



THE
CHRISTIAN
ADVENTURE

A Bible Study from Pilgrim's Progress

BY FRANK HAMRICK

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MAP Pilgrim's Progress





CLEAR HILL

HILL OF ERROR

RIVER OF DEATH

HILL OF LUCRE

VANITY FAIR

GATES OF HELL

VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH

VILLAGE OF MORALITY

WICKET GATE

INTERPRETER'S HOUSE

MOUNT SINAI

SLOUGH OF DESPOND

CITY OF DESTRUCTION

PREFACE

When the Christian life is lived right—the way God intends it to be lived—it is heaven now, an exciting adventure every day. This is not to say that there are no problems and difficulties. In fact, the problems, sorrows, and dangers of the Christian life add to the excitement and are what make it an adventure.

No, not everything in the Christian experience is ideal. The birds do not always sing and the sun does not always shine, but no one can enjoy life more fully or have more thrilling experiences than the Christian who follows the Lord with all of his or her might.

This year's study, *The Christian Adventure*, follows Christian, the main character of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, through his many experiences and applies those experiences to you. In these pages, you will find yourself a burdened sinner seeking the wicket-gate and the way to the Cross. As a broken believer, you will feel relief when the burden of your sins falls from your back and is buried forever in Christ's tomb. You will learn to fight successfully against Apollyon, to stand firm amid the temptations of Vanity Fair, and to resist the enticement of riches. You will learn the danger of taking advice from worldly men, the peril of following those who flatter you, and the consequence of trying to find an easier way to serve God.

The Pilgrim's Progress is more than three hundred years old, but it is still relevant to modern young people because they travel the same path and meet the same monsters, giants, and tempters as did the seventeenth-century believers for whom John Bunyan wrote the book. *Relevant* is an overused word today, but that's exactly what this study is. In it, you will learn principles of dating and how to control impure thoughts that often enter your mind. You will see yourself as a companion of Christian as, with him, you journey the narrow way from the city of Destruction to the Celestial City.

Is your Christian life boring, or is it full of vitality and joy? The author, editors, and publisher of this book pray that this study will enrich and energize your life with godly energy by the time you complete it. Enter upon its pages with prayer

and determination, and walk with Christian through the adventurous journey of the believer.

How to Use This Book

This student textbook includes a number of unique features, including the following.

Introductory Reading Assignments

Every chapter begins with a reading assignment from *The Pilgrim's Progress* that sets the stage for what will be covered in that particular lesson. These readings should prepare you for and be supplemental to the teacher's lecture and the accompanying notes that you should take during that time.

Student Work

Each lesson includes some work that you need to do at home. Normally you will want to do this work before your teacher begins teaching the lesson. That way you will have a pretty good understanding of the subject matter, which should make the class time more productive.

Notes from the Teacher's Lesson

Every chapter also includes charts and diagrams that your teacher will use in the class lectures. These charts provide the "tools" that will help you focus on the key points of the lesson. You should fill in the appropriate blanks as your teacher presents the lesson and study them for the quiz that follows the completion of each lesson. (The quizzes include material from both your textbook readings and the teacher's lesson.)

Application Activities

At the end of each chapter is a list of topics, project, and/or activities under the heading "Application Activities" that will help you make practical applications of the lessons you've learned. These activities are designed to be used at your teacher's discretion to help you develop, think about, and apply the principles learned from the introductory reading assignment and your teacher's lecture. They might

be reading assignments, discussion or debate topics, review activities, or writing assignments. Your teacher may use all or only a few of these items as appropriate for your particular class and to fit the time available for your class.

A Word About Quizzes and Tests

Your teacher will evaluate your work using a variety of tools, including chapter quizzes, Scripture memorization, various activities and/or writing assignments, and possibly major tests covering several chapters, or units. The questions for the quizzes cover the material in both the student readings and the teacher's lecture notes. The quizzes are made up of a variety of types of questions, including matching, short answer, true–false, multiple choice, and essays. The unit tests cover from four to six lessons, with the average number of lessons being about five. The same types of items will be used on the tests as are on the quizzes. The individual classroom teacher will determine various point values and grading scales.



UNIT ONE



Chapter 1

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS: AN OVERVIEW

STUDENT WORK

The Pilgrim's Progress, the basis of our Bible study this year, is considered to be the greatest work ever written in the English language. Its total volume of sales is second only to that of the Bible. In our study of this book, we will first view the story as a whole. Next, we will study the life of the man who wrote the book. Then, in Lesson 3, we will begin our study of the book itself.

