

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

March 4th, 2018 - Christiana's Progress Stage 8 - Part 1 (pages 83-87)

Let's start out today by looking at the character by the name of Turn-away, whom Christian (from Pilgrim's Progress) confronted. Mr. Great-Heart gives Christiana, her family and fellow believers an explanation of what transpired there.

Turn-away, had come from the town of Apostasy and even though he had entered the Christian pilgrimage, he resolved in his heart he wanted to turn away from it and desired to return to where he had come from.

So let's look at what apostasy means. Going to Biblestudytools.com, it says the following; "*Defection from the faith, an act of unpardonable rebellion against God and his truth. The sin of apostasy results in the abandonment of Christian doctrine and conduct. With respect to the covenant relationship established through prior profession of faith (passive profession in the case of baptized infants), apostates place themselves under the curse and wrath of God as covenant breakers, having entered into a state of final and irrevocable condemnation. Those who apostatize are thus numbered among the reprobate. Since the resurrection of Christ, there is no distinction between blasphemy against Christ and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.*"

Matthew 12:31-32 Jesus talks about the unpardonable sin; "*Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.*"

This should put the fear of God in anyone and cause them to lock their lips if they want to speak against the Holy Spirit and his gifts mentioned in **I Corinthians 12:8-12** which are; "*for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.*"

Just as a side note, it's easy for Christians to yield to and desire the fruit of the Holy Spirit as mentioned in **Galatians 5:22**; "...*love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*", but there is much opposition - sometimes in those same Christians - against the gifts. It's the same Holy Spirit though isn't it.

I'd like to share what Matthew Henry's Commentary says about Matthew 12:31-32. It says; "*The learned Dr. Whitby very well observes, that Christ speaks not of what should be (Mark 3:28; Luke 12:10); Whosoever shall blaspheme. As for those who blasphemed Christ when he was here upon earth, and called him a Winebibber, a Deceiver, a Blasphemer, and the like, they had some colour of excuse, because of the meanness of his appearance, and the prejudices of the nation against him; and the proof of his divine mission was not perfected till after his ascension; and therefore, upon their repentance, they shall be pardoned: and it is hoped that they may be convinced by the pouring out of the Spirit, as many of them were, who had been his betrayers and murderers. But if, when the Holy Ghost is given, in his inward gifts of revelation, speaking with tongues, and the like, such as were the distributions of the Spirit among the apostles, if they continue to blaspheme the Spirit likewise, as an evil spirit, there is no hope of them that they will ever be brought to believe in Christ; for First, Those gifts of the Holy Ghost in the apostles were the last proof that God designed to make use of for the confirming of the gospel, and were still kept in reserve, when other methods preceded. Secondly, This was the*

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

most powerful evidence, and more apt to convince than miracles themselves. Thirdly, Those therefore who blaspheme this dispensation of the Spirit, cannot possibly be brought to believe in Christ; those who shall impute them to a collusion with Satan, as the Pharisees did the miracles, what can convince them? This is such a strong hold of infidelity as a man can never be beaten out of, and is therefore unpardonable, because hereby repentance is hid from the sinner's eyes."

Remember, Jesus commanded his disciples to wait and pray in Jerusalem until the Heavenly Father sent the Holy Spirit to come upon them and dwell in them. Jesus said he wouldn't leave them as orphans but would send the Spirit to them. So the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, is accrediting to the devil the gifts of the Spirit that are taking place in churches. When this blasphemy transpires, according to Jesus, it's unforgivable.

There should be a big question mark over people and their salvation, who are saying that the gifts of Holy Spirit are of the devil. It's a sure warning sign of their eternal destination. You don't bully Holy Spirit. He is Holy. Jesus said in the scripture above that if you blaspheme him (Jesus), it would be forgiven, but not if you blaspheme the Holy Spirit. What comes out of your mouth against Holy Spirit will judge you on judgment day.

Let's read **Hebrews 10:26-29** it says; *"For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?"*

Hebrews 6:4-6 also says; *"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame."*

Again, this is a warning; don't mess with the Holy Spirit, don't make foolish commentaries about Charismatic and Pentecostal Christians, speaking in tongues, signs, wonders, miracles and his other manifestations saying that they're not of God and are of the devil...it will cost you eternity as you've condemned yourself in blasphemy.

Let's continue in the script; *"MR. GREAT-HEART When he came to the place where the cross and sepulcher were, he met one that bid him look there; but he gnashed with his teeth, and stamped, and said he was resolved to go back to his own town. Before he came to the gate, he met with Evangelist, who offered to lay hands on him and turn him into the way again. But this Turn-away resisted him; and having struggled, he got away over the wall, and so escaped his hand."*

God was merciful to Turn-away by sending Evangelist to him again, to offer to pray for him to get him back on track, but he would have nothing to do with it. Have you seen Christians who continually refuse prayer or to have hands laid on them to pray for deliverance and almost throw a temper tantrum by stomping their feet in defiance? It shows they want to stay in the flesh and carnal nature but God's mercy is reaching out to them again to repent.

