

Christiana's Progress - Part 2 of the Book "Pilgrim's Progress"

October 29th, 2017 - Christiana's Progress
Stage 4 - Part 3 (pages42-45)

There is a section in the script that says; "*So he came once or twice, or more, to Mercy, and made love to her.*" This doesn't mean the actual physical act but in old English it meant that he was flirting with her, or falling in love with her, making his intentions known to her. Mercy was not living in fornication...just to make that clear.

The script today starts with this; "*Then said Prudence to the boys, "You must still listen to your mother; for she can teach you more. You must also diligently give ear to what good talk you hear from others: for your sakes, they speak good things. Observe also, and that with carefulness, what the heavens and the earth teach you; but especially be much in the meditation of that book which was the cause of your father's becoming a pilgrim. I, for my part, my children, will teach you what I can while you are here, and will be glad if you will ask me questions that tend to godly edifying."*

The book of Proverbs is filled with wise instruction and in **Proverbs 1:8-9** it says; "*My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother; for they will be a graceful ornament on your head, and chains about your neck.*"

Obedience and heeding your parents Godly instruction will be seen by those around you as beautiful and valuable.

Prudence encourages these boys from **Philippians 4:8** where it says; "*Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.*"

Romans 1:19-20 says; "*Because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.*"

Every person who has ever lived and is alive today, can never say that they weren't aware of God, his love and power because God's very own creation exemplifies who he is. It's innate within us to know our creator as we see his creation around us every moment of every day.

Two scriptures that talk about the blessings that transpire when you meditate on God's word are found in **Jeremiah 17:7-8** where it says; "*Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit.*"; also in **Psalms 1:1-3**; "*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.*"

If you want a good and prosperous life, a life that is full of the Holy Spirit, love, joy and peace, and all that God has for you... meditate in the Bible.

Christiana's Progress - Part 2 of the Book "Pilgrim's Progress"

As I said at the beginning, Mercy had a young man start to show interest in her and the script continues with this; *"Mercy had a visitor that pretended some good-will towards her, and his name was Mr. Brisk; a man of some breeding, and who pretended to be religious, but a man that stuck very close to the world."*

Remember how Mr. Badman tricked his wife into marrying him, pretending to be religious, in order to marry for money? In this case, Mr. Brisk was looking for a non-idle, industrious wife to make money. But when he found out that her business was about providing for the poor, his interest in her as a wife stopped. You may know of women that this has happened to, or maybe this happened to you. Someone who wants to profit from your gifts for themselves and not for the kingdom of God. Sad to say but it does happen.

Money can be a snare and tool for people to get what they want - yes even in Christianity it is a snare. Mr. Brisk, like Judas Iscariot wanted the money for personal gain. We read in **John 12:1-8** the following; *"Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."*

Jesus, knowing that Judas Iscariot was a thief, put him as CFO of his earthly ministry. Why? Well, Jesus knew the future and how Judas was going to do what he did. Jesus knew the bigger picture and role of his disciples.

It's also interesting in the following scripture, that the other disciples were behaving just like Judas. We're not sure which disciples they were, whether they were the 12 chosen disciples or others of many disciples of his, none the less, they wanted the money for their own motives.

It says this in **Matthew 26:6-13**; *"And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor." But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."*

We continue with the script; *"Then said he, "What, always at it?" Said she, "Yes, either for myself or for others. "And what do you earn in a day?" he asked. "I do these things", said she, "that I may be rich in good works, laying up in store for myself a good foundation against the time to come, when I may lay hold on eternal life." (1 Tim. 6:17-19) "Why, I beg you, what do you do with them?" he asked. "Clothe the naked", she replied. With that his face fell. So he stopped coming to her again. And when he was asked the reason why, he said that Mercy was a pretty lass, but was troubled with the poor conditions of others."*

Let's draw a type and shadow here for a minute ok. How many slick Mr. Brisk preachers have tried to seduce the bride of Christ into becoming their industrious workers for personal gain without any care for the poor?

Christiana's Progress - Part 2 of the Book "Pilgrim's Progress"

How about you? Have you become an industrious volunteer in a ministry that's in it for personal gain having no care for the poor? Selah and meditate on that for a minute.

James 2:5 talks about how important the poor are to God; "*Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?*"

1 Timothy 6:17-19 also says this for those who are rich; "*Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*" This mirrors Mercy's life and heart.