Take a few moments to scan the contents of this book. Notice that the entire text of the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* is printed in short segments at the beginning of each lesson or chapter of your book. Beginning with Lesson 3, you should take the following two steps:

1. Read the excerpt from *The Pilgrim's Progress* found at the beginning of each lesson.
2. Work through the lesson material after each reading selection.

The Significance and History of the Book

John Bunyan wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress* during the years 1673–1675 while he was in prison for preaching the gospel. Bunyan was in and out of prison for a total of twelve years. During those years, he had only the Bible and *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* to help him while away the hours. It was during the latter stages of his second imprisonment that Bunyan began writing *The Pilgrim's Progress*. He completed it in 1675, and it was published in 1678.

After Bunyan wrote the story, he was not sure that it would be accepted by the public. No one had ever written an allegory on biblical truth. He let his fellow prisoners read the story and give their opinions of its usefulness. Some of them advised him to publish it; others advised him to forget it. He decided that the only way to know for sure whether it was worth publishing was to print it and see if anyone would buy it.

Within a year of its publication, several thousand copies had been sold. By the time of his death ten years later, more than one hundred thousand copies had been sold.

Although the plot of *The Pilgrim's Progress* makes a nice little story, it is not a children's book. It contains deep lessons for life. Both nobles and common men, educated and uneducated, have read the book with equal enjoyment and benefit. Some of history's greatest men admired it. For example, Charles Haddon Spurgeon called it the most important book in his life outside of the Bible, and he read it twice a year—more than a hundred times during his life. Spurgeon was one of the greatest preachers who ever lived.

Hudson Taylor, the great pioneer missionary to China, was also greatly influenced by *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Also J. H. Jowett, a great Congregational preacher of England and a master of the Word, rarely preached a sermon in which he did not refer to *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

Alexander Whyte, a great Scottish preacher of the nineteenth century, gained a reputation as a graphic and compelling preacher unparalleled even in a country of great preachers. He had a life-long fascination with Bunyan's great work. He preached whole series of sermons on *The Pilgrim's Progress* and referred to it in many of his sermons. He compiled his sermon sketches of the characters of *The Pilgrim's Progress* into a book titled *Bunyan Characters*. (The reprinted version of the book was retitled *The Characters of The Pilgrim's Progress*.)

The Style of the Book

- *The Pilgrim's Progress* is an allegory. What is an allegory? _____
a story that has an underlying meaning different from the surface
meaning of the story itself; a story in which the characters, places,
objects, and events have another meaning, often morally or spiritu-
ally instructive
- Bunyan called his story a metaphor. How does the dictionary define metaphor? _____
an implied comparison between two different things; the use of a
word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object
- Christ taught the people of His day using a similar method. What do we call Christ's metaphors or allegories? parables

As you read *The Pilgrim's Progress*, remember that each character and each place that it mentions has a deeper meaning than what you might see at first glance. To understand the story best, we must know the intent and purpose of the author so that we can discover the deeper meanings behind the events he is recounting.

The Pilgrim's Progress was written during the seventeenth century by an Englishman who spoke and wrote using the language in the unique style of that time. The language of his original version is close to that of the language in the King James Version of the Bible and similar to but a little easier to read than the writings of William Shakespeare. In fact, the King James Version was translated in the same century in which Bunyan lived (1611). Bunyan was thoroughly saturated in the King James Version and in the language of that day.

Therefore, the original version of *The Pilgrim's Progress* has a beauty of expression that is found only in the much-loved King James Version of the Bible. The version that you will read, however, has been modernized so that today's young people can more readily understand, enjoy, and benefit from the lessons of this great book.

The Summary of the Book and Its Meaning

The central figure of *The Pilgrim's Progress* is Christian, a married man with children who lives in the city of Destruction. In the story, we learn that his name at first was Graceless. Later, when he came to the Cross of Christ, his name was changed to Christian. Throughout the book, however, in addition to either of these names, he is often referred to simply as “the pilgrim.”

The Pilgrim's Progress is the story of how Christian journeys from the city of Destruction to the Celestial City. Its deeper meaning, however, is the story of a lost soul's flight to Christ and then its journey as a Christian from the Cross to heaven.