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

Mr. Turn-away is a great example of a Christian who rejects the crucified life in exchange for an apostate lifestyle, and fulfilling the unpardonable sin of blasphemy. Once you blaspheme, there is no way back according to Jesus! That's serious!

The devil has done a good job at convincing Christians that it's acceptable to grieve the Holy Spirit and reject the new dispensation or era of the Holy Spirit, i.e. Baptism of the Holy Spirit, speaking in other tongues, gifts of the Holy Spirit, signs and wonders and miracles, casting out devils etc., in exchange for a religious nominal Christian walk with God that poses no threat to the devils kingdom of darkness.

We continue in the script with meeting Valiant-for-Truth where he says this; *"I am one whose name is Valiant-for truth. I am a pilgrim, and am going to the Celestial City. Now, as I was on my way, there were three men that set upon me, and proposed to me these three things: 1. Whether I would become one of them. 2. Or go back where I came from. 3. Or die in this place. "*

Sounds just like the devil doesn't it, to kill, steal and destroy. Their names were, Wild-head, Inconsiderate, and Pragmatic. What do their names mean and how does it apply.

Wild means; uncontrolled or unrestrained, especially in pursuit of pleasure. Synonyms are unruly, rowdy, disorderly, riotous and more.

Inconsiderate means; thoughtlessly causing hurt or inconvenience to others. Synonyms are insensitive, centered, uncaring, uncharitable, ungracious, impolite and more.

Pragmatic means; solving problems in a sensible way that suits the conditions that really exist now, rather than obeying fixed theories, ideas or rules. A law-breaker or the ends justifies the means. Synonyms are, down-to-earth, hard-headed, hard-nosed, logical, sober, commonsense, utilitarian and more.

These three attributes have their roots in rebellion and independence, just like Lucifer had who was cast out of heaven. These three came against Valiant-For-Truth with only three options...but he triumphs over these enemies of the cross with his sword, the Holy Bible. The devil will lie to you too saying that you only have so many options and with any of them, he believes he wins. BUT...there is the other option...what does the Word of God say about your situation and when you lay ahold of the Word of God, you conquer.

Valiant-for-Truth says; *"It is so. Let a man have one of these blades, with a hand to wield it, and skill to use it, and he may venture upon an angel with it. He need not fear its holding, if he can but tell how to lay it on. Its edge will never blunt. It will cut flesh and bone, and soul, and spirit, and all."*

Hebrews 4:12 says this about God's word; *"For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."*

We have to fight off the demons behind wild-headed, inconsiderate, pragmatic individuals in life with the sword, that is the Bible, and not conform ourselves to their image. Remember that you don't fight against flesh and blood (people), but the demonic that influences and has inroads in people's lives.

Here's a sobering question. As a professing Christian, have you become wild-headed, inconsiderate and pragmatic towards Christians that are valiant for the truth, found in the Holy Bible, and as a result grieved the Holy Spirit?

Let's continue with the story;

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

MR. GREAT-HEART. "Yes; were your father and mother willing for you to become a pilgrim?"

VALIANT-FOR-TRUTH. "Oh no; they used all means imaginable to persuade me to stay at home."

MR. GREAT-HEART. "Why, what could they say against it?"

VALIANT-FOR-TRUTH. "They said it was an idle life; and if I myself were not inclined to sloth and laziness, I would never get used to a pilgrim's condition."

What a lie of the devil to throw on Christians calling them lazy and idle, but he does. **Mark 10:28-30** says; *"Then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You." So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life."*

Jesus experienced persecutions too when he says in **John 7:3-5**; *"His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." For even His brothers did not believe in Him."*

Now-a-days it would be to get out on the radio, TV, newspapers, internet, facebook, twitter etc., to get your message out. I believe they were taunting him because they didn't believe him.

When you're valiant for the truth found in God's word, the devil will raise even the members of your own family to not believe in what your teaching from the Bible and might even say that you are out of your mind. They said that about Jesus where we read in **Mark 3:20-21**; *"Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."*

Just like Valiant-for-Truths parents, they will say all sorts of things to discourage you from living the life of a Christian and leaving your old life behind. Jesus said that if they did it to him...they'd do it to you. If they thought he was out of his mind, so they will you.

Jesus also says in **Matthew 10:21**; *"Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death."* and in **Matthew 10:35-36**; *"For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; and 'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.'"*

2 Corinthians 4:7-18 says; *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you. And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore I spoke," we also believe and therefore speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more*

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

exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

No what goes on around you, whether it is persecutions, unbelief in your midst, problems in ministry or people saying that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are of the devil ... this scripture is your promise and future.