

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

February 4th, 2018 - Christiana's Progress
Stage 6 - Part 6 (pages 72-76)

We start by reading this part of the script today. *"Now, by this time, they had come within sight of the town of Vanity, where Vanity Fair is kept. So, when they saw that they were near the town, they consulted with one another whether they should pass through the town; and some said one thing, and some another. At last, Mr. Great-Heart said,*
MR. GREAT-HEART. "I have, as you may understand, often been a conductor of pilgrims through this town. Now, I am acquainted with one Mr. Mnason (Acts 21:16), a Cypriot by birth, an old disciple, at whose house we may lodge. If you think it good, we will turn in there."

Christiana, her family together with the other pilgrims come to the same city where her husband was persecuted and another Christian brother, Faithful, was martyred by being burned alive at the stake. We read this in Pilgrim's Progress and if you'd like, you can reread the review that we did on that in Chapter 21 by [clicking this the link](#). For Christiana, they must be painful memories as she remembered all her husband suffered here.

The city of Vanity Fair has a Fair that goes on perpetually, symbolizing worldly ostentation, pretension, flamboyance, brazenness and frivolity, together with displaying a preoccupation with idle pleasures or the things of the flesh. Maybe you remember where Al Pachino says, "Vanity is definitely my favourite sin..." in the movie, The Devils Advocate. There's a magazine that's called "Vanity Fair". It exemplifies the vain things in life, not as in worthless things, but things that are vain, be that fashion, arts, entertainment, money, prestige, power, politics etc.

Here's a definition of the word vanity; excessive pride in or admiration of one's own appearance or achievements. Synonyms are conceit, narcissism, self-love, self-admiration, self-absorption, self-regard and egotism.

Another meaning of the word means; the quality of being worthless or futile. Synonyms are uselessness, pointlessness, worthlessness and fruitlessness.

So the vanity that we prize so much, in the end, really amounts to nothing.

According to this website, www.patheos.com/blogs, it says; *"Vanity of a person is seen as having excessive estimation (overestimation) of one's self, abilities, looks, or other attributes that makes them have an excessive belief in their own abilities or attractiveness to others. Perhaps this was the reason that a certain piece of bedroom furniture is called a "vanity," because it has a mirror and focuses on the person looking into it."*

We can all get caught up looking in the mirror can't we. Doing our hair, make-up, getting dressed, seeing we want to look great when we walk out the door. Whatever is happening to you because of age, life, weather, etc., whatever it is that you take pride in that can become vanity, we have to deal with it. That's why we're admonished throughout the Bible to look into the perfect law of liberty according **James 1:23-25** where it says; *"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."*

The Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology says this about vanity; *"In common parlance "vanity" and "vain" apply to conceited persons with exaggerated self-opinions. While the biblical usage includes this nuance, it describes the world as having as no ultimate meaning, a concept shared with some philosophies. The*

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

meanings of emptiness and lacking in reality are already present in the Latin vanitas, from which the English word "vanity" is derived. This approaches the chief Old Testament understanding that human life apart from God, even at its best, has no ultimate significance and consequently is valueless. "

King Solomon famously says this in **Ecclesiastes 1:1**; *"The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher; "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." What profit has a man from all his labor in which he toils under the sun? The only thing that places value on anything in life is God, whether it's personal possessions, what you work and study for and what you pride yourself in. God being at the centre of it all is what gives it value.*

We continue reading; *"MR. MNASON. "Grace, go and tell my friends Mr. Contrite, Mr. Holy-man, Mr. Love-saints, Mr. Dare-not-lie, and Mr. Penitent, that I have a friend or two at my house who have a mind to see them this evening."*

So Grace went to call them, and they came; and after greetings were exchanged, they sat down together at table."

God will give you grace to seek out contrite, holy, saint loving, truthful, penitent Christian fellowship when dwelling in places like Vanity Fair.

"Then Mr. Honest (when they had all sat down) asked Mr. Contrite and the rest, in what state their town was at present.

MR. CONTRITE. "You may be sure we are full of hurry during fair-time. It is hard keeping our hearts and spirits in good order when we are in such a condition. He that lives in such a place as this, and has to do with such as we do, has need to warn himself to take care every moment of the day."

