

The Pilgrim's Progress
Chapter 17 – “The Chastening of the Pilgrims”
November 5, 2014

"This word of the wise man, that pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall, was fulfilled to the very letter in Christian and Hopeful that high-minded day." Alexander Whyte

- I. Context
 - A. The scene
 - 1. Flatter
 - 2. Straight and narrow path
 - 3. The Flatterer
 - 4. The net
 - B. Christian and Hopeful at the fork in the road
 - a.i.1. They were previously in similar situations
 - a.i.2. They recently received counsel from the Shepherds
 - a.i.3. They only “thought” about the Way
 - C. The Shining One
 - 1. Shining ones: celestial creatures who act as guardians throughout Christian’s journey.

“This messenger is obviously under orders to carry out specific duties, and thus he comes prepared with a whip in hand. The implication is that the Celestial City continually watches out for the well-being of those pilgrims it anticipates receiving.” – Barry Horner

- 2. An important caveat
- 3. 1689 LBCOF Chapter 11: Of Justification (emphasis mine)

God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified, and although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, **fall under God's fatherly displeasure**; and in that condition they have not usually the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.

- 4. 1689 LBCOF Chapter 12: Of Adoption (emphasis mine)

All those that are justified, God vouchsafed, in and for the sake of his only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption, by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God, have his name put upon them, receive the spirit of adoption, have access to the throne of grace with boldness, are enabled to cry Abba, Father, are pitied, protected, provided for, and **chastened by him as by a Father, yet never cast off**, but sealed to the day of redemption, and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation.

- II. God's purposes in chastening Christians
 - A. Correction
 - a.i.1. The word of God is profitable for correction.
 - a.i.2. 1 Cor 11 some sick because of their attitude at the Lord's Supper.
 - a.i.3. God is correcting the Christian in _____ rather than smiting him in _____.
"To be chastened of God for what we have done amiss, and by that means to be reduced to the sense and practice of our duty, is one of the greatest blessings on this side heaven that can light upon us." – Thomas Manton
 - B. Prevention from going down paths into sin
 - C. Education
 - a.i.1. Designed to teach the Christian the experiences of life that lead to a deeper fellowship with God.
 - a.i.2. Preparation for other duties (Luke 22:31-32)
 - a.i.3. Raise the level of sympathy (2 Cor 1)

- III. Application Questions
 - A. What was the purpose of Job's suffering?
 - B. What are the two perils should Christians be aware of?
 - C. What does God show by His chastening?
 - D. What are two results of God's chastening his children?

"It is not the sharpness of the affliction we should look to, but the improvement of it. The bitter waters may be made sweet by experiences of grace; if we are made more godly, wise, religious, it is a good cross; but if it leave us as careless and stupid, or no better than we were before, that cross is but a preparation to another; if it hath only stirred up our impatience, done us no good, God will follow his stroke, and heat his furnace hotter." – Thomas Manton

- IV. Next Week: Read Chapter 18 "Hopeful Tells of His Conversion" and Chapter 19 "The Pilgrims Deal with Ignorance." I plan to contrast the saving faith of Hopeful to the false profession of Ignorance.

