

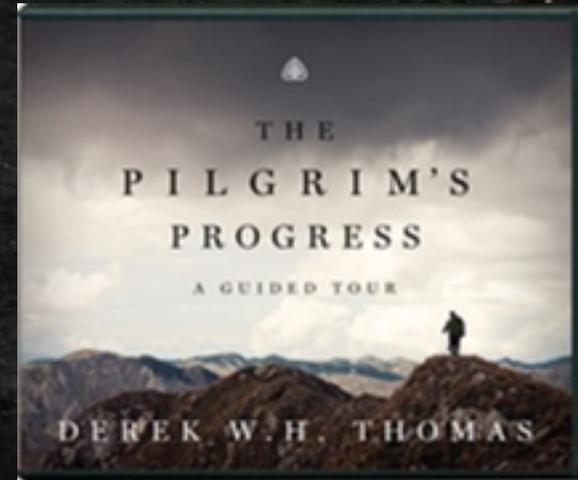
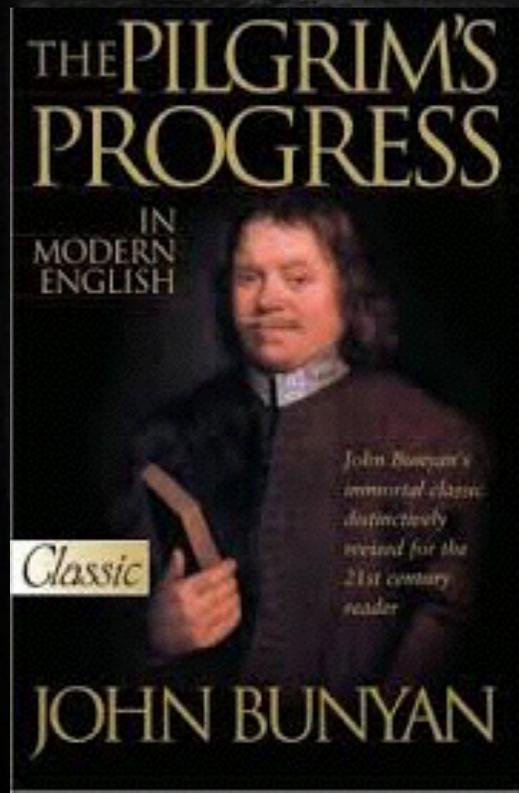
The Pilgrim's Progress

From This World to That Which is to Come;

Delivered Under the Similitude of a Dream

by

John Bunyan



West Suffolk Baptist Church

May 7, 2014

The Pilgrim's Progress

An Introductory Lesson



1. John Bunyan and 17th century England
2. What have pastors and theologians said about John Bunyan and The Pilgrim's Progress?
3. Why have a book study of The Pilgrim's Progress?
4. Next week's assignment

1. John Bunyan and 17th century England

- ❖ 1517 - Luther led the Protestant Reformation
- ❖ 1559 - Elizabeth I: Act of Uniformity
- ❖ 1625 - Charles I succeeded King James I
- ❖ 1628 - Born in Elstow, Bedfordshire, England to Thomas and Margaret Bunyan
- ❖ 1642 - Charles I attempted to enforce Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity. Parliament struggled with King Charles I over his authoritarianism and the religious turmoil, which caused a Civil War

- ❖ 1644 – In June, when Bunyan was 16, his mother died. In July his sister Margaret died. In August his father re-married.
- ❖ 1644-1647 – John Bunyan served in Oliver Cromwell's parliamentary army.
- ❖ 1649 – Charles I executed by Parliament.
- ❖ 1649-1658 Cromwell became Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland.
- ❖ 1650 – John married his first wife. Bunyan's first daughter, Mary, was born blind.
- ❖ 1653 – Bunyan was given Martin Luther's Commentary on Galatians. He joined the Baptist Church at Bedford. John Gifford ("Evangelist") is the Pastor.

