

Pictures from Pilgrim's Progress

Part Two



C. H. Spurgeon

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6. Christian at the Cross

"Now I saw in my dream that the highway, up which Christian was to go, was fenced on either side with a wall, and that wall was called Salvation. Up this way therefore did burdened Christian run, but not without great difficulty because of the load on his back. He ran thus till he came to a place somewhat ascending, and upon that place stood a cross, and a little below in the bottom a sepulchre."

A Voice said, "Away, away to Calvary!" Yet he trembled at the voice for he said within himself, "Why should I go thither, for there my blackest sin was committed; there I murdered the Saviour by my transgressions." But Mercy beckoned and said, "Come, come away, poor sinner!" And the sinner followed. The chains were on his legs and hands, but he crept as best he could, till he came to the foot of the hill called Calvary, on the summit of which he saw a cross. O sinner, I would that thou wouldst stand at the foot of the cross, and think of Jesus till thou couldst find comfort! I believe the shortest way to faith is to consider well the object of faith. The true way to get comfort is not to try to comfort yourself away from the cross, but think of Christ dying for you till you are comforted; say unto your soul, "I will never remove from the cross until I am washed in His precious blood:

***“Blest Saviour, at Thy feet I lie,
Here to receive a cure or die;
But grace forbids that painful fear
Almighty grace, which triumphs here.”***

Healing came to the sin-bitten by looking at the serpent, not by looking at their own wounds, nor yet by hearing about the cure of others; and, even so, healing will come to you, not by looking at sin, nor hearing about Christ, so much as by fixing your mind's eye upon the cross, and meditating upon Him who died thereon, till, as by considering His merits, you believe on Him, and so are saved.

“So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up to the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more.”

The Pilgrim was never eased of his burden till he came to the foot of the cross, and there he lost it for ever. Bunyan did not intend by this the Popish symbol which is now so commonly had in reverence; he had no respect for such baubles and idolatries. He meant that a burdened soul finds no peace until it trusts in the atoning Sacrifice of Jesus. Sin must be punished; conscience knows this, and makes the sinner tremble. Jesus was punished in the stead of those who trust Him, the believer knows this, and feels that he is justly secure from further penalty; his conscience rests, and his heart is glad. If Jesus bore the penalty of the law for me, then God is just, and yet I am safe. Two punishments for one offense cannot be demanded by justice; a suffering Jesus prevents the possibility of those being condemned for whom He died as a substitute. In the wounds of Jesus there is rest for the weary consciences, but nowhere else. They who trust in the merit of His atonement are saved from wrath through Him. When Dr. Neale, the eminent ritualist, Romanized “Pilgrim's Progress,” he represented the pilgrim as

coming to a certain bath, into which he was plunged, and there his burden was washed away. According to this doctored edition of the allegory, Christian was washed in the laver of baptism, and all his sins were thus removed. That is the High Church mode of getting rid of sin. The true way to lose it is at the cross. Now, mark what happened. According to Dr. Neale's "Pilgrim's Progress," that burden grew again on the pilgrim's back. I do not wonder at that; for a burden which baptism can remove is sure to come again, but the burden which is lost at the cross never appears again for ever.

"Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a merry heart, He hath given me rest by His sorrow, and life by His death. Then he stood awhile to look and wonder, for it was very surprising to him that the sight of the cross should thus ease him of his burden. He looked, therefore, and looked again, even till the springs that were in his head sent the waters down his cheeks."

Let awakened sinners beware of receiving comfort from those who depreciate repentance. It is after all no little thing. They tell us "It is only a change of mind." But what a change of mind! The words sound little enough, but repentance itself is no trifle. They tell us that repentance does not necessarily imply sorrow for sin; but we solemnly warn them, and all others whom it may concern, that if their repentance has in it no grief for having offended, it is not repentance after a godly sort, and will need to be repented of. A dry-eyed repentance is no repentance. They who turn unto the Lord aright, mourn for sin and are in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. It is from the cross that both repentance and faith arise. We do not bring these graces to the cross, but find them at the cross. They are love-tokens from Jesus. When He arises in us as the Sun of Righteousness, these are His early beams. Oh, that all poor sinners would come and sit in this sunshine.

When I think of my transgressions, better known to myself than to anyone else, and remember too that they are not known

even to me as they are to God, I feel all hope swept away and my soul left in utter despair, until I come anew to the cross, and bethink me of who it was that died there, and what designs of infinite mercy are answered by His death. It is so sweet to look up at the Crucified One again, and say, "I have naught but Thee, my Lord, no confidence but Thee. If Thou be not accepted as my substitute I must perish, if God's appointed Saviour be not enough I have no other, but I know thou art the Father's well-beloved, and I am accepted in Thee. Thou art all I have, or want."

Beloved, I think that you know, in your own experience, that it was Christ's death that really operated most upon you in the matter of your conversion. I hear much talk about the example of Christ having great effect upon goodly men; but I do not believe it, and certainly have never seen it. It has great effect upon men when they are born again, and are saved from the wrath to come, and are full of gratitude on this account; but before that happens, we have known men to admire the conduct of Christ, and even write books about the beauty of His character, while, at the same time, they have denied His Godhead. Thus they have rejected Him in His essential character, and there has been no effect produced upon their conduct by their cold admiration of His life. But when a man comes to see that he is pardoned and saved through the death of Jesus, he is moved to gratitude, and then to love. "We love Him because He first loved us." That love which He displayed in His death has touched the mainspring of our being, and moved us with a passion to which we were strangers before; and, because of this, we hate the sins that once were sweet, and turn with all our hearts to the obedience that once was so unpleasant. There is more effect in faith in the blood of Christ to change the human character than in every other consideration. The cross once seen, sin is crucified: the passion of the Master once apprehended as being endured for us, we then feel that we are not our own, but are bought with a price. This perception of redeeming love, in the death of our Lord Jesus, makes all the difference: this prepares us for a higher and a better life than we

have ever known before. It is His death that does it.

