold, those pearls, and precious stones that were
Worth digging for, and that with greatest care.

Let me add one word more. O man of God,
Art thou offended? Dost thou wish I had
Put forth my matter in another dress?
Or that I had in things been more express?
Three things let me propound; then I submit
To those that are my betters, as is fit.

1. I find not that I am denied the use
Of this my method, so I no abuse
Put on the words, things, readers, or be rude
In handling figure or similitude,
In application; but all that I may
Seek the advance of truth this or that way.
Denied, did I say? Nay, I have leave,
(Example too, and that from them that have

God better pleased, by their words or ways,
Than any man that breatheth now-a-days,)
Thus to express my mind, thus to declare
Things unto thee that excellentest are.

2. I find that men as high as trees will write
Dialogue-wise; yet no man doth them slight
For writing so. Indeed, if they abuse
Truth, cursed be they, and the craft they use
To that intent; but yet let truth be free
To make her sallies upon thee and me,
Which way it pleases God: for who knows how,
Better than he that taught us first to plough,
To guide our minds and pens for his designs?
And he makes base things usher in divine.

3. I find that holy writ, in many places,
Hath semblance with this method, where the cases
Do call for one thing to set forth another:
Use it I may then, and yet nothing smother
Truth's golden beams: nay, by this method may
Make it cast forth its rays as light as day.

And now, before I do put up my pen,
I'll show the profit of my book; and then
Commit both thee and it unto that hand
That pulls the strong down, and makes weak ones stand.

This book it chalketh out before thine eyes
The man that seeks the everlasting prize:
It shows you whence he comes, whither he goes,
What he leaves undone; also what he does:
It also shows you how he runs, and runs,
Till he unto the gate of glory comes.
It shows, too, who set out for life amain,
As if the lasting crown they would obtain;
Here also you may see the reason why
They lose their labor, and like fools do die.

This book will make a traveler of thee,
If by its counsel thou wilt ruled be;
It will direct thee to the Holy Land,
If thou wilt its directions understand
Yea, it will make the slothful active be;
The blind also delightful things to see.

Art thou for something rare and profitable?
Or would'st thou see a truth within a fable?
Art thou forgetful? Wouldest thou remember
From New-Year's day to the last of December?
Then read my fancies; they will stick like burs,
And may be, to the helpless, comforters.

This book is writ in such a dialect
As may the minds of listless men affect:
It seems a novelty, and yet contains
Nothing but sound and honest gospel strains.

Would'st thou divert thyself from melancholy?
Would'st thou be pleasant, yet be far from folly?
Would'st thou read riddles, and their explanation?
Or else be drowned in thy contemplation?
Dost thou love picking meat? Or would'st thou see
A man i' the clouds, and hear him speak to thee?
Would'st thou be in a dream, and yet not sleep?
Or would'st thou in a moment laugh and weep?
Would'st thou lose thyself and catch no harm,
And find thyself again without a charm?
Would'st read thyself, and read thou know'st not what,
And yet know whether thou art blest or not,
By reading the same lines? O then come hither,
And lay my book, thy head, and heart together.

Summary



2

Christian & Evangelist

Words to Know:

Lighted – to descend and rest upon

Den – a squalid, neglected place

Lamentable – mournful, sorrowful, expressing grief

Plight – a place or situation of danger

Frenzy – mental agitation

Distemper – an unnatural temper, as showing loss of balance

Surly carriage – a rude and abrupt manner of carrying one's body or self

Deride – to laugh at with contempt, to mock

Chide – to rebuke, scold, admonish, or reprove

Parchment roll – an animal skin prepared for writing on and rolled into a scroll

Wicket gate – a small gate or door inside a larger gate or door

Tophet – hell, utter chaos, darkness



Memory verses: Psalm 38:4-8

Christian & Evangelist

Isaiah 64:6
Luke 14:33
Psalm 38:4
Acts 2:37; 16:30
Habakkuk 1:2–3

AS I WALKED THROUGH THE wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den,¹ and laid me down in that place to sleep; and as I slept, I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold, I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back. I looked and saw him open the book, and read therein; and as he read, he wept and trembled; and not being able longer to contain, he brake out with a lamentable cry, saying, “What shall I do?”