- ❖ 1655 – John Gifford died. Bunyan began serving as lay-preacher at various independent gatherings around the countryside. Bunyan's first wife died.
- ❖ 1656 – Bunyan's first book *Some Gospel Truths* was published and his first son, Thomas, was born. John Burton appointed as his minister.
- ❖ 1657 Bunyan became a deacon and his second son, John, was born.
- ❖ 1658 – Oliver Cromwell dies. Bunyan was arrested for the first time for preaching without a license.
- ❖ 1658 – *A Few Sighs from Hell, or the Groans of a Damned Soul* published.
- ❖ 1659 – Bunyan married again, to Elizabeth (surname unknown), by whom he had two more children – Sarah (born 1667) and Joseph (born 1672).

- ❖ 1660 - Charles II assumes the throne and resumes the Act of Uniformity. Bunyan was arrested for preaching in private meetings.
- ❖ 1661 - Bunyan was jailed for 3 months for the crimes of "pertinaciously abstaining" from attending mandatory Anglican church services and preaching at "unlawful meetings"
- ❖ 1666 - Bunyan was briefly released for a few weeks, before being re-arrested - again, for preaching - and sent back to Bedford's County jail, where he remained for six more years. *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* published.
- ❖ 1672 - Bunyan released from prison when Charles II issued the Declaration of Religious Indulgence. In the same month as his release he became pastor of St John's Church in Bedford and was the recipient of one of the first licenses to preach as an independent preacher, under the new law.

- ❖ 1675 - following Charles II's withdrawal of the Declaration of Religious Indulgence, Bunyan was again imprisoned for preaching.
- ❖ 1677 - Bunyan was jailed again, this time for 6 months, for preaching without a license.
- ❖ 1678 - The Pilgrim's Progress Part 1 was published.
- ❖ 1684 - The Pilgrim's Progress Part 2 was published.
- ❖ 1688 - John served as chaplain to the Lord Mayor of London, Sir John Shorter. The Work of Jesus Christ as an Advocate was published.

- ❖ 1688 – Bunyan died from a cold caught while traveling on horseback in order to counsel a father and son (drenched in a downpour). He was buried in Bunhill Fields, London in a non-conformist cemetery.



2. What pastors and theologians have said about John Bunyan and *The Pilgrim's Progress*?

❖ John Owen

❖ George Whitefield

❖ Charles Spurgeon

❖ J.I. Packer

❖ R.C. Sproul

❖ John Piper

❖ Mark Dever

❖ Sinclair Ferguson

❖ John McArthur



John Owen
(1616-1683)

Owen once went to hear Bunyan preach. Charles II, hearing of it, asked the learned doctor of divinity why someone as thoroughly educated as he would want to hear a mere tinker preach. Owen replied, "May it please your Majesty, if I could possess the tinker's abilities to grip men's hearts, I would gladly give in exchange all my learning."



George Whitefield
1714 - 1770

George Whitefield said of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, "It smells of the prison. It was written when the author was confined in Bedford jail. And ministers never write or preach so well as when under the cross: the Spirit of Christ and of Glory then rests upon them."



Charles Spurgeon
1834-1892

“Read anything of his, and you will see that it is almost like reading the Bible itself. He had read it till his very soul was saturated with Scripture; and, though his writings are charmingly full of poetry, yet he cannot give us his Pilgrim’s Progress — that sweetest of all prose poems — without continually making us feel and say, ‘Why, this man is a living Bible!’ Prick him anywhere; his blood is Bibline, the very essence of the Bible flows from him. He cannot speak without quoting a text, for his very soul is full of the Word of God. I commend his example to you, beloved.”



“Bunyan was the only Puritan I would label as ‘genius,’ though others were ‘brilliant.’”