1 Peter 5:8 confirms this also by saying; *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."*

Matthew 26:40-41 says; *"Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

1 Corinthians 10:13 says; *"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."*

In essence, Mr. Contrite was saying that there was constant trouble lurking around 24/7 and that they constantly had to stand guard against temptation, but the Word of God always showed them what to do. And so must we.

We're going to look at the meanings of these men who have been invited over to Mnason's home for fellowship with these pilgrims.

*** First we have Mr. Contrite.**

So what does contrite mean? It means crushed, broken or bruised in spirit. As long as we walk humbly before the Lord, we're safe. Here are some scriptures that show the importance that God places on a contrite person.

Isaiah 66:1-2; *"Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a CONTRITE spirit, and trembleth at my word."*

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

Psalm 51:17 says; "*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—These, O God, You will not despise.*" This is what God seeks out. He's not into the pomp, glory and fleshly show that we can add to what He's already done.

Psalm 34:18 says; "*The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.*"

Isaiah 57:15 says; "*For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."* God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble contrite person.

Isaiah 66:2 also says; "*For all those things My hand has made, and all those things exist," says the Lord. "But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word."*

Are you seeking out fellowship with those who are contrite, crushed, broken or bruised in spirit that tremble at Gods word, while living in or going to Vanity Fair? Everyone has vanity pulling on them whether at work, school or your social arenas. Since that's who God searches out - do you search them out in the same way? Do you seek out the local church who has people like this in it? Are you sought out as a contrite Christian man or woman or are you more inclined to conform yourself to the image of this world and all its vanities rather than be transformed by the renewing of your mind through Gods word the Holy Bible?

The Apostle Paul urges us also in **Romans 12:2** by saying; "*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*"

****Second we have Mr. Holy-Man** and he says this about what pilgrims or Christians need to posses to walk victoriously.

"MR. HOLY-MAN. "There are two things they need to possess who go on pilgrimage: courage, and an unspotted life. If they do not have courage, they can never hold on their way; and if their lives are loose, they will make the very name of a pilgrim stink." How often have you heard or seen this take place in conversations, social media or TV where Christians have been smeared maybe because of loose living?

Joshua 1:7 says; "*Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.*"

What distinguishes a Holy-Man or a Spiritual-Man? According to I Corinthians 2:15 they can spiritually judge all things; they have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside and who rules them; they discern and interpret all things; they're a new creature in Christ according to 2 Corinthians 5:17 and are a new man according to Ephesians 4:24; they also have spiritual enduement and power according to Acts 1:8. Some scriptures on holiness are the following;

Romans 6:21-23 says; "*What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" The Holy Spirit living in us makes us holy.

2 Corinthians 7:1 also says regarding holiness; "*Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*"

There is a working together with the Holy Spirit in us, as we also have to do our part by cleansing ourselves. The Holy Spirit helps us change, to walk the Christian walk. You're not just saying you're a Christian but your behaving like a Christian.

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

Ephesians 4:23-24 says; "*and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*" There is a living out of the holiness of Christ in you. You're not conforming yourself to Vanity Fair.

1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 "*And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.*"

Hebrews 12:14-15 says; "*Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled.*"

Another question to you today. Are you seeking out Christian spiritual holy men or women for fellowship while surrounded by vanity fair or are you conforming yourself vanity fair? In your journeys in life, do you seek out these kind of people when you enter a new town or city? Are you sought out as a Christian holy man or women with a life that is set apart for the Lord, or have you simply chosen to conform your Christian walk to image of vanity fair for the sake of not offending anyone? Are you seeking Christian fellowship over worldly secular fellowship? Good questions to ask yourself today.

*****Thirdly, we have Mr. Love-Saints.** He says in the script; "*MR. LOVE-SAINTS. "I hope this warning is not needed among you: but truly there are many that go on the road who rather declare themselves strangers to pilgrimage, than strangers and pilgrims on the earth."* Have you heard that before from 'apparent' Christians who prefer not to be recognized as Christians? They prefer going in stealth than confessing openly that they are believers in Christ Jesus.