In this plight, therefore, he went home, and restrained himself as long as he could, that his wife and children should not perceive his distress; but he could not be silent long, because that his trouble increased. Wherefore at length he brake his mind to his wife and children; and thus he began to talk to them: “O, my dear wife,” said he, “and you the children of my bowels, I, your dear friend, am in myself undone by reason of a burden that lieth hard upon me; moreover, I am certainly informed that this our city will be burnt with fire from heaven; in which fearful overthrow, both myself, with thee my wife, and you my sweet babes, shall miserably come to ruin, except (the which yet I see not) some way of escape can be found whereby we may be delivered.”

At this his relations were sore amazed; not for that they believed that what he had said to them was true, but because they thought that some frenzy distemper had got into his head; therefore, it drawing towards night, and they hoping that sleep might settle his brains, with all haste they got him to bed. But the night was as troublesome to him as the day; wherefore, instead of sleeping, he spent it in sighs and tears. So when the morning was come, they would know how he did. He told them, “Worse and worse:” he also set to talking to them again; but they began to be hardened. They also thought to drive away his distemper by harsh and surly carriage to him; sometimes they would deride, sometimes they would chide, and sometimes they would quite neglect him. Wherefore he began to retire himself to his chamber to pray for and pity them, and also to condole his own misery; he would also walk solitarily in the fields, sometimes reading, and sometimes praying: and thus for some days he spent his time.

¹ Bedford jail, in which the author was imprisoned for conscience' sake.



Now I saw, upon a time, when he was walking in the fields, that he was (as he was wont) reading in his book, and greatly distressed in his mind; and as he read, he burst out, as he had done before, crying, “What shall I do to be saved?”

I saw also that he looked this way, and that way, as if he would run; yet he stood still because (as I perceived) he could not tell which way to go. I looked then, and saw a man named Evangelist coming to him, and he asked, “Wherefore dost thou cry?”

He answered, “Sir, I perceive, by the book in my hand, that I am condemned to die, and after that to come to judgment, and I find that I am not willing to do the first, nor able to do the second.”

Acts 16:30–31

Hebrews 9:27
Job 10:21–22
Ezekiel 22:14

Then said Evangelist, “Why not willing to die, since this life is attended with so many evils?” The man answered, “Because, I fear that this burden that is upon my back will sink me lower than the grave, and I shall fall into Tophet. And Sir, if I be not fit to go to prison, I am not fit to go to judgment, and from thence to execution; and the thoughts of these things make me cry.”

Meeting with Evangelist

This allegory frequently draws its characters from real people who moved across the landscape of Bunyan’s life. John Gifford, the pastor of the church in Bedford, was one such person. He was a man who was faithful to his calling, and in so doing, became Evangelist to Bunyan himself.



The people who come into our lives either for good or evil are frequently remembered because of their words or conduct that, in part, have shaped us into what we are today. The first minister of the gospel whose words sank deeply into our souls and awakened us from that fatal ease surely holds an esteemed place in our hearts.

Scripture makes it clear that there are those who are given to the church with peculiar giftings for evangelism (Ephesians 4:11). They may have a more official capacity with both gift and recognition, or they

may be a Sunday school teacher, a youth pastor or just a friend speaking from the heart and doing “the work of an evangelist” (2 Timothy 4:5).

The liberal church of today has not changed much since Bunyan’s day. Its message is that a sense of danger for one’s soul is only imagined and that a burden of guilt is the product of an overly sensitive conscience fed by the religious extremism that is inherent in the preaching of many pulpits across the land—the God who keeps track of our sins in a book somewhere is nothing but a cosmic bully and any who follow this kind of thinking need psychiatric help. Bunyan’s Evangelist would surely be singled out as an extremist as he gives the warning, “Fly from the wrath to come.” Of course, we recognize these words as those of John the Baptist (Matthew 3:7), who was also deemed an extremist by some, and who consequently lost his head.

The Apostle Paul, in like fashion, reminds those in the church at Corinth that “knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men” (2 Corinthians 5:11). It seems quite clear that the message of the evangelist is couched in the understanding that God will deal with the impenitent heart in judgment and in wrath. Yet if the message simply stopped there, how dark and hopeless would our plight be? Evangelist asks, “Dost thou see yonder shining light? Keep that light in thine eye.” All is not without hope because Christ is the Light that shines in the darkness and offers Himself freely in the gospel to all who will (by faith) come to Him.