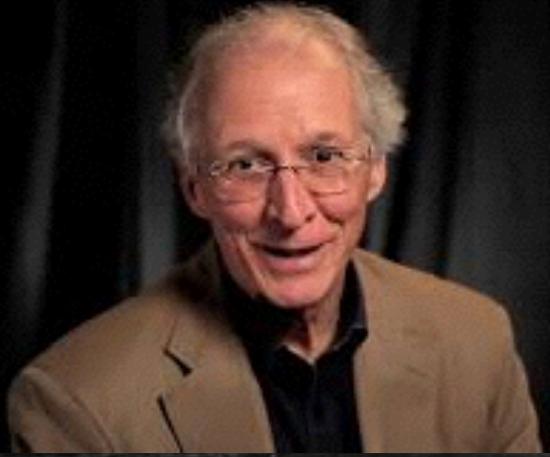
J.I. Packer
1926 - Present



R.C. Sproul
1939 - present

“In Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, we see set forth in masterful literary style the depths and the riches of the biblical Gospel...we see a story that focuses on the groaning pressure of a man who is weighed down to the depths of his soul with a burden of which he is unable to rid himself. It is like the apostle Paul’s description in Romans 7 of the body of death that crushes the spirit.”

“It’s time once more for the Christian community to follow the *Pilgrim’s Progress*.”



John Piper
1946 - present

“In all my reading of Bunyan, what has gripped me most is his suffering and how he responded to it. What it made of him. And what it might make of us. All of us come to our tasks with a history and many predispositions. I come to John Bunyan with a growing sense that suffering is a normal and useful and essential and God-ordained element in Christian life and ministry.”



“Bunyan’s writings have been among the most appreciated in the history of the Christian church.”

Mark Dever
1960-present



Sinclair Ferguson

1948- present

“What more can one say about this book than has already been said? It is simply extraordinary in every way. Not only do I love it because of its vivid description of what it means to become and be a Christian, but because it has become an invaluable pastoral tool to me. It is all so lifelike, so spiritually realistic, so challenging, so encouraging, and so strengthening. I love it!”



"I read Pilgrim's Progress as a child, I read it again as a young man. I've read it twice as our family read it in the time our children were growing up. And I have read it periodically in points over the years."

John McArthur
1939 - present

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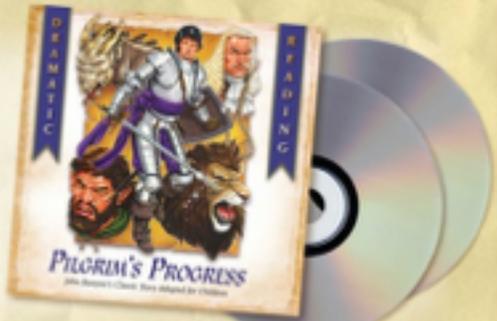
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3. Why have a book study of *The Pilgrim's Progress*?

- ❖ It is the story of the Christian life
- ❖ It is saturated with Scripture
- ❖ God's people have read and studied it since 1678
- ❖ Next to the Bible, it's the best-selling Christian book of all time

Bunyan's stated purpose of *The Pilgrim's Progress*

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.

Purpose One

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.

Purpose Two

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;