“Now, as he stood looking and weeping, behold three shining ones came to him, and saluted him with ‘Peace be to thee.’ So the first said to him, ‘Thy sins be forgiven;’ the second stripped him of his rags, and clothed him with change of raiment; the third also set a mark upon his forehead, and gave him a roll with a seal upon it, which he bid him look on as he ran, and that he should give it in at the celestial gate; so they went their way. Then Christian gave three leaps for joy, and went on singing: —

***“Thus far did come laden with my sin,
Nor could aught ease the grief that I was in,
Till I came hither: what a place is this!
Must here be the beginning of my bliss?
Must here the burden fall from off my back?
Must here the strings that bound it to me crack?
Blest Cross! blest sepulchre, blest rather be
The Man that there was put to shame for me!”***

Imagine the experience of some dear friend, who has just believed in Jesus, and to whom the Spirit of God bears witness that he is forgiven. What sort of man will he be? I will try to picture him to you. Already I see his eyes glistening with a light I never saw there before. The man looks positively handsome; you would hardly recognize him if you knew him before this great change happened to him. He had a burden on his mind that made him always look careworn. That has gone, and now he looks supremely blest. But I also see tears in his eyes; how came they there? He was not much given to weeping in his old days? He is grieving to think that he should ever have offended so kind a God; for nothing makes us so sorry for sin as the sense of being completely forgiven. He knows he is pardoned, he is sure of it; he knows that God loves him, and now he loathes himself that he should ever have sunk so low. Yet, if you will take one of his tears, and put it under a microscope, or analyze its component parts, you will find that there is no bitterness in it. Joy is mingled

with his sorrow as he stands at the foot of the cross, and bathes his Lord's feet with his penitential yet rainbowed tears. Now see him go home. He has some Christian friends there, I hope; and if so, he will not be long with them before they begin to notice the change in him, and he is not long before he wants to tell them the blessed secret. Mother wants to know what has happened to her boy, and his arms are thrown around her neck as he says, "Mother, I have found the Lord." She is very delighted, and perhaps very surprised, for it was not his usual way to talk about religion; he used sometimes to sneer and jeer at it. Will he go to bed without prayer? No; he needs nobody to tell him to pray; he has been praying all the way home, and while he has been sitting there. These are the first real prayers he has ever presented; but it has now become as natural for him to pray as it is for a living man to breathe.

The time when Christians begin to sing in the ways of the Lord is when they first lose their burden at the foot of the Cross. Not even the songs of the angels seem so sweet as the first song of rapture which gushes from the inmost soul of the forgiven child of God. Well might poor Pilgrim, having lost his load, give three great leaps for joy and go on singing: —

***"Blest Cross! blest sepulchre! blest rather be
The Man that there was put to shame for me!"***

Believer, do you recollect the day when your fetters fell off? Do you remember the place where Jesus met you and said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; I have blotted out as a cloud thy transgressions, and as a thick cloud thy sins; they shall not be mentioned against thee any more for ever?" Oh! what a sweet season is that when Jesus takes away the pain of sin. When the Lord first pardoned my sin, I was so joyous that I could scarce refrain from dancing. I thought on my road home from the house where I had been set at liberty, that I must tell the stones in the street the story of my deliverance. So full was my soul of joy, that I wanted to tell every snowflake that was falling from the Heaven of the wondrous love of Jesus, who had blotted out

the sins of one of the chief of rebels. That happy day, when I found the Saviour and learned to cling to His dear feet, was a day never to be forgotten by me. I can testify that the joy of that day was utterly indescribable. There was no expression, however fanatical, which would have been out of keeping with the joy of my spirit at that hour. Many days of Christian experience have passed since then, but there has never been one which has had the full exhilaration, the sparkling delight which the first day had. I thought I could have sprung from the seat on which I sat, and have called out with the wildest of those Methodist brethren who were present, "I am forgiven! I am forgiven! A monument of grace! A sinner saved by blood." My spirit saw its chains broken to pieces, I felt that I was an emancipated soul, an heir of heaven, a forgiven one, accepted in Jesus, plucked out of the miry clay and out of the horrible pit, with my feet set upon a rock, and my goings established. I could understand what John Bunyan meant, when he declared that he wanted to tell the crows on the ploughed land all about his conversion.

I have heard a Christian say that when he found the Saviour he was so happy that he did not know how to contain himself, and he sang like a whole band of music,

***"Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away."***

It is the privilege of true believers to be "singing all the time." Joy in God is suitable to our condition.

***"Why should the children of a King
Go mourning all their days?"***

Joy in the Lord is more injurious to Satan's empire than anything. I am of the same mind as Luther, who, when he heard any bad news, used to say, "Come, let us sing a psalm, and spite the devil."

"They shall sing in the ways of the Lord." When the ways get very rough, and become the paths of suffering, and the pains are frequent and intense, sing still. No music that goes up to the

throne of God is sweeter in Jehovah's ear than the song of suffering saints. They shall bless Him upon their beds and sing His high praises in the fire. To go right through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and sing all the way; to climb the Hill Difficulty, and to sing up its crags; to pass by Giant Grim, and even by the Castle of Giant Despair, and through the Enchanted Ground and still keep singing, and to come to the river's brink and descend into it still singing — this is lovely in a Christian. May the statutes of the Lord be our songs in the house of our pilgrimage, till we mount to sing above!

We owe all to Jesus crucified. What is your life, my brethren, but the cross? Whence comes the bread of your soul but from the cross? What is your joy but the cross? What is your delight, what is your heaven, but the Blessed One, once crucified for you, who ever liveth to make intercession for you? Cling to the cross, then, Put both arms around it! Hold to the Crucified, and never let Him go. Come afresh to the cross at this moment, and rest there now and for ever! Then, with the power of God resting upon you, go forth and preach the cross! Tell out the story of the bleeding Lamb. Repeat the wondrous tale, and nothing else. Never mind how you do it, only proclaim that Jesus died for sinners. The cross held up by a babe's hands is just as powerful as if a giant held it up. The power lies in the word itself, or rather in the Holy Spirit who works by it and with it.

O glorious Christ, when I have had a vision of Thy cross, I have seen it at first like a common gibbet, and Thou wast hanging on it like a felon; but, as I have looked, I have seen it begin to rise, and tower aloft till it has reached the highest heaven, and by its mighty power has lifted up myriads to the throne of God. I have seen its arms extend and expand until they have embraced all the earth. I have seen the foot of it go down deep as our helpless miseries are; and what a vision I have had of Thy magnificence, O Thou crucified One!

Brethren, believe in the power of the cross for the conversion of those around you. Do not say of any man that he cannot be saved. The blood of Jesus is omnipotent. Do not say of any

district that it is too sunken, or of any class of men that they are too far gone: the word of the cross reclaims the lost. Believe it to be the power of God, and you shall find it so. Believe in Christ crucified, and preach boldly in His name, and you shall see great and gladsome things. Do not doubt the ultimate triumph of Christianity. Do not let a mistrust flit across your soul. The cross must conquer; it must blossom with a crown, a crown commensurate with the person of the Crucified, and the bitterness of His agony. His reward shall parallel His sorrows. Trust in God, and lift your banner high, and now with psalms and songs advance to battle, for the Lord of hosts is with us, the Son of the Highest leads our van. Onward, with blast of silver trumpet and shout of those that seize the spoil. Let no man's heart fail him! Christ hath died! Atonement is complete! God is satisfied! Peace is proclaimed! Heaven glitters with proofs of mercy already bestowed upon ten thousand times ten thousand! Hell is trembling, heaven adoring, earth waiting. Advance, ye saints, to certain victory! You shall overcome through the blood of the Lamb.