Then said Evangelist, "If this be thy condition, why standest thou still?" He answered, "Because I know not whither to go." Then he gave him a parchment roll, and there was written within, "Fly from the wrath to come."

The man therefore read it, and looking upon Evangelist very carefully, said, "Whither must I fly?" Then said Evangelist, (pointing with his finger over a very wide field,) "Do you see yonder wicket-gate?" The man said, "No." Then said the other, "Do you see yonder shining light?" He said, "I think I do." Then said Evangelist, "Keep that light in your eye, and go up directly thereto, so shalt thou see the gate; at which, when thou knockest, it shall be told thee what thou shalt do."

Matthew 3:7

Matthew 7:13-14

Psalm 119:105

2 Peter 1:19

3

Obstinate & Pliable

Words to Know:

Obstinate – headstrong, willful, stubborn

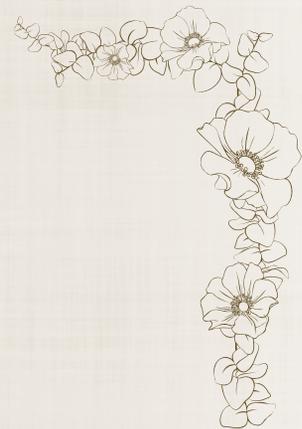
Pliable – flexible, bending, easily influenced

Brimstone – burning stone

Incorruptible – pure, sound, untainted

Discourse – orderly conversation about a particular subject

Garment – clothing



Memory verses: 1 Peter 1:3-5

Obstinate & Pliable

Luke 14:26
Genesis 19:17
Jeremiah 20:10

SO I SAW IN MY dream that the man began to run. Now he had not run far from his own door when his wife and children, perceiving it, began to cry after him to return; but the man put his fingers in his ears, and ran on crying, Life! life! eternal life! So he looked not behind him, but fled towards the middle of the plain.

The neighbors also came out to see him run; and as he ran, some mocked, others threatened, and some cried after him to return; and among those that did so, there were two that were resolved to fetch him back by force. The name of the one was Obstinate and the name of the other Pliable. Now by this time the man was got a good distance from them; but, however, they were resolved to pursue him, which they did, and in a little time they overtook him. Then said the man, "Neighbors, wherefore are you come?" They said, "To persuade you to go back with us." But he said, "That can by no means be: you dwell," said he, "in the city of Destruction, the place also where I was born: I see it to be so; and dying there, sooner or later, you will sink lower than the grave, into a place that burns with fire and brimstone: be content, good neighbors, and go along with me."

OBSTINATE: What, said Obstinate, and leave our friends and our comforts behind us!

2 Corinthians 4:18
Luke 15:17

CHRISTIAN: Yes, said Christian, (for that was his name,) because that all which you forsake is not worthy to be compared with a little of that I am seeking to enjoy; and if you will go along with me, and hold it, you shall fare as I myself; for there, where I go, is enough and to spare. Come away, and prove my words.

OBSTINATE: What are the things you seek, since you leave all the world to find them?

1 Peter 1:4
Hebrews 11:16

CHRISTIAN: I seek an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away; and it is laid up in heaven, and safe there to be bestowed, at the time appointed, on them that diligently seek it. Read it so, if you will, in my book.



OBSTINATE: Tush, said Obstatine, away with your book; will you go back with us or no?

CHRISTIAN: No, not I, said the other, because I have laid my hand to the plough.

OBSTINATE: Come then, neighbor Pliable, let us turn again, and go home without him: there is a company of these crazy-headed coxcombs, that when they take a fancy by the end, are wiser in their own eyes than seven men that can render a reason.

Luke 9:62



Notes



PLIABLE: Then said Pliable, Don't revile; if what the good Christian says is true, the things he looks after are better than ours: my heart inclines to go with my neighbor.

OBSTINATE: What, more fools still! Be ruled by me, and go back; who knows whither such a brain-sick fellow will lead you? Go back, go back, and be wise.