"When he left her, Prudence said, "Did I not tell you that Mr. Brisk would soon forsake you? Yes, he will raise up an ill report about you; for, despite his pretence to religion, and his seeming love for Mercy, yet she and he are so different from one another that I believe they will never come together."

How many pretentious preachers that are in it for personal gain have raised up an evil report about dedicated members in the body of Christ that are not profitable for their personal gain? They couldn't seduce you so they fabricate an evil report about you. Did not Judas do that of Jesus in betrayal? Here's a practical test, start designating all your financial offerings at church (not tithes) to the needs of the poor, asking for proof of receipt that it's gone to a ministry for the poor, and you'll soon find out if you have a pretentious preacher in the pulpit or not.

On a more practical note, women need to follow the example of Mercy as talked about with regards to Mr. BRISK. The script says; "*MERCY. "Well, if nobody will have me, I will die unmarried, or my conditions shall be to me as a husband: for I cannot change my nature; and to have some man who is opposite to me in this, I purpose never to admit as long as I live. I had a sister named Bountiful, who was married to one of these idiots, but he and she could never agree; but because my sister was resolved to do as she had begun, that is, show kindness to the poor, then her husband first cried her down, and then turned her out of doors."*

PRUDENCE. "And yet he professed religion, isn't that so?"

MERCY. "Yes, such a one he was, and, of such as him, the world is full of now: but I am for none of them at all."

As a woman, this is what you need to learn from men like Mr. Brisk. They will show up to get you off of missions work, feeding the poor, clothing the naked, the call and election on your life, and to get you focused on making money for them. Not all men are like this ok! BUT, Mr. Brisk's are like this. You need to get Godly counsel like Mercy did with Prudence. Prudence and the others knew him and his character. This is opposite though of Mr. Badman's wife, who did not seek Godly counsel when Badman was flirting with her, wanting to marry her. She fell in hook, line and sinker, swept off her feet, and it ended terribly for her.

We have a change of theme now in the script where it turns to Christiana's oldest son Matthew. This is a very powerful teaching, so please open your heart, ears and eyes to it. It says; "*Now Matthew, the eldest son of Christiana, felt sick, and his sickness was very severe, for he had much pain in his bowels, so that he was, at times, bent over. There lived not far from there one Mr. Skill, an ancient and well-approved physician. So Christiana asked him to come; and he entered the room, and observed the boy.*

MR. SKILL. "I knew he had eaten something that was not wholesome; and that fruit is the most harmful of all. It is fruit from Beelzebub's orchard. I marvel that no one warned you about it; many have died because of it."

MR. SKILL. "Come, do not be too downhearted; the boy may do well again, but he must purge and vomit."

Christiana's Progress - Part 2 of the Book "Pilgrim's Progress"

CHRISTIANA. "Please, sir, try the utmost of your skill with him, whatever it costs.

MR. SKILL. "No, I hope I shall be reasonable."

So he made him a purge, but it was too weak; it was said that it was made of the blood of a goat, the ashes of a heifer, and some of the juice of hyssop."

When you read in Hebrews 9, there is a clear comparison drawn up between the Old Testament Levitical sacrifices and rituals that were needed to heal the Israelites and cover their sins, and to what Jesus did by offering his own body as the ultimate and final sacrifice, spilling his own blood for the forgiveness, cleansing and washing away of our sins and healing our bodies. So in this script, a type and shadow are used (not the actual physical drinking of blood with the other things added).

So **Hebrews 9:13** says; "*For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh.*" and continues on in verses **19-20**; "*For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you."*

Hebrews 10:1-4 continues showing that animal sacrifices are now insufficient; "*For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins."*

Back to Matthew now as he is sick because of sin in his life, he partook of something evil and now he is doubled over in guilt and anguish of soul because of it. Mr. Skill or the Physician, was trying to heal a Christian boy (New Covenant) with the Old Testament Law, and concluded, that the Old Testament Law doesn't work any longer. Here is an example; let's say that you're carrying unconfessed sin in your life. Maybe you committed a sexual sin years ago. Now you've applied the Law to it in that you don't do it anymore, but you haven't confessed the sin in you. The Law isn't doing anything for you other than maybe help you abstain from doing it again, knowing that it was bad and that you're not going to do it again. It doesn't matter how clean your lifestyle is now fill with good works, if it's not confessed as sin, brought up and out and forgiven by the blood of Jesus, it will not be dealt with. You're not justified by the Law any longer as a Christian, your justification comes through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Here is the difference between the Old and New Covenant and what Mr. Skill gives Matthew. We read in **John 6:54-57**; "*Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.*" Again, this isn't the physical eating and drinking of Jesus body and blood, but a type and shadow saying that our faith in what he has done for us at the cross is sufficient.