7. Formalist and Hypocrisy

“Christian espied two men come tumbling over the wall, on the left hand of the narrow way; and they made up space to him. The name of the one was Formalist, and the name of the other Hypocrisy. So, as I said, they drew up unto him, who thus entered with them into discourse:-

“CHRISTIAN. Gentlemen, whence came you and whither do you go?

“FORMALIST AND HYPOCRISY. We were born in the land of Vainglory, and are going for praise to Mount Sion.

“CHRISTIAN. Why came you not in at the gate which standeth at the beginning of the way? Know you not that it is written, that he that cometh not in by the door, ‘but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber’? (John 10:1.)

“They said that, to go to the gate for entrance was, by all

their countrymen, counted too far about; and that, therefore, their usual way was to make a short cut of it, and to climb over the wall, as they had done.

“CHRISTIAN. But will it not be counted a trespass against the Lord of the city whither we are bound, thus to violate His revealed will?

“They told him that, as for that, he needed not to trouble his head thereabout; for what they did, they had custom for; and could produce, if need were, testimony that would witness it for more than a thousand years.”

After Christian had been at the foot of the cross, and had been stripped of his rags, and had received a change of raiment, and a mark in his forehead, and a roll with a seal upon it, he went on his way rejoicing. He had not gone far before he came to three men fast asleep, with fetters upon their heels. These were Simple, Sloth, and Presumption. Christian woke them, and offered to help them off with their irons; but they soon lay down again, and he had to go on alone. While he was troubled in his mind by their indifference, “he espied two men come tumbling over the wall, on the left hand of the narrow way.” Possibly, there had been some revival services, and at an exciting meeting these two men had, all of a sudden, determined to be Christians. They did not take the trouble to obtain true repentance and a living faith in the crucified Saviour. They did not care about real heart work, nor about the operations of the Holy Spirit within them; but they resolved to make a profession of being Christians, and to join the church. They thought that, as Christians wore a certain style of coat, they would wear the same, but they were not concerned as to whether their hearts were right with God or not. They came tumbling over the wall.

Bunyan says, “they made up apace” to Christian. It had taken him a long time to get where he was, but they caught up with him in a minute or two. None seemed to grow so rapidly as those who have not roots, and who therefore are not really growing at all. A child, with a farthing’s worth of soap and a

pipe, soon blows some big bubbles, painted with many colours and sparkling with beauty; but they are only bubbles. They are very quickly produced, and they as speedily vanish. Beware of getting up a sham religion. You can easily paint and grain a piece of common wood so that it will be taken for oak or sandal-wood; but it would take many years to grow the genuine oak, and many months to bring the sandal-wood from the far-off land. To imitate a good thing may be rapid work, but it will not last. You who catch up so soon with older Christians, mind that yours is personal experience, and not such as is learned from books, or picked up at an experience meeting. When a man has nothing to carry, he can run quickly. Empty drums make a great sound, and brooks that are shallow flow at a great rate. So the Formalist and Hypocrisy make up apace to Christian.

I do not know to what sect Formalist belonged. I know his father very well, and he had several children. One of them used to go to the Church of England; in fact, two or three of that branch of the family, who were very happy and comfortable, always attended there. One or two of them took to going a little further than the Church of England, and made towards Rome, multiplying ceremonies, and gaudy dresses, and I know not what besides. But, if I recollect right, there was one of the sons who was a Presbyterian; — he could not bear anything like Romanism, but he was a great stickler for all the forms of the kirk nevertheless. Another of the sons joined the Baptists, and a mighty fine fellow he was, — as orthodox as possible. He knew what was what in doctrine, and demanded sixteen ounces to the pound, and a little over. He would fight tooth and nail for the defence of believers' baptism and the Lord's Supper. I am not quite certain, but I sometimes fear that at least one of the Formalist family is a member at the Tabernacle. If it is not one of the sons, perhaps it is a grandson who comes here. There are many of these people about, and we must not be surprised if some of them come to us.

“Oh!” say they, “we will try to be Christians; and, in order to be Christians, there are such-and-such outward actions to be

performed. We will attend the prayer-meeting; we will go to the Bible-classes; we will see the elders; we will be baptized; we will join the church; and when we have done all this, we shall have got into the right road, certainly. Have we not received, as it were, the certificate of God's own Church that we are all right? It is true that we have tumbled over the wall; we have not been humbled on account of sin; we have not put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ; still, we are in the right way; does not everybody say that we are? Therefore, all must be well with us." Such was Formalist.

Hypocrisy, however, was the bigger rogue of the two, for he had not any belief in the matter at all. Formalist had, perhaps, some measure of faith of a certain sort; he thought there might be something in forms and ceremonies. But Hypocrisy said in his heart, "Ah! it is all a pretty story, but then it is a very respectable story; and if I pretend to believe it, people will think the better of me." I recollect one member of this family saying, "If I join the church, possibly I may get an almshouse;" and another reflected, "Very likely I might secure a pension of so much a week." Another thought, "It would be a capital thing to get into the ministry, and pick up a good living that way." And another said within himself, "This would increase my trade; people would say, 'He goes to such-and-such a chapel, we must deal with him, you know.'"

There is a very numerous family of this class; and there are some others who do not expect, perhaps, to get any pecuniary gain by professing to be Christians, but who feel, "Well, you see, it makes you seem to be a good sort of person, you get the respect and esteem of your friends; your mother will be pleased; your husband will be glad; all your friends will feel so satisfied, and they will make quite a fuss over you." So the man goes in for it, though, in his heart, he says, "There is nothing in it; it is all rubbish." He tumbles over the wall; he does not care about the secret power of vital godliness. It is enough for him that he has got into the Christian Church, and there he means to stick. He sometimes says that he is as good as the most of us; and

though he knows he is as rotten as he can be, yet he boasts himself above those trembling but earnest souls who cannot talk so glibly, nor fly so many colours at their masthead.

Well, these two men drew up apace to Christian, and he saluted them, for it is not the Christian's duty to suspect anybody; and when he finds people in the right road, he must treat them as if they were sincere until he has proof to the contrary. If it is the law of England that every man is to be accounted honest, till he is proved to be a rogue, it should certainly be the law of the Christian Church. So, seeing them in the narrow road, in which there are so few travellers, Christian began to speak with them. He asked them whence they came, and they answered, "We were born in the land of Vain-glory." That is where all formalists and hypocrites come from. They glory in themselves. They think their own hearts are right. They conclude that their natural goodness suffices, and therefore a few forms and a bare profession will serve them in the day of judgment. Christian also asked them, "Whither go you?" "We are going," they said, "for praise to Mount Sion." Alas, for love of praise! It is a most damnable snare. We all love praise; it is useless to deny it. It has been said that —

***"The proud, to gain it, toils on toils endure;
The modest shun it but to make it sure."***

We all have an eye to it at times, and no man can say that he does not more or less desire it. Of course, we do not like flattery when it is laid on with a trowel. We do not want great lumps of butter on our bread, for then we begin to suspect that it is not genuine. All of us are capable of receiving a goodly amount of praise, but it is difficult to remain in a healthy state under such circumstances.

