Compass Life Adult Sunday School

Pastor Pete

April 5, 2020

**“Climbing the Hill of Difficulty”**

**I. “The Hill Difficulty”**

The road Christian is traveling is difficult and he must remain alert, sober and \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Thes. 5:4-8). Simple, Sloth, Presumption are found \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and chained at the foot of the cross. They represent a group of people that have no interest in spiritual growth. When Christiana and her 4 children come to the same spot in Book 2, she will find the same three men \_\_\_\_\_. Next, two men illegally climb over the wall and approach Christian; their names are Formalist (2 Timothy 3:5) and Hypocrisy. Formalist is probably a representative of the Church of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Hypocrisy has no faith at all, believing that the Gospel is just a nice story, and if he pretends to believe it, he will be accepted. Christian comes to the Hill Difficult and finds two roads that are offered as alternates to the climbing the hill: Danger and Destruction. Bunyan teaches us that true faith shows us that we need a strong desire to persevere. Formalist and Hypocrisy have an interest in religion but have no heart change. Formalist and Hypocrisy choose the alternate routes. Christian climbs the Hill Difficulty and eventually needs a rest (God provides an arbor); instead of resting he falls asleep during the day and unknowingly loses his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Next, he briefly meets Mistrust and Timorous who are traveling \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ warning him of danger to come. Christian then looks for the scroll to comfort himself, and discovers it is missing. Interestingly, it wasn’t long after Christian received assurance that he faced outward opposition and his own weak flesh, which together caused him to temporarily \_\_\_\_\_\_ his assurance. After confessing his sinful sleep and carelessness he prays a prayer of confession and repentance. He goes back to the arbor and God allows him to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the scroll once again, “this role was the assurance of his life, and acceptance at the desired haven. He laid it up on his bosom and gave thanks to God and with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and set himself off on his journey.”

**II. “The Palace Beautiful” (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)**

Palace Beautiful is a wonderful, stately palace beyond the Hill Difficulty. To Bunyan the “Palace Beautiful” was a representation of the church. Bunyan believes that “No one can have God as his father, who does not have the Church as his mother.” Two lions guarded the passageway into the Palace Beautiful, and Christian remembered Mistrust and Timorous’ warnings of danger. The lions represent the authority of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the authority of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The church is to fully expect that spiritual opposition is inevitable. Secondly, we see that God provides the church with gifted leaders like the Porter called \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, as Bunyan constantly shows the importance of good characters (Pastors) that help Christian on his journey. Earlier, we see other strong and godly leaders that help Christian like: Evangelist, Help, Goodwill and Interpreter. At this point of the book Bunyan has Christian retell his entire story to the Porter; this serves as an excellent retelling of all the events that have transpired thus far. Another reason for the retelling of his story was to provide an example of sharing a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (part of church membership in the 17th century). It is so important for people to be able tell the story of how they became Christians. During the narrative review we learn that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was Christian’s name in the City of Destruction. The family living here represent the church and church-fellowship, and emphasize the important role that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ played in founding and sustaining the Bedford nonconformist congregation which Bunyan joined when his religious doubts were resolved. In his day the church was not only the religious center, but also the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the village, the place where the faithful met regularly to renew bonds of fellowship. He needed not only divine guidance but the human warmth to be found in close association with his fellows in pursuit of a common goal. Enjoying the company and "heavenly discourse" at Palace Beautiful, Christian stays several days, longer than at any other stop on his pilgrimage. The church also provides physical rest for the pilgrims and preparation for future battles. Next Christian will fight against a very powerful enemy.

