

**The Pilgrim's Progress**  
**From the Slough of Despond to the Wicket Gate**  
*June 11, 2014*

I. The Slough of Despond

A. Context **(use 2 maps)**

1. From the City of Destruction to the Slough of Despond
2. Obstinate, Pliable and Christian

**(p.11 quote on slough)**

**"I myself floundered in it for five years, or thereabouts, and am therefore well-acquainted with its terrible geography." CHS**

B. We can see "sloughs" full of sinking men **(Alexander Whyte)**

1. **Vice (open and secret)**
2. **Poverty**
3. **Youthful ignorance**
4. **Temptation**
5. **Transgression**
6. **Inward gloom**
7. **Family disquiet and dispute**
8. **Lonely grief**

II. Help

A. "Help" in Scripture **(Alexander Whyte)**

1. **The help of God**
2. **Eve**
3. **Helps (assistants) (1COR 12:28)**
4. **Any member of the Church**

B. We should imitate Help **(CHS)**

1. Get the person to state his own case
2. Enter into the case (**sympathy/"weep with those who weep"**)

**"If you see a brother in the mire, put your arms right down into the mud that, by the grace of God, you may lift him bodily out of it. Recollect that you were once just where that desponding brother of yours is now; and try, if you can, to bring back your own feelings when you were in his condition." CHS**

**WHAT DO YOU THINK THE "STEPS" WERE IN THE SLOUGH OF DESPOND?**

3. Comfort the person with the promises of God
  - a. **"Steps" in the Slough of Despond**
  - b. **Isaiah 55:6-7, Micah 7:18, Rev 21:6, Rev 22:17**
4. Try to instruct those who may need your help more fully in the plan of salvation
5. Tell the troubled one of your own experience

**"We tell our patients all their symptoms, and then they think we must have read their hearts; whilst the fact is, that our hearts are just like theirs, and, in reading ourselves, we read them." CHS**

6. Pray with the troubled one
- C. Description of Help (**and a helper**) CHS
1. A tender **heart**
  2. Very quick **eye** and **ear**
  3. Swift of **foot**
  4. A loving **face**
  5. Firm **footing**
  6. Knows the **Slough** well
  7. A strong **hand**
  8. A bending **back**
- D. Why we should help others
1. Souls need help
  2. We were helped when in the same condition
  3. Christ deserves it
  4. The work in itself is blessed

5. We are called to the work
  6. Every hour we live we are getting nearer to Heaven, and sinners nearer to Hell
- E. “and Bartholomew” (Mt 10:3. Mk 3:18, Luke 6:14, Acts 1:13)

III. Goodwill **(why is Goodwill described as grave - and who is Goodwill?)**

A. The Wicket Gate and its surroundings

1. The Slough of Despond
2. The City of Destruction, the town of Carnal Policy and the village of Morality
3. People who come to the gate
4. The narrow and straight way to the Celestial City

B. Lessons from the Wicket Gate

1. The Wicket Gate was shut
  - a. The only thing visible was the writing over the gate telling pilgrims to knock.
  - b. What does “knock” mean?
  - c. How many times did Christian “knock?”
2. “Notwithstanding.” – “We make no objections against any, notwithstanding all that they have done. **(i.e. the woman at the well in Sychar – John 4)**

“My original an inward pollution was my plague and my affliction; that I say, at a dreadful rate was always putting itself forth within me; that I had the guilt of amazement; by reason of that I was more loathsome in my own eyes than a toad; and I thought I was so in God’s eyes also. Sin and corruption would bubble up out of my heart as naturally as water bubbles up out of a fountain. I thought now that everyone had a better heart than I had. I could

have changed hearts with anybody. I thought none but the devil himself could equalize me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind. I fell, therefore, at the sight of my own vileness, deeply into despair, for I concluded that this condition in which I was in could not stand with a life of grace. Sure, thought I, I am forsaken of God; sure I am given up to the Devil, and to a reprobate mind.” - John Bunyan in *Grace Abounding*

IV. Arrows of Beelzebub (or the lies of Satan)

- A. **Remembrance** of our sins
- B. It is too late for you to be **saved**
- C. You have **resisted** the Holy Spirit
- D. The Doctrine of **Election**
- E. You have committed the **unpardonable** sin
- F. It would be **presumptuous** to trust Christ