

VISIONS OF HEAVEN AND HELL BY JOHN BUNYAN

John Bunyan's Vision and Visit to Hell – Sixth Encounter Following the Wrong Minister May 3rd, 2020

Please read page 17 of the PDF above of John Bunyan's, "[Vision of Heaven and Visit to Hell](#)", with the title; **Sixth Encounter - Following the Wrong Minister.**

A good question to ask yourself today is; am I following the right minister or am I following the wrong minister? Is it even possible that a minister can be wrong? Apparently so as we read in the story and as we'll study today. The consequences are eternal, unless repented of.

In the story, the wretched man says; *"I was told," said he, "by those that I depended on and thought had informed me correctly, that if I only said, 'Lord, have mercy on me', then, when it came time to die, that would be enough to save me. But oh, wretchedly I find myself mistaken, to my eternal sorrow! Alas, I did call for mercy on my deathbed, but found it was too late."*

How could it be too late? Doesn't the scripture say that, *"those that call on the name of the Lord shall be saved"*, Romans 10:13? How about the thief on the cross? He called on Jesus to save him, [Luke 23:39-43](#). This thief had no previous repentance and confession, but Jesus knew the heart of that sinner on the cross that he was repenting of his sins. That's why Jesus said that he'd be with Him in paradise that same day. This same thief was rebuking the other sinner on the cross knowing that they were both deserving of punishment of their sins, yet one was truly repentant. Jesus knows and sees your heart today too. Jesus knows when a heart is truly repentant.

The wrong Minister, whom the wretched man followed, was one and the same as the Seeker Friendly Ministers today who teach the following of this definition found in an article By Steve Shirley at JesusAlive.

"1. A key trait of the "seeker friendly" church is a desire to reach the lost. Of course, this is AWESOME, however, the problem comes from HOW they are trying to do it. "Seeker" means someone who is "seeking" Christ. "Friendly" means basically doing or saying nothing that would offend or drive the person who is seeking Christ away. In regards to the Gospel, this means avoiding any negative talk regarding why we need Christ. There is no talk about the reality of Hell and that Hell is the destination of all people without Christ. There is no talk about sin and the need to repent. There is no talk about the "cost" of following Christ ([Mt 16:24-25](#))([Mk 8:34-35](#))([Lk 14:25-33](#)). Rarely is the importance of the resurrection mentioned. Instead, Jesus is presented as an answer to your problems, a way to meet your needs, a way to make yourself better, a way to give you a better life."

There's a big difference between a sinner repenting of their sins on their deathbed and a sinner simply calling on the Lord to have mercy on them, without repenting of their sins. The one has no sorrow and remains a sinner on his deathbed, the other has sorrow and genuinely repents of his sins, confessing them to God and does not continue in them in heart, mind, or action. How many people today who attend Seeker Friendly Churches are on, or some day will be on their death bed, believing the same lie that the wretched man believed?

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

The wretched man that is in Hell never repented of his sins, even when he was not able to continue in them in action, but carried them in his heart and mind on his deathbed.

The story continues with the devil saying; *"You say some of your lewd companions told you that saying, 'Lord, have mercy on me' when you came to die would be enough. A very fine excuse! You might have known, if you'd given yourself but leisure, to have read the Bible that 'Without holiness no one shall see the Lord.' Therefore this is the sum of the matter. You were willing to live in your sins as long as you could, you did not leave them at last because you did not like them, but because you could not follow them while lying on your death bed."*

Without holiness no one will see the Lord and the One who makes you holy is the Holy Spirit dwelling in the born again Christian. We know that we're saved by grace through faith and not of ourselves lest we boast, (Ephesians 2:8), yet that's been twisted to imply that you don't have to continue to work out your salvation, (Philippians 2:12). But we do have to continue to work out our salvation by our actions. There's a false teaching that says that grace covers all of your sins; past, present and future and that you don't have to confess any sin when you do sin. But the Apostle Paul says that the Lord told him that His grace was sufficient for him in his weakness, (2 Corinthians 12:9). Grace helps you to flee sin when you are tempted to sin. You're without excuse. The Bible says that when you're tempted God will always make a way of escape, (1 Corinthians 10:13), because you won't be tempted beyond what you can bear. His grace helps you flee the temptation to sin.