Because *The Pilgrim's Progress* is an allegory, the various characters and places have deeper meanings. Thus, we see in the story that a lost man is seeing his need of escaping the damnation of hell, but Satan is doing everything he can to thwart him. At last, however, the man is saved as he comes to the Cross of Christ. From there to heaven he faces all of the temptations and evils that Satan can muster. The Lord, however, provides for Christian's every need. At last, Christian reaches heaven at God's appointed time.

Sir Francis Bacon once wrote an essay titled “Of Studies” in which he stated, “Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.” John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* is certainly one of the books that every Christian student should chew and digest.

The Significance of the Characters and Places

Following is a list of the various characters and places found in *The Pilgrim's Progress* and their meanings. Pay particular attention to these places and people as you encounter them in your reading. Use the map of Christian's journey that is provided in your book to aid you in your study.

Person/place	Meaning/interpretation
The pilgrim as Graceless	A lost man
The pilgrim as Christian	A saved man
Obstinate	A rebellious man who tries to keep the pilgrim from trusting Christ
Pliable	A curious man who, for a time, shows some interest in being saved, but he is not willing to suffer and pay the price
Mr. Worldly Wiseman	The intellectual, egotistical religious person who tries to lead a soul in the wrong direction
Goodwill, the Gatekeeper	Jesus Christ, who is the Way and the Door
Interpreter	Both the minister of the gospel and the Holy Spirit
Evangelist	One who tries to win souls
Apollyon	Satan
The citizens of Vanity Fair	Unsaved people in a hurry to enjoy the pleasures of the world
Giant Despair	The Christian's own temptation to give up in his Christian life and let the world, the flesh, and the devil have the victory
By-ends	An unsaved person who is making an effort at religion but is a hypocrite. He is two-faced and is using his religion only to benefit his business, his popularity, and his ego.
Faithful	The virtue of faithfulness that Christian needs
Hopeful	The virtue of ever hoping or trusting in God
The Shining Ones	Angels
The city of Destruction	Generally, this world system, which is doomed to destruction; more specifically, the condition of every lost soul
Slough of Despond	A feeling of sadness and despondency through which most burdened sinners go before they get saved. Many such sinners never get through it and so never trust Christ for salvation.
High Hill near Morality	Man's efforts to save himself by keeping the commandments and living a good moral life
The wicket-gate	The point in time when a lost sinner sees that Christ is the answer for salvation
Interpreter's House	The place where the sinner is shown by both a Christian and the Holy Spirit just how to get saved
Hill and the Cross	Calvary, where the sinner is saved
Palace Beautiful	The local church
Valley of the Shadow of Death	Hard and difficult times in a Christian's life, both physically and emotionally
Vanity Fair	The world and all of its temptations and enticements

Hill of Lucre	The enticement of riches and materialism
Doubting Castle and By-path Meadow	The temptation to find an easier way to godliness and the doubts and fears by which a Christian can be tested
Delectable Mountains	The Word of God and the mature Christian's experience
Enchanted Grounds and Beulah	The point of sweet fellowship that a mature Christian achieves later in life
River of Death	The appointed time for a Christian to die (Note: if he is not careful, he can die before this point. Christians sometimes die prematurely when they get out of God's will.)
Celestial City	Heaven

NOTES FROM THE TEACHER'S LESSON

Five Great Lessons from *The Pilgrim's Progress*

1. The Condition _____ of the Lost
2. The Power _____ of the Cross
3. The Importance _____ of the Word
 - The Word Gives Graceless the Burden _____ of His Condition
 - The Word Points Him to the Cross _____
 - The Word Became His Armor _____
 - The Word Frees Him from Despair _____
 - The Delectable Mountains Represent the Enjoyment _____ of God's Word
4. The Prominence of Satan _____
5. The Difficulty _____ of the Way

APPLICATION ACTIVITIES

1. Compare and contrast the original language of *The Pilgrim's Progress* with the modernized version in your textbook. What conclusions can you make from this study? Why do you think that the old language style has survived for so long? What influence has it had on our society?
2. Study the parables of Jesus. Make a chart outlining their surface plots and their deeper meanings. Find Scripture reasons why He taught in parables.
3. Conduct a study and write a report on the religious conditions in England during Bunyan's day.
4. Read "The Author's Apology for His Book" (see Appendix A) and write a summary of what it tells about why and how Bunyan wrote *The Pilgrim's Progress*.