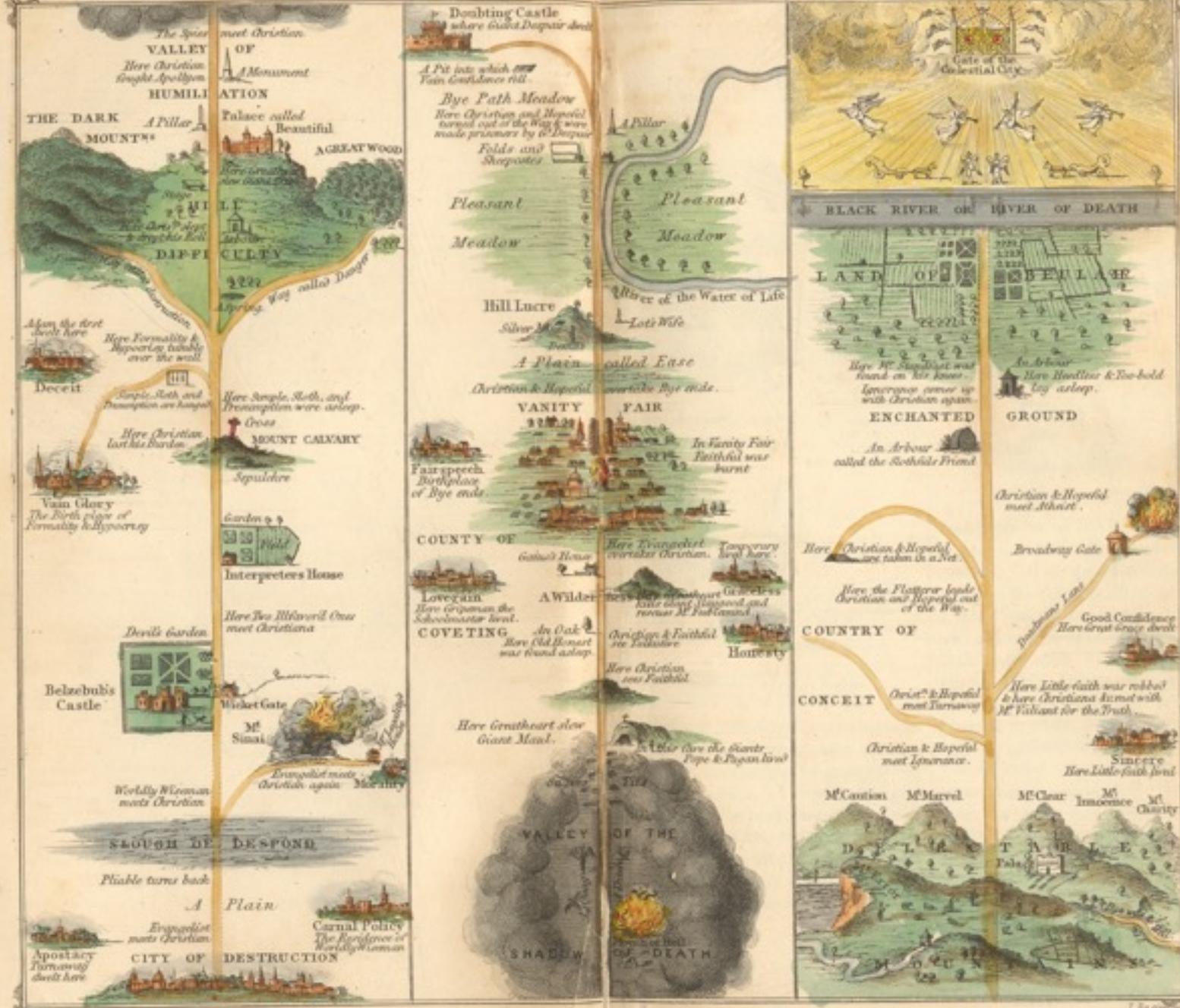
The blind also delightful things to see.

The Bible and The Pilgrim's Progress

“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.” -- John Bunyan

“Next to the Bible, the book I value most is John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. I believe I have read it through at least a hundred times. It is a volume of which I never seem to tire; and the secret of its freshness is that it is so largely compiled from the Scriptures. It is really Biblical teaching put into the form of a simple yet very striking allegory.” -- C.H. Spurgeon

A PLAN of the ROAD from the CITY of DESTRUCTION to the CELESTIAL CITY. Drawn by the late M^r T. CONDER.



*Worldly Wiseman
meets Christian*

Christian again **Morality**

SLOUGH OF DESPOND

Pliable turns back

A Plain

*Evangelist
meets Christian*

Carnal Policy
*The Residence of
Worldly Wiseman*

Apostacy
*Turnaway
dwelt here*

CITY OF DESTRUCTION





4. Next Week's Homework

- ❖ Dedication
- ❖ Acknowledgements
- ❖ Contents
- ❖ Preface
- ❖ Forward
- ❖ Apology
- ❖ Chapter 1 (at least thru page 3)