Obstinate & Pliable

After Evangelist points Christian to the way that he must go in order to find eternal life, Christian encounters Obstinate and Pliable. It is as true in the allegory as it is in reality that the seeking soul cannot but discover that others are watching who are full of sympathies, concerns, comments and criticisms. It is often the case, as many can relate, when a local town scoundrel becomes converted, or a relative once given over to alcohol or another vice comes into the kingdom of Heaven, the general gossip is that "so-and-so has found religion." The world cannot understand "if any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, and yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26).

Bunyan shows us at least two kinds of reactions to true biblical conversion with Obstinate and Pliable, both of whom run after Christian and attempt to cause him to reconsider his actions.

Obstinate is a mulish, stiff-necked, highly opinionated individual who is an obstacle not only to his own salvation but also to others who would attain it. Nonetheless, we must all exercise caution here lest we think that an obstinate heart is only the possession of a certain segment of humanity. Paul, in his letter to the Romans, reminds us that "the carnal mind is enmity against God" (Romans 8:7). Everyone possesses a significant measure of obstinacy within us by virtue of our relationship to our father, Adam. Obstinacy expresses it-

self in an ongoing act of rebellion against our Maker whereby an inherent hostility and animosity is generated toward a good and gracious God. Alexander Whyte tells us, "There is a sullenness in some men's minds, a gloom, and a bitter air that rises up from the unploughed, undrained, unweeded, uncultivated fens of their hearts that chills and blasts all the feeble beginnings of a better life." Only when the self-willed individual bows the knee to the will of Another does the obstinate one become submissive, humble and yielding. As Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature."

On the other hand, Pliable becomes temporarily persuaded by Christian's argument and decides to accompany him along the way. Pliable wants to talk about Heaven, an endless kingdom, crowns of glory, angelic hosts, a place where there is no more crying or sorrow, and then he also wants to hurry up to get there. The only things Pliable can think of are the benefits to be received and rewards to be collected. However, he totally misses the point. Christian reminds him, "Had Obstinate himself but felt what I have felt of the powers and terrors of what is yet unseen, he would not thus lightly have given us the back." Christian can't hurry because he has a burden on his back. Pliable has no burden but owns a shallow heart. He precisely fits the words of Jesus in the parable of the soils, "He has no root in himself, but endures only for a while" (Matthew 13:21, NKJV).

CHRISTIAN: Nay, but do thou come with thy neighbor Pliable; there are such things to be had which I spoke of, and many more glories besides. If you believe not me, read here in this book, and for the truth of what is expressed therein, behold, all is confirmed by the blood of Him that made it.

Hebrews 9:17–21

PLIABLE: Well, neighbor Obstinate, said Pliable, I begin to come to a point; I intend to go along with this good man, and to cast in my lot with him: but, my good companion, do you know the way to this desired place?

CHRISTIAN: I am directed by a man whose name is Evangelist, to speed me to a little gate that is before us, where we shall receive instructions about the way.

PLIABLE: Come then, good neighbor, let us be going. Then they went both together.

OBSTINATE: And I will go back to my place, said Obstinate: I will be no companion of such misled, fantastical fellows.

Now I saw in my dream, that when Obstinate was gone back, Christian and Pliable went talking over the plain; and thus they began their discourse.

CHRISTIAN: Come, neighbor Pliable, how do you do? I am glad you are persuaded to go along with me. Had even Obstinate himself but felt what I have felt of the powers and terrors of what is yet unseen, he would not thus lightly have given us the back.

PLIABLE: Come, neighbor Christian, since there are none but us two here, tell me now farther, what the things are, and how to be enjoyed, whither we are going.

CHRISTIAN: I can better conceive of them with my mind, than speak of them with my tongue: but yet, since you are desirous to know, I will read of them in my book.

PLIABLE: And do you think that the words of your book are certainly true?

CHRISTIAN: Yes, verily; for it was made by Him that cannot lie.

PLIABLE: Well said; what things are they?

CHRISTIAN: There is an endless kingdom to be inhabited, and everlasting life to be given us, that we may inhabit that kingdom for ever.

Isaiah 65:17
John 10:27–29

PLIABLE: Well said; and what else?

