

The Pilgrim's Progress
Summary Lesson
December 3, 2014

*"Now, reader, I have told my dream to thee, See if thou canst interpret it to me,
Or to thyself, or neighbor: but take heed of misinterpreting..." - John Bunyan*

I. The historical context of "The Pilgrim's Progress" (number ascending by date of occurrence)

Bishop's Bible (1568)

The Pilgrim's Progress (1678 and 1684)

Martin Luther's 95 Theses posted (1517)

King James Version of the Bible first published (1611)

Geneva Bible (1560)

Second London Baptist Confession of Faith (1689)

Institutes of the Christian Religion (1536)

Westminster Confession of Faith (1646)

II. The intended profit of "The Pilgrim's Progress" as stated in the author's Apology

a.i.A. "This book it chalketh out before thine eyes the man that seeks the everlasting prize."

a.i.B. "This book will make a traveler of thee."

Would you consider "The Pilgrim's Progress" an evangelistic tract?

the first 10% of the text of Part 1 is concerned with Christian's unconverted state up to his entrance through the wicket gate. 90% focuses upon Christian's advance and growth in grace.

III. The author's Conclusion of "The Pilgrim's Progress"

a.i.A. Warnings

a.i.A.1. Misinterpretation (**How could you misinterpret?**)

a.i.A.2. Extreme interpretation of the "outside" of the dream (**What is the outside of the dream? How could you interpret it extremely?**)

a.i.A.3. Joking about the figures or similitude

a.i.A.4. Fighting over the figures or similitude

a.i.B. Exhortations (Horner)

a.i.B.1. Find the substance of the matter

a. The gospel of the **substitutionary righteousness** of Jesus Christ

b. The **progressive** sanctification of the authentic Christian pilgrim

c. The vital importance of the local **church** and **pastoral** encouragement

d. The **incentive** of eventual arrival at the Celestial City

a.i.B.2. Preserve the gold (**What is the gold?**)

a. **The foundational role of the Word of God for sanctification**

b. **The gospel of the free, substitutionary, imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ as the believer's ground of justification, sanctification, and resultant assurance.**

c. **The progress of Christian is an expected consequence of his conversion.**

- d. **A distinction is made between true faith and counterfeit faith.**
 - e. **The perseverance of the true believer.**
 - f. **The nature of the world (seductive and treacherous)**
 - g. **The reality of spiritual victory and defeat in the Christian life**
 - h. **The role of singing in the Christian life**
- a.i.B.3. Throw away the dross (What is the dross?)

IV. Application questions

“Now thou hast come to die; thou hast gathered up thy feet in the bed; the death sweat stands upon thy brow: thou art sinking so far as this life is concerned among the sons of men, but underneath thee shall then be the everlasting arms. Beautifully has Bunyan described confidence in death, when he pictures the pilgrims passing the river. Christian cried out to young Hopeful, “I sink in deep waters, the billows go over my head, all his waves go over me.” Then said Hopeful, “Be of good cheer, my brother, I feel the bottom, and it is good.” Thus, beloved, shall it be with you. You shall feel the bottom of death’s chill river, but you shall say “it is good”; for underneath are the everlasting arms. Then comes the last plunge, and we shall be as when a man stands on the edge of a precipice and leaps over into the clouds below him. You need not fear to take your last farewell and drop into your Father’s arms, for underneath you shall be the everlasting arms; and oh, how sweetly shall you be caught up together with the Lord in the air, pressed to the bosom of the great Father, and borne upward into the heaven of heavens, where you shall behold the face of the Well Beloved, and find yourselves entranced in his company for ever and forever. O heir of glory, underneath thee there is no hell: underneath thee there is no annihilation: underneath thee are the everlasting arms; therefore commit thy spirit unto thy faithful Creator, and then welcome life or death, for all is well with thee.” Spurgeon