These two men were seeking after pride. They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Brethren, do not we sometimes do good actions out of a desire for praise? I was thinking about this very matter today. I have undertaken a certain duty which I do not particularly like. I would get out of it if I

dared, for I do not think I shall succeed in it, and it will occupy much of my time, and give me a deal of trouble. But, while I was murmuring to myself about what a stupid person I was to venture on so ungrateful a task, I thought, "I shall receive no honour and no credit for it; but, still, if I do it with a view to God's glory throughout, and with no consideration for myself, that is enough." If I take up a difficult work that I like, and succeed in it, everybody will say, "He has done it thoroughly well," and so I get praise here, though I may not hear the "Well done!" when I get to my Master at the last. But if I undertake anything from which the flesh shrinks, with a single eye to God's glory, I shall have the sweet satisfaction that my Lord approves of my action whatever comes of it. Take care, I pray you, of "going for praise to Mount Sion."

Christian next asked these two men this very important question, "Why came you not in at the gate which standeth at the beginning of the way?" Now, if there should be anybody here who is saying to himself, "I am all right; I have always attended my parish church, or I have always gone to the meeting-house;" if there is one here who says, "I am all right, for I was christened," or "I am all right, for I was baptized," I ask you, "Why came you not in at the gate which standeth at the beginning of the way?" How is it that you did not come as God has bidden you come, by a living faith in the living Saviour; by repentance; by reliance upon Him who alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life? If you have been a church-member no matter how many years, better give up that position than let a religious profession be a winding-sheet in which to envelop a corpse. Have the life Divine within you, or else, in the Name of God, I beseech you not to make a profession which you cannot by any possibility adorn, but which will be the ruin of your soul at the last!

In answer to Christian's question, "Why came you not in at the gate?" Formalist and Hypocrisy gave a reason which seemed to them sufficient. "They said that, to go to the gate for entrance was, by all their countrymen, counted too far about; and that,

therefore, their usual way was to make a short cut of it, and to climb over the wall, as they had done." Formalists think, "We do not mind being christened, confirmed, taking the sacrament, and going to church or chapel; but this repenting of sin, this believing, this clinging to Christ, this seeking after holiness, — Ah! 'it is too far about.'" They would rather tumble over the wall. They cry, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace." I hope you, dear friends, are not so foolish as that. Better go never so far roundabout, and be right, than jump hastily at a false conclusion, and find yourself mistaken. Besides, it is not "far about," after all. The safe way is really a short way, and to trust in Christ is the direct road to eternal life.

Christian further very properly asked these men how, if it was a trespass against God to get into the road without coming in at the gate, they hoped to be accepted. If, without faith, it is impossible to please God, how can you expect to please Him by trusting to forms and ceremonies? Even your prayers are an abomination unto God unless you have come to Him, through Christ, for mercy and forgiveness. If you rest in your Bible-reading, or your chapel-going, or your Sunday-school teaching, — if you depend upon anything that you are, or do, or feel, you are leaning upon that which will fail you at the last. You are really making an anti-Christ of these things, and putting them into the place of Jesus. How can you be right at the end if you are wrong at the start? If you come not in at the door, rest assured that you will never reach the gates of Paradise.

These men told Christian that "he needed not to trouble his head thereabout;" and that is the answer of many formalists and hypocrites. They are harder to deal with than are the professedly unconverted. Those who have no sense of religion at all will often listen to what you have to say; while those other people, who know so much, and practice so little, tell you to mind your own business, for they are as good as you are. If you ever talk to a genuine Christian in that way, he is very thankful to you for the exhortation to examine himself. The true child of God, when he is under a searching ministry, will bear the wound, and will ask

God to help the minister to probe it. It is a sign of a good state of heart when you are willing to be probed; but it is a terrible proof of hypocrisy and formalism when you say to others, "Let each man keep to his own religion; you go your way, and leave me to mine; I daresay I am as right as you are."

These men further assured Christian that it had been the custom for more than a thousand years. In that, they spoke truly. Men have relied on outward forms, and thought themselves something when they were nothing, from time immortal. One who walked with Christ, and who even ate the sop out of the same dish with Him, betrayed Him. There have always been some having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Such were "spots" in the solemn feasts of apostolic days. They were "clouds without water, trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." It is so still. There are, indeed, most venerable precedents for formalism and hypocrisy. Go to Rome, and you will see plenty of them. Go into a large number of our parish churches in England, and you will see formality run mad. Step into our own Dissenting places of worship, and even in our decent sobriety how much there may be of dead formalism! Alas! this is the religion of many professing Christians all through the land, "You need not trouble about faith, or those other weighty matters which concern the soul and God; but if you go to your place of worship, and take your seat there regularly, all will be well with you." This is false religion; may God save us from it! May we be sincere, in our love to Christ, and in our faith in His atoning sacrifice!

8. Formalist and Hypocrisy (Concluded)

"'But,' said Christian, 'will your practice stand a trial at law?'"

I like Christian's way of bringing the matter in dispute to a test; and I desire to pass on, to each one of you, the question that he put to Formalist and Hypocrisy, "Will your practice stand a trial at law?" Blessed be God, if we are relying on the Lord

Jesus Christ, we need not fear the result of any trial at law. It is according to the law, surely, that a man should keep his promise, and that an oath should be binding upon him who takes it; and we have these “two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie,” — namely, His promise and His oath, — “that we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.”

***“God has promised to forgive
All who on His Son believe;” —***

and that is a matter which will stand a trial at law. If we believe on Him, He must and will forgive us.

The two men could not answer that straight question, so they said to Christian, “If we get into the way, what matter which way we get in? If we are in, we are in; thou art but in the way, who, as we perceive, came in at the gate; and we are also in the way, that came tumbling over the wall.” So, many say, nowadays, “You are professors, and we are professors; you come to the Lord’s Supper, and we come to the Lord’s Supper; you are a Christian, and we are Christians; one is as good as another, you know; and every tub stands on its own bottom.” These people declare that they are just as good as you Christians are, and I have sometimes known Formalist to say, “I am a great deal better than you are, for you often have to complain that your life is not up to the mark that you know you ought to reach. I have heard you confess, in your prayers, that you are far from perfect. Now, I am perfect.” Have you never heard Formalist talk like that? I have, many a time. I have known persons come to join the church, who, in answer to my questions, have told me that they were perfect. One man assured me that he had lived for six months without sin in thought, and word, and deed. I asked him if he was sure of that, and he replied, “Yes.” “Well, then,” I answered, “I cannot propose you for membership in this church, because there is nobody else of that sort amongst us, and I am afraid that you would be unhappy amongst such poor imperfect creatures as we are.” So I sent him on his way.