**III. “The Valley of Humiliation” (Encountering \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)**

Christian has enjoyed a good time of both physical rest and wonderful fellowship with the people of the Palace Beautiful. Bunyan reminds us how much he loves and values the church as a place of refreshment and safety. It is at Palace Beautiful that Christian sees in the distance the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and later is fitted with battle armor to protect him for the rest of his journey to the Celestial City. As Christian leaves Palace Beautiful he notices an immediate and steep drop into a valley called Humiliation. Bunyan reminds us to expect \_\_\_\_\_\_ right after a period of rest and peace. The trouble comes in the form of a confrontation with the devil, Apollyon (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) Rev 9:11. Apollyon is an imposing figure; he resembles a bear and has a mouth like a lion (Rev. 9:7-11). Christian’s immediate instinct is to turn and run, but he has nothing to protect his \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, so he needs to face this mighty foe and fight. He has been provided with a sword/shield/helmet/breast plate (Ephesians 6), in order to fight a spiritual battle against evil forces. The battle between Apollyon and Christian is really much bigger! The battle is really between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ or the Kingdom of God against the Kingdom of Darkness. Bunyan makes it clear that Christian has an enemy and this enemy hates Jesus and the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_! Apollyon’s first strategy is to remind Christian that he belongs to him, not God. Next, he accuses Christian of being unfaithful and unworthy of the salvation God is offering. Satan is the great \_\_\_\_\_ and he preys upon believers, through false accusation (1 Peter 5:8). A persistent theme in in The Pilgrim’s Progress is that faith and truth cannot triumph without a \_\_\_\_\_\_, and that fight is often violent. The pilgrim's struggle for faith is an active one indeed, and the military imagery and violence in the text reinforces that fact. When Apollyon’s initial strategies fail, he physically attacks Christian and this commences the great battle scene of the Pilgrim’s Progress. Bunyan loved music and he provides a victory song as he leaves the Valley of Humiliation. Our battle is against the spiritual forces of evil (Eph. 6:12): 1. Remember who you are before God (imputed righteousness of Christ), 2. Remember how the enemy will attack you, and 3. Remember to put on God’s armor!

**IV. “The Valley of the Shadow of Death” (Fighting Inner-Fear and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)**

After the battle against Apollyon a \_\_\_\_ is expected. Instead, Christian enters into the Valley Shadow of Death. The Valley is full of hobgoblins, satyrs, dragons and a continual awful howling from people in misery. Two men try to persuade him to return to the City of Destruction (Give up! Go Home!) The way has now narrowed: On one side the blind lead the blind into the ditch, on the other side is a dangerous quagmire (David’s rescue) Psalm 69:14 (allusion of Christ’s suffering). The shadow of death is the fear of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and a loss of assurance. Reminder: Temptation always begins in the \_\_\_\_ (Romans 8:6). Now the most important weapon Christian holds is the weapon of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The armor given at Palace Beautiful is no good here, and Christian lays his sword down. When he is challenged by the worst of fiends, he prays that he would walk in the strength of the Lord. The greater the challenge, the more Christian becomes dependent upon God. Christian is comforted by the voice of a man who shows \_\_\_\_\_\_ of the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Points of Comfort: 1. Not alone, 2. God helped that person (so he will \_\_\_\_\_\_), 3. A potential for friendship and companionship. The words of scripture are as powerful when verbalized as they are when read, and the characters often \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to one another. They also speak aloud to comfort themselves and one another, as when Christian is in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Bunyan is writing while in prison, showing how much he misses close \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. As Christians, we need encouragement, companionship, direction, etc. When the sun rose Christian was thankful, and could easily see the traps and snares, as well as, two evil giants in a cave that no longer have any power to harm pilgrims. (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_). The first dweller in the cave was Pagan. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was formally a place of paganism with no light of the Gospel. Then Pope moved in and eventually Pagan died out. Giant Pope represents the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that sent missionaries to England and converted the land to its traditions. Both of these giants have been responsible for persecuting pilgrims and sending many to their death. In Bunyan's day, following the Protestant Reformation, with the rise of the Commonwealth and influence of the Puritans in England, the Roman Church had grown weak. Christian sees old Giant Pope sitting near the mouth of the cave taunting him as he goes past, but

unable to cause him any harm.

**4/12 “Vanity Fair to Celestial City”**