Hebrews 9:14 says; "*How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"* So the first potion given to Matthew was nothing but dead works and it didn't work.

Christiana's Progress - Part 2 of the Book "Pilgrim's Progress"

The script continues saying; "*Now, he was to take them three at a time, fasting, in half a quarter of a pint of the tears of repentance.*" When was the last time you wept and repented over your unconfessed sin, getting it up and out of your soul and body? **Zechariah 12:10** says this of Jesus; "*And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*" What Jesus did on the cross of Calvary is the only thing that will cleanse you of your sins.

The script continues with this; "*When this potion was prepared, and brought to the boy, he was averse to take it, though torn with the gripes as if he should be pulled in pieces.*" You may be averse to hearing this message today because you're still trying to cover your sin with good works and the Law - being a good man or woman, boy or girl. Allow Holy Spirit to bring conviction and repentance of unconfessed sin in your life and receive forgiveness through the work of Jesus at the cross.

It continues saying; *After the boy was healed, Christiana asked Mr. Skill, saying, CHRISTIANA. "Sir, what will content you for your pains and care of my child?"*

MR. SKILL. "You must pay the master of the College of Physicians, according to rules made in such cases."

The master of the college of Physicians is JESUS who we are in debt to pay him with our lives.

Hebrews 13:11-15 says; "*For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come. Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.*"

MR. SKILL. "These pills are good for preventing diseases, as well as acting as a cure when one is sick. Yet, I dare say, and I stand by this, that if anyone will use this medicine as he should, it will make him live forever." Here is the Bible verse that back this up, **John 6:51**, "*I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.*"

John 6:53-66

Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever." Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you? What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more."

Are you like the ones who hear this as a hard saying and have departed or you want to depart from being his disciple? Are you offended when challenged with this truth? It's Jesus and all he did or nothing at all. He's the

Christiana's Progress - Part 2 of the Book "Pilgrim's Progress"

final atoning sacrifice. He's the only way, truth and life. What Jesus spoke here was the plumb line, the line that divided his disciples as to who would follow him by faith and who would continue under the Old Testament rituals and Laws.

The script continues; "*Then Matthew, who had been sick, asked her,*

MATTHEW. "Why, for the most part, do medicines tend to be bitter to our palates."

PRUDENCE. "To show how unwelcome the Word of God, and its effects, is to a carnal heart."

MATTHEW. "Why does medicine, if it is to do good, purge, and cause to vomit?"

PRUDENCE. "To show that the Word, when it works effectively, cleanses the heart and mind. For look, what the one does to the body, the other does to the soul."

The flesh and carnality want to hold on to unconfessed sin, presuming that since you're not committing that sin now, you're fine. So in that case, the Word of God becomes averse to your soul, or reluctant, disinclined, or loath to receiving it as medicine and healing. Matthew ate the fruit, was scolded for doing it, but in time forgot about it. But it came back in full fury affecting his bowels so as to kill him. He could no longer cover up the symptoms but had to confess the sin and receive forgiveness and healing through Jesus Christ.

You can try to apply the works of the Law for cleansing of your sin, but it won't work. For even before Jesus died for our sins, the application of the Law did not cleanse man but provided a temporal covering. That's why when a person died having kept the Old Testament laws, they did not go to heaven but rather to a place called Abrahams bosom and remained there till Jesus redeemed them after his death and resurrection. Jesus opened the doors for them to enter heaven.

Hebrews 10:11-14 says; "*And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.*"

If you want to you can continue in unrepented sin as a Christian, using the Law to make you feel good because you're not committing that sin today. But you're still sick in the spirit, the thought of that sin makes you sick and maybe your suffering physically in your body as a result of that unconfessed sin. The Law will not work for you today. Only repenting of that sin will cleanse, purge and heal you, never to be remembered against you and removed from you as far as the east is from the west. Now just to clarify also, that we know that good works follow those that are truly saved and are walking upright Christian lives but our justification does not come from good works, it only comes through faith in Jesus.

Pray right now and ask Jesus to forgive you of that sin or sins you've been hiding from for years and he will forgive you and heal you in Jesus name.