

The Pilgrim's Progress - Part 2 - Christiana's Progress

July 16th, 2017 - Christiana's Progress

To the Reader - Part 1 - pages 7 - 9

We're embarking on the third book by John Bunyan's series, which is The Pilgrim's Progress - Part 2 - Christiana's Progress. After spending about 9 months on Pilgrim's Progress and 10 months on The Life and Death of Mr. Badman, we are starting this series of Illustrated Messages on Christian's wife and sons journey to heaven and her name is Christiana. [Please click on this link to download the PDF of this book onto your PC or mobile device.](#) Scroll down until you find "[Christiana's Progress](#)".

Christian (Christiana's husband) and Christians are worthy of heaven. One of the churches that Jesus address to the Apostle John in Revelation is the church of Sardis. It says in **Revelation 3:4-6**; "*You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

This is the future hope we have in going to heaven as born again believers in Christ Jesus. This is where Christian from Pilgrim's Progress went to and as we read today, this is where his wife Christiana and her sons are going towards as pilgrims and also that you and I are working towards as Christians.

In **John 14:1-3**, Jesus reveals himself as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He says; "*Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*" This is the comfort and assurance we have today that we are worthy of heaven. It's not based on your good works but by what Jesus did on the cross for us.

Those who speak or do evil to or persecute Christians on account of their faith, will be judged. Just as Christian was on his journey to heaven, he faced extreme persecution; whether it was from family, friends and strangers. But he persevered to the end, in spite of the devil trying to rob him of his pilgrimage, his call and election, and trying to get him to give up.

Jude 14-15 says; "*Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."*

We know we live in an ungodly secular society and much of that has crept into the church, and in their ungodly ways, have and are persecuting Christians as they walk in the ways of the Lord. But here, Jude says that they will be judged by God for their persecutions in the end.

Jesus says in **Luke 10:16**; "*He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.*" There is a chain reaction that happens here; as they reject you, they reject Jesus, and in turn reject God himself.

John 5:21-30

"For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they

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honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me."

It is evident and clear that those who judge and persecute you in your Christian walk, will be judged. What happens to you or me as Christians, just doesn't affect us; it affects Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Father. Jesus' judgment is righteous and just. So persecutions that come from family, friends, co-workers or from society in general when you take a stand for Jesus - God has the final judgment on them. As a child of God, calling him Abba Father (which means daddy) you have a direct intimate relationship with Him. You're an ambassador representing another country, that's how special you are and who Jesus made you to be as his representative on earth. All authority has been given to you on heaven and earth because of what he did for you. So when persecutions arise, don't take it personally because Jesus said that if they did it to him, they'd do it to you. It's your responsibility to continue to preach the gospel and the love of Jesus in the midst of all opposition, just like Christiana in our story is embarking on in her pilgrimage. Jesus says for us to pick up our cross, die to self and follow him. Jesus will give abundance in power, authority, signs and wonders and miracles, in soul winning and so much more. The only thing really that you can take to heaven besides your own soul, are the souls of other people who you've preached the gospel to.

Heaven is a safe place for Christians, free of persecution. **Revelation 14:13**; *"Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."*

All that you go through on a daily basis on earth will end and you will enter into rest. No family member to curse you out, or striving with an ungodly with a co-worker, no temptations, no more bad thoughts, no more sickness or mental illness, no doubt and unbelief. You go from being an ambassador on earth to being a permanent resident in heaven.

Jesus says that he will make all things new in heaven as we read in **Revelation 21:1-4**; *"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."* This is the hope that Christiana and you and I have as we are on our pilgrimage to heaven.

Christians are blessed when they obey the Bible. As you grow and mature in Christ, the spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit teaches and helps you obey what it says. The Bible helps you to reason right from wrong, it cuts and pierces between joint and marrow and judges the thoughts and intents of your heart, whether you want it to or not! It's alive!

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James expounds on this in **James 1:23-25**; *"For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does."*

Jesus says in **John 8:12**; *"Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."*

Follow Jesus into your workplace and secular society and he will bring the light in. But if you go in with your own secular humanistic ideology mixed with the world the flesh and the devil, trying to humanize the Word, it won't work. The ungodly will see right through you as they want to see light, not grey and cloudy waters. The secular want to see the light shining bright when everything has gone south for you and you're being persecuted or going through extreme trials whatever that may entail.

Acts 5:32 says; *"And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."* The Holy Spirit is a wonderful blessing that is given when you're obedient to God! Receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

King David says this in **Psalms 1:1-3** regarding the way of the righteous person and the end of the ungodly. It says; *"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper."*

There is a blessing of the light of life that enters your life as you draw near to the Lord. The Holy Spirit shining bright through you in whatever circumstance you're in.

Jesus again admonishes those listening to him in **Luke 11:27-28** about the need to keep and obey his word; *"And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" But He said, "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"*

Jesus doesn't allow the praise to go to his mother, but to be obedient to what He says. That's powerful. Get your eyes off the flesh and be obedient to Him.

In **John 14:15-18**, Jesus talks about the promise of the Holy Spirit who he will send to them; *"If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you."*

John 15:7-14

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have

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loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you."

The abiding in Jesus is obedience to Him. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are at work on your behalf - isn't that awesome and comforting! Jesus puts conditions on His friendship with you - did you see that? The condition is that you do what He commands. You can call yourself a Christian, a follower of Christ or a Jesus freak if you want - but if you're attaching that friendship with Jesus - the only ways He'll recognize it is if you obey His commands. That's conditional isn't it. Our earthly friendships don't carry this kind of weight on them do they. You don't expect your best friend to 'obey' all that you say do you? But our friendship with Jesus is very different. Jesus wants friendship with you, but it will cost you everything as you'll have to obey His commands. You'll have to love your brothers and sisters in Christ and lay your life down for them. You can't be Jesus' friend unless you obey Him. That's heavy. Jesus has the final say as to where you spend eternity as all authority has been given to Him in heaven and earth. So our obedience to Him is of utmost priority.

There is forgiveness when we confess our sins and become a Christian as it says in **Luke 18:13**; *"And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'"* This is what happened to Christiana as she cried out for God to be merciful to her, a sinner.

Romans 10:8-10 says; *"But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."*

We know verse 16 of **John 3:16-18** very well, but notice what Jesus says to those who do not believe in Him in verses 17-18 *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."* For those who walk after the Spirit there is no condemnation, but if you walk in the flesh, condemnation comes. Guaranteed forgiveness for those who confess your sins to God.

If there is no confession of sin, there is no salvation as **1 John 1:9** says; *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

In conclusion, heaven is a safe place for you if you're a Christian or desire to become a Christian as we read today. Jesus will make all things new, He will judge all your enemies, we will walk in His blessings. All these things though are conditional upon our obedience to Him on earth. Jesus places a lot of conditions on us in our love walk with Him, mainly, our obedience to Him and the Bible. Are you able to stand before Jesus today as His friend? You can find forgiveness if you confess your sins to Him. He'll wipe your slate clean and re-establish friendship with Him. Our friendship with Christ is different than the secular, worldly and humanistic ways of handling friendships. Being a friend with Jesus is about coming in line with Him. Everything in your Christian walk ought to be about preserving your friendship with Christ, not allowing anything or anyone to get between you, whether it's husband, wife, brother, sister, father, mother, son, daughter or friends and you will go out of the way to obey all of His commands. As Mary sat at the feet of Jesus, just to be near Him and hear Him, that is the way we need to be with Him.