There are others, who are not such fools as to claim absolute perfection, but they think that they are marvellously near it. I was amused, to-day, when I read an advertisement of “an ivory church-service, with gilt edges, and lined with satin.” That is for the use of “miserable sinners” on Sundays! It seemed odd to me; yet how much of our religion is just like it! It is very fine work for those who dwell in dust and ashes. There is much of pride even in our humility.

When Formalist and Hypocrisy said to Christian, “We see not wherein thou differest from us, but by the coat that is on thy back, which was, as we trow, given thee by some of thy neighbours, to hide the shame of thy nakedness,” the true pilgrim made a most suitable reply. He said: —

“It was given me by the Lord of the place whither I go; and that, as you say, to cover my nakedness with. And I take it as a token of His kindness to me; for I had nothing but rags before. And, besides, thus I comfort myself as I go: Surely, think I, when I come to the gate of the city, the Lord thereof will know me for good, since I have His coat on my back, — a coat that He gave me freely in the day that He stripped me of my rags.”

This is one of the things that the formalist cannot imitate, — the robe of Christ’s righteousness, accompanied by a humble sense of one’s own unrighteousness and raggedness. The hypocrite will not own that he is unrighteous, and the formalist will not confess that all his righteousnesses are as filthy rags. He thinks that his own righteousness is all that God requires of him, and that it will answer his purpose to the full. But the man with a broken heart and a contrite spirit will never be ashamed to say, in the presence of men, “Yes, I was ragged, and lost, and ruined, and you have spoken a true word, though you meant it in ridicule; for I am nothing but a beggar wearing somebody else’s garments.” I like that trait in Christian’s character, that the very thing with which these men twitted [taunted] him, was that for which he felt that he had good reason to be grateful to God.

I am inclined to think, however, that Christian was not so wise in saying to these two men what he next told them. After speaking of his coat, he added: —

“I have, moreover, a mark in my forehead, of which perhaps, you have taken no notice, which one of my Lord’s most intimate associates fixed there in the day that my burden fell off my shoulders. I will tell you, moreover, that I had then given me a roll, sealed, to comfort me by reading, as I go on the way; I was also bid to give it in at the Celestial Gate, in token of my certain going in after it: all which things, I doubt, you want, and want them because you came not in at the gate.”

“To these things they gave him no answer; only they looked upon each other, and laughed.”

Of course they did; what did they know about the mark in the forehead and the roll in the hand? They had joined the church, they had “taken the sacrament,” they had attended to the usual ceremonies; so they must all be right. “A mark in your forehead,” said one, “what is the good of that?” “And the roll,” said the other, “what is that?” Be not too fast, dear friends, in telling everybody about the secret of the Lord, or about your inward experience. When you meet with anyone who can appreciate these things, then make a point of glorifying God by your testimony; but when you are talking with a mere formalist, or a cunning hypocrite, it is better, as soon as you perceive that he is trusting to what he finds in himself, to show him the falsehood of his own supposed righteousness, than to say much concerning what the Lord has done for you. Beware of disobeying the command of our Lord concerning casting pearls before swine, lest they turn again, and rend you. When you talk of walking humbly before God, they will at once begin to laugh at you.

Bunyan’s next description of the pilgrim always interests me; he says: —

“Then I saw that they went on all, save that Christian kept before, who had no more talk but with himself, and that

sometimes sighingly and sometimes comfortably.”

I know that John Bunyan never saw me, but he has sketched my portrait most accurately, for that is just the style in which I talk to myself, “sometimes sighingly and sometimes comfortably.” I look within, and then I talk sighingly; then I look away to Christ, and that enables me to talk comfortably. I look around, and see all sorts of trials and troubles, and then I talk sighingly; then I look up to my Father’s love, and I talk comfortably. I look sometimes to some of the Lord’s people who are not walking as they should, and then I talk sighingly; then I think of the Lord’s eternal purpose to present them faultless before the presence of His glory, and then I talk comfortably. A man passed me in the street, the other day, talking to himself so loudly that I thought he was speaking to me. It is not always wise to do that; but still, as we go through the world, we might talk to worse people than ourselves. May I make a suggestion, as I know some friends who are very fond of talking? If they would not mind talking more to themselves, the bad reputations of their neighbours would not be known quite so fast, and it would be quite as pleasant for themselves, I should think. Some people do love gossip and scandal; but it would be better if they would do as David did, and pour out their soul in talking to themselves. To talk about Divine things to your own soul, and to hold communion with your own heart upon your bed, is a wise and blessed exercise.

After that Bunyan goes on to say: —

“I beheld, then, that they all went on till they came to the foot of the Hill Difficulty; at the bottom of which was a spring. There were also in the same place two other ways besides that which came straight from the gate; one turned to the left hand, and the other to the right, at the bottom of the hill; but the narrow way lay right up the hill, and the name of the going up the side of the hill is called Difficulty.”

Now comes the pinch. Christian has been through the Slough

of Despond, so he is not afraid of climbing Hill Difficulty. He has been to the foot of the Cross, and there lost his burden, so he stoops down, and drinks at the spring, and says, "By God's help, I will climb the Hill Difficulty, too." Perhaps it was a little persecution, or maybe it was some discord in the church; perchance it was a loss in business, or it might have been some outward trial; but, whatever it was, he braced himself for the trial. The true Christian ever says within himself, —

***"Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where He goes."***

But our friend Formalist saw that there was another course open to him. He reasoned within himself that it really was preposterous that people should be put to any inconvenience for the sake of religion. We often hear young people talk about what an ordeal they have to go through, without knowing what an ordeal really means; for, to go through an ordeal, was to walk bare-footed over red-hot ploughshares. So Formalist said that he did not mind being religious when it was respectable, and if it involved no giving up of fashionable parties, or of marriage with an ungodly person; but when it brought down the anger of a father, or the opposition of one's old companions, he said he could not endure that. So he would take the path that led to the left, and wound round the bottom of the Hill Difficulty; then he would come out on the other side, where he should find Christian coming down with as much difficulty as he went up, and then he would say to him, "I have missed all this trouble, and yet have come where you are, safe and sound." It was not so, however, for Formalist went along the road called Danger, which led him into a great wood, where he was completely lost.