Again, Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology says this about the word 'saints'. "*The word "saint" is derived from a Greek verb (hagiazō [aJgiavzw]) whose basic meaning is "to set apart, " "sanctify, " or "make holy." This idea of the separateness of God and his people is carried forward in the New Testament, which was written by Jews (except possibly Luke-Acts) who interpreted God's covenant with Israel through the teachings of Christ. Those who were dedicated to the teachings of Christ were frequently called saints by these writers (e.g., [Matt 27:52](#) ; [Acts 9:13](#) ; [Rev 14:12](#)). Six of Paul's letters to churches are addressed to saints (Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians).*"

In essence, we are to boldly love the saints, or the body of Christ. **Colossians 1:3-5** says: "*We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.*"

Philemon 7 says; "*For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother.*" Wherever you go, you're to bring refreshment to the saints. Whatever that may look like, spirit, soul and body. Jesus said if we do it to the least of any, we've done it unto him as well. You see, Vanity Fair will always say to you, even as a Christian, that your fellowship ought to be with them.

Hebrews 6:9-11 says; "*But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end.*"

Here is another question for you today. Are you seeking out those who love the saints while surrounded by Vanity Fair, or are you avoiding their fellowship so that you can continue to conform yourself to the image of this world with all its vanities? Are you being sought out as a Christian saint? Or are you a saint that's behaving

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

like a sinner conforming your Christian walk to what the world wants the Church to look like? If so, I guess you could call it Vanity Fair Church.

******Fourthly we have Mr. Dare-Not-Lie** who adds to the conversation by saying; *"It is true. They have neither the pilgrim's clothes, nor the pilgrim's courage. They do not go uprightly, but all awry with their feet; one shoe goes inward, another outward; and their stockings are out behind: here a rag, and there a rent, to the disparagement of their Lord."* He's pointing out the duality of so called Christians and it's really obvious by how they're seen and how they act. Whatever the duality is, it will show itself in some outward way in your life. What he says here is very descriptive. They can't see their duality but everyone else can see the instability, duality and double mindedness of their walk. The lies expose what's going on internally.

Jesus says this about liars in **John 8:44**; *"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."*

Proverbs 12:22 says; *"Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal truthfully are His delight."* And **Proverbs 12:19** says; *"The truthful lip shall be established forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment."*

Here is another question for you. Are you seeking out those who walk in truth at all times for fellowship while being surrounded by Vanity Fair? Do you seek out saints who seek out truth or do you seek the world? You know they're caught up in lies, misappropriation of money, doing bad things secretly, saying the ends justify the means. Are you sought out as a Christian man or woman of truth? Or are you seen as a Christian living in duality with your tongue saying one thing but living another.

******Fifthly we have Mr. Penitent** who says; *"These things they ought to be troubled about; nor are the pilgrims likely to have that grace put upon them and their Pilgrim's Progress as they desire, until the way is clear of such spots and blemishes."* Here he is talking about repentance, being penitent.

What does penitent mean? Feeling or showing sorrow and regret for having done wrong; repentant. Synonyms are: repentant, contrite, remorseful, sorry, apologetic, regretful, conscience-stricken, rueful, ashamed, shamefaced, abject, in sackcloth and ashes. As a noun, it means a person who repents of their sins and/or wrongdoings and in the Christian Church, seeks forgiveness from God.

In **2 Corinthians 7:10** it says; *"For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death."*

2 Peter 3:9 also says; *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."* The Lord is strong and able help you work through areas in your life where you need to truly repent. His love is longsuffering.

The last question to you today is this; are you seeking fellowship with penitent Christian brothers and sisters who walk in repentance while surrounded by Vanity Fair? Are you sought out as a penitent repentant Christian man or woman or are you seen as a member of the Vanity Fair Church, having conformed your Church to what the world wants, a church without repentance?

All these characters we looked at today need to be who our life represents; Mr. Contrite, Mr. Holy-Man, Mr. Love-Saints, Mr. Dare-Not-Lie and Mr. Penitent and not be conformed to Vanity Fair Church.