As for Hypocrisy, he took the road called Destruction, "which led him into a wide field, full of dark mountains, where he stumbled and fell, and rose no more." I suppose this means that he went off into the wilds of sin. He said to himself, "I have had enough of this kind of thing. If I am going to be abused for the sake of religion, or to lose my customers, I shall give it all up,

and do as others do; I shall take my ease, and enjoy myself; I do not see why I should go on denying myself.” SO, beginning with one worldly pleasure, he went on to another and another, and soon, he “fell, and rose no more.” The devil did not grow to be a devil in a day, and the worst of sinners do not become so all at once. A man may be a very decent-looking hypocrite for a long time. The horns and the hoofs may not peep out just yet; they grow by degrees, and show themselves in due time. The course of rebellion against God may be very gradual, but it increases in rapidity as you progress in it; and if you begin to run down the hill, the ever-increasing impetus will send you down faster and faster to destruction. You Christians ought to watch against the beginning of worldly conformity. I do believe that the growth of worldliness is like strife, which is as the letting out of water. Once you begin, there is no knowing where you will stop. I sometimes get this question put to me, concerning certain worldly amusements, “May I do so-and-so?” I am very sorry whenever anyone asks me that question, because it shows that there is something wrong, or it would not be raised at all. If a person’s conscience lets him say, “Well, I can go to A,” he will very soon go on to B, C, D, E, and through all the letters of the alphabet. When thieves would rob our houses, and find they cannot get in at the front door, they search for a little window at the back, and they put a small boy in there. As soon as he is in, he opens the door to the thieves, and the house is easily rifled. In so-called little sins there is great mischief. When Satan cannot catch us with a big sin, he will try a little one. It does not matter to him, as long as he catches his fish, what bait he uses. Beware of the beginning of evil, for many, who bade fair to go right, have turned aside, and perished amongst the dark mountains in the wide field of sin.

It is sad to have to speak thus concerning Formalist and Hypocrisy, who were once as good people to look upon as you and I now are, but who perished so miserably. God grant that we may be neither formalists nor hypocrites, but true pilgrims, to Zion’s city bound, and He shall have the praise and the glory!

9. Christian Arrives At The Palace Beautiful.

We are now to consider John Bunyan's own description of Christian joining the church. He pictures one true pilgrim, namely, Faithful, who never did join the church, but went on his way alone until Christian overtook him. He was a great loser by doing so, as Christian said to him, when speaking of the Palace Beautiful, "I wish you had called at the house, for they would have showed you so many rarities, that you would scarce have forgot them to the day of your death." Still, Faithful, being an eminent saint, with great depth of knowledge, and experience, and with much firmness of conviction, served his Master well without joining the church; and you remember that Bunyan depicts him as being carried up, from the blazing fagots of martyrdom in Vanity Fair, in a chariot with a couple of horses, "through the clouds, with sound of trumpet, the nearest way to the Celestial Gate."

But Christian, and Christiana, and Mercy, and almost if not all the other pilgrims, stopped at the Palace Beautiful, by which Bunyan means the place of special Christian fellowship, — the Church of God on earth. This Palace Beautiful was a little beyond the top of the Hill Difficulty. Christian wasted some valuable time through sleeping in the arbour, losing his roll, and having to go back to find it; but, at last, says Bunyan, —

"while he was bewailing his unhappy miscarriage, he lift up his eyes, and, behold, there was a very stately palace before him, the name of which was Beautiful; and it stood just by the highway side.

"So, I saw in my dream, that he made haste and went forward, that if possible he might get lodging there. Now before he had gone far, he entered into a very narrow passage, which was about a furlong off of the porter's lodge; and, looking very narrowly before him as he went, he espied two lions in the way."

When a person is about to be united with a Christian church, it often happens that he sees difficulties ahead, like these "two

lions in the way.” He begins to say to himself, “I cannot pass through such an ordeal.” It seems to him such a trial to have to talk with a Christian brother about his experience, and a truly awful thing to have to come before the church, and a still more dreadful thing to be baptized; and, so, poor Mr. Timidity begins to quiver and quake. Sometimes, even worse fears than these come up, and the perplexed soul cries, “Shall I be able to hold on if I profess to be a follower of Christ? Shall I continue to bear a good testimony for Him in after years as well as now? What will my husband say about the matter? What will my father say? What will those I work with say when they hear that I have avowed myself to be a disciple of Christ?” That was poor Christian’s trouble “he espied two lions in the way.”

“‘Now,’ thought he, ‘I see the dangers that Mistrust and Timorous were driven back by.’ (The lions were chained but he saw not the chains).”

Unbelief generally has a good eye for the lions, but a blind eye for the chains that hold them back. It is quite true that there are difficulties in the way of those who profess to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not desire to conceal this fact, and we do not wish you to come amongst us without counting the cost. But it is also true that these difficulties have a limit which they cannot pass. Like the lions in the pilgrim’s pathway, they are chained, and restrained, and absolutely under the control of the Lord God Almighty.

“Then he was afraid, and thought nothing but death was before him. But the porter at the lodge, whose name is Watchful, perceiving that Christian made a halt as if he would go back, cried unto him, saying, ‘Is thy strength so small? (Mark 8:34-37). Fear not the lions, for they are chained, and are placed there for trial of faith where it is, and for discovery of those that have none. Keep in the midst of the path, and no hurt shall come unto thee.”

Watchful means the good minister, who ought to be ever

watchful for souls. He told the pilgrim to “keep in the midst of the path;” and we give you the same advice. Live consistently, walk carefully; — not right at the edge of the way, as though you were half inclined to wander from it; but on the crown of the causeway, right in the middle of the King’s highway. Walk in integrity and uprightness, whatever may be the consequence of doing so. For a while, difficulties may dismay you, but they really cannot hurt you. The lions are chained.

What is the difficulty in the way of any of you who desire to make a profession of your faith in Christ? I ask you earnestly to look it in the face; for, I believe, if you do so, it will soon vanish. Consider the difficulty carefully, and then consider the far greater difficulty in your way if you do not profess the faith which you say that you do truly hold. Remember these words of the Lord Jesus, which you can never explain away, “He that denieth Me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.” “Oh!” you say, “I do not deny Christ: I merely do not confess Him.” Yes, but that is just what our Saviour meant by denial of Him, for He had just before said, “Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God;” so that the expression, “He that denieth Me before men” is evidently intended to apply to him who does not confess Christ. Therefore, see to it that you do come forward, and testify that you belong to Christ, if you really are His. When Israel turned aside to worship the golden calf, “Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord’s side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.” May there be many such who will now come, and avow their faith, because the Lord has by His grace, called them unto Himself!

“Then I saw that he went on, trembling for fear of the lions; but taking good heed to the directions of the porter; he heard them roar, but they did him no harm. Then he clapped his hands, and went on till he came and stood before the gate where the porter was. Then said Christian, to the porter, ‘Sir, what house is this? And may I lodge here to-

night?’ The porter answered, ‘This house was built by the Lord of the hill, and He built it for the relief and security of pilgrims.’”

The purpose for which the Palace Beautiful — the Church of the living God — was established, is that “pilgrims to Zion’s city bound” may there find rest, refreshment, shelter, and protection. I wonder what some of us would have done if it had not been for the Sabbath services of the sanctuary, the gathering of ourselves together for worship in its varied forms of preaching, prayer, and praise. When I am away from England, travelling on the Continent, — in places where there is no public assembly for worship, — as the Sabbaths come round, I always try to meet with two or three Christian friends, that we may read the Word of God together, and pray, and sing, and, if possible, remember our Lord in the breaking of bread; and we have found Christ very precious at such times. Yet, for all that, I always miss this Tabernacle, and its hallowed services; nothing can fill their place in my heart. I have often felt just as the psalmist did when he was away from Jerusalem; it seemed almost more than he could bear, and he longed to enjoy even the meanest place within the Courts of the Lord’s house. I feel sure that it must be so with all of you who love the Lord; if you were banished from the place where God’s name is specially recorded, and where you have so often been fed with the finest of the wheat, what would you do? Perhaps it is night with some of you, as it was with Christian when he came to the Palace Beautiful; and, therefore, you want shelter, and much beside. Well, the Church of Christ is ordained for this very purpose, — that, by the use of the means of grace, and by mutual fellowship, Christians may be comforted and relieved.

“The porter also asked whence he was, and whither he was going.

“CHRISTIAN. I am come from the City of Destruction, and am going to Mount Zion; but because the sun is now set, I desire, if I may, to lodge here to-night.

“PORTER. *What is your name?*

“CHRISTIAN. *My name is now Christian, but my name at the first was Graceless; I came of the race of Japheth, whom God will persuade to dwell in the tents of Shem. (Genesis 9:27).*

“PORTER. *But how doth it happen you come so late? The sun is set.*”

Ah! that is a question I often have to ask pilgrims, — “Why have you come so late to join the church? Why did you not confess Christ sooner?” So many put off this very important matter for a long while, as though it were of no account. I notice that, if they postpone it for a month or two, they are very apt to put it off for a year or two; and if they do that, they are most likely to put it off for a still longer period. They have been truly converted, they are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet, because they do not join the church at the first, they have continued postponing and postponing until some of them have actually died out of membership with the church. I do not say, of course that they have been lost through this neglect; but I do say that they have lost many blessings, and many opportunities of glorifying God by the way, through their disobedience to His plain command.

Christian had to make a very sorrowful confession: —

“I had been here sooner, but that, “wretched man that I am!” I slept in the arbour that stands on the hill-side; nay, I had, notwithstanding that, been here much sooner, but that, in my sleep, I lost my evidence, and came without it to the brow of the hill, and then, feeling for it, and finding it not, I was forced, with sorrow of heart, to go back to the place where I slept my sleep, where I found it; and now I am come.”

He gave the true reason for arriving so late at the Palace Beautiful, but it was a great pity that he had to admit that he had been slumbering, and so had lost his evidence, and was obliged to go back for it. When you and I fall into a sleepy state, we are

very liable to lose our evidences, and to think that we are not children of God at all. In this way, we lose our first love, our highest joys, and the unwavering confidence in God that we once possessed; and we rightly feel, that we cannot join the church till we get these blessings back; so, like poor Christian, we have to go down Hill Difficulty, and to toil up the steep ascent again, — treading the same road three times instead of only once, because we went to sleep in the arbour when we ought to have been pressing on towards the Palace Beautiful. Thrice happy shall we be if, like the pilgrim, though late, we safely reach the gate of that holy house “built by the Lord of the hill for the relief and security of pilgrims.”

10. “Come In, Thou Blessed Of the Lord”

“The porter then said to Christian, ‘Well, I will call out one of the virgins of this place, who will, if she likes your talk, bring you in to the rest of the family, according to the rules of the house.’”

John Bunyan was a member of a Baptist church, and he knew how to do things in an orderly manner. I have sometimes met with people who have said that, in reading “The Pilgrim’s Progress,” you cannot tell to what denomination the writer belonged; but if you study his book carefully, you will soon discover, both from what he left out and what he put in, what the good man’s position was. When John Bunyan joined Mr. Gifford’s church, the Pastor said to him, “Well, John, I am glad to find that you are converted, but I could not take upon myself the responsibility of receiving you into fellowship; I must ask one of my elders or deacons to see you. Someone must be appointed by the church to converse with you, and to report to the rest of the members whether you should be received or not.”

“So, Watchful, the porter, rang a bell, at the sound of which came out at the door of the home, a grave and beautiful damsel, named Discretion, and asked why she was called.”

The officer of the church, who is appointed to see candidates

for membership, should be “grave” in his carriage and “beautiful” in his character; he should be discreet, yet affectionate; desirous neither to be deceived nor to let his fellow-members be deceived; anxious not to be too severe, so as to keep out of the church those who are truly the Lord’s; and, on the other hand, not to be too lax, so as to receive those who are not His people.

“The porter answered, ‘This man is in a journey from the City of Destruction to Mount Zion, but being weary and benighted, he asked me if he might lodge here to-night; so I told him I would call for thee, who, after discourse had with him, mayest do as seemeth thee good, even according to the law of the house.’ Then she asked whence he was, and whither he was going; and he told her.”

This is like the examination of converts which we generally describe under the term “seeing the elders.” In answer to the inquiries of Discretion, Christian did not go beating about the bush, and talking of other matters, but he told her at once what she wanted to know. “She asked him whence he was.” That question was put in order to ascertain whether he knew what he was by nature; for, if you do not know what you are by nature, you do not really begin to know anything aright. If you have never discovered that you were born in sin, and shapen in iniquity, — if you have never realized that you are a sinner, lost and undone; — and, further, if you have never lost your burden at the cross, — you are not fit to be entertained at the Palace Beautiful, for you evidently are not a true Christian.

Next, Discretion asked Christian “whither he was going.” That is a very important question. I am afraid that there are many people who do not know whither they are going, — whether to Heaven or to hell, — though they have a faint hope that, possibly, all may be well with them at the last. There are also some who assert that a man cannot know whether he is saved till he gets into another world. Surely, they must have read a different Bible from the one I read every day; for that seems to

me to speak very clearly upon this matter: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;” — “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Surely, a man is not saved without knowing it; and he does not possess peace with God without being aware that he has that peace.

“She asked him also how he had got into the way; and he told her.”

That is another inquiry that we shall put to you if you wish to unite with us in church-fellowship. We shall say to you, “You profess to be on the road to Heaven; but how did you commence to walk in that way? What led you to go on pilgrimage? How came you to realize your need of a Saviour? How did the work of grace begin in your heart? We shall not want you to tell us the day and the hour when you were converted. Some of us could tell that about ourselves, but others could not; and there will be no discreet virgin who will be angry with you if you cannot. Often, when it rains, it would puzzle a Solomon to tell you exactly when it began, for it was at first a kind of mist, then it turned to a little drizzle, and afterwards it did really rain. Oftentimes, when the sun is shining, it may be that nobody can tell just when it rose, yet you know that it did rise, for you can both see it and feel it. When I was in Switzerland, one afternoon, I went up some five thousand feet so as to sleep at an inn, and to be ready for the sunrise the following day. Early in the morning, a big horn was blown, and everybody jumped out of bed, for that was an intimation that the sun was rising. We all ran out, wrapped in our blankets, — perhaps two hundred of us, — and were all staring away at the East to see the sun rise; but we were too late, for the sun was up before we were there. So it is, often, with the work of grace in the heart. It is there, but you do not know when it came there.” This is one point upon which the discreet virgin will be sure to question you, and I trust that we shall be able to say of you, as Bunyan says of Christian, “and he told her.”

“Then she asked him what he had seen and met with in the way; and he told her.”

We shall want to know what your experience has been since you became a Christian, — whether you have proved the power of the prayer, because God has answered your petitions, — whether, when you have been tempted, you have been able to resist the tempter, and overcome him. We shall also ask you what you are doing for Christ, and what you think of Christ, and what are your habits with regard to reading Scriptures, and private prayer, and such things.

“And last she asked his name; so he said, ‘It is Christian, and I have so much the more a desire to lodge here to-night, because, by what I perceive, this place was built by the Lord of the hill, for the relief and security of pilgrims.’ So she smiled, but the water stood in her eyes; and after a little pause, she said, ‘I will call forth two or three more of the family.’”

You see she was a tender, affectionate, gentle creature. She smiled to hear what the pilgrim said; she was pleased with his testimony, and “the water stood in her eyes” as she blessed the Lord that there was another soul brought out of darkness into His marvellous light.

You have, in this passage, a reference to the different church-officers. Mr. Watchful was the minister; Discretion was the deacon or elder; and then came “two or three more of the family.”

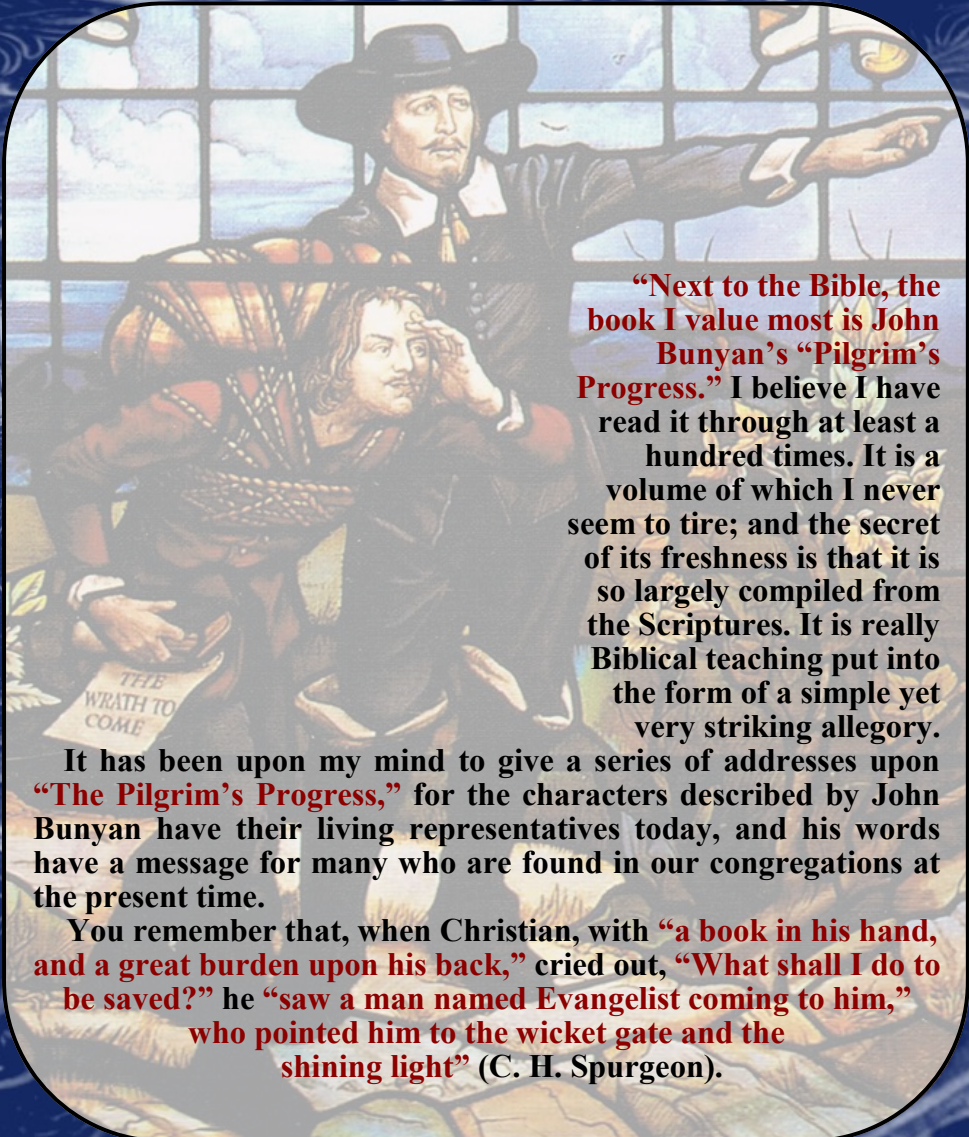
“So she ran to the door, and called out Prudence, Piety, and Charity.”

These are the messengers of the church: — Prudence, who does not want to let any hypocrites in; Piety, who understands spiritual matters, and knows how to search the heart; and Charity, who judges kindly, yet justly, according to the love of Christ which is shed abroad in her heart.

“Prudence, Piety, and Charity, after a little more discourse with him, had him into the family; and many of them, meeting him at the threshold of the house, said, ‘Come in, thou blessed of the Lord;’ this house was built, by the Lord of the hill, on purpose to entertain such pilgrims in. Then he bowed his head, and followed them into the house. So when he was come in and sat down, they gave him something to drink, and consented together that, until supper was ready, some of them should have some particular discourse with Christian, for the best improvement of time; and they appointed Piety, and Prudence, and Charity to discourse with him.”

There I shall leave him for the present, in good snug quarters, and I hope many of you will be tempted to come to the same door, and by the same means enter into the quietude and security of the Palace Beautiful, — Christ’s Church on earth.

The second of four booklets.



“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.

It has been upon my mind to give a series of addresses upon **“The Pilgrim’s Progress,”** for the characters described by John Bunyan have their living representatives today, and his words have a message for many who are found in our congregations at the present time.

You remember that, when Christian, with **“a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back,”** cried out, **“What shall I do to be saved?”** he **“saw a man named Evangelist coming to him,”** who pointed him to the wicket gate and the **“shining light”** (C. H. Spurgeon).