James 4:7-10 talks about the power of humility; *"7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners;*

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and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”

Had the wretched man in the story humbled himself before Jesus when he had the opportunity, he wouldn't have ended up in hell. That's the attitude of a repentant sinner and the attitude you're to have on your deathbed, if you make it that far. But don't wait until your deathbed to make things right with God, today is the day of salvation, don't wait until tomorrow or until the end of your life.

1 John 2:1-6 gives us the test of knowing Jesus Christ; *“2 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. 3 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God [a] is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”*

The wretched sinner we are reading about loved his sin to his deathbed and we don't see any remorse or repentance for his sin. Even though he couldn't act out his sin on his deathbed, he still had it in his heart and mind to do it, refusing to give it up.

1 John 3:4-9 says; *“4 Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. 5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. 6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. 7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.”*

In essence what this is saying is that you have the ability not to sin, but if you do, you repent. These words, repent and sin, have been taken out of many pulpits in the world today. It's offensive. It's been exchanged with a seeker sensitive scenario, a non-offensive preaching.

The story continues with the devil saying; *“You have been warned often enough that you should take heed of being deceived, for God would not be mocked, but such as you sowed you should also reap. So that you have no reason to complain of anything but your own folly, which you now see too late.”*

Once you're in hell, you can't get out. The devil will torment you for eternity, you believed a lie, you mocked God who gave you a salvation plan which you refused to follow. It's eternal separation from God.

Galatians 6:7-8 says; *“7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”*

Life and death are a choice that's being given to you today, choose eternal life. Even if you're on your deathbed, choose life, choose repentance of your sins, ask Jesus to forgive you. Don't go back to your sins, even in your heart and mind, but truly repent and be remorseful of your sins.

People who attend Seeker Friendly Churches would view what is being taught to be one of condemnation, but the reason they are feeling condemnation is that they are walking according to the flesh and not the Spirit. People say it all the time, they feel condemned by the message of the Word of God. The reason why people feel condemned is because they refuse to repent because they're in the flesh.

Romans 8:1-8 makes this very clear; *“8 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who [a] do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be [b] carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the [c] carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”*

When you confess your sins, repent of them from your heart, trust in Jesus then to create in you a clean heart and renew a steadfast spirit in you. When you're on your deathbed you can't go anywhere. Don't sleep on the decision, you might not wake up. Now is the day and time of salvation. Just like the Wretched man in the story, don't mock God's salvation plan while you're alive like countless thousands do today. There is a protocol to God's plan of salvation; it's repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus, (Acts 2:38).

God may raise you up off your deathbed if you become a Christian. James 5:14-16 says to confess your sins God. Maybe He'll send a preacher to you to pray for you to be healed. Jesus may give you a whole new

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ministry and life in serving Him. It's more than throwing up a slap-stick Jesus having mercy prayer, it's about you confessing your sins and being born again.

The story continues with the Guardian Angel saying; *"It is this intentional neglecting the salvation of the soul that is the ruin of so many thousands who do not think about the result of what they are doing, nor where they are going until it is too late to help it."*

You don't want to be in this position while you're reading this message, having every opportunity to repent yet intentionally neglecting it for the pleasure of sin. You need to humble yourself before an all holy God, repent of being a sinner and receive Him into your heart and the Holy Spirit will come into you and make you holy. Don't offer to God a last-minute prayer for mercy without repentance, it won't work. There is no quick or easy access to heaven. It requires a heart and mind change, bending your knee to the Creator of the heavens and earth.

Did you know that you can believe in Jesus yet not repent of being a sinner? That will not get you to heaven. If this message sounds condemning to you today, it's probably because you're still a sinner, walking in the flesh, not wanting to humble yourself before God. Jesus isn't condemning you, but you're already condemned because you don't believe and receive him as Lord of your life, (John 3:18).

As we said earlier, the two words that have been removed from the Seeker Friendly pulpits today, are sin and repentance. The two very actions that you need to do to become born again, the devil has removed from the pulpits with the lie that it's too offensive and condemning. Again, it's only condemning because you are still in the flesh if you feel that way.

It's very important to follow the right minister and not the wrong one, because it can cost you an eternity in Hell, and once you're in Hell there is no way out. The wretched man who believed that he could live a life of sin and call upon the name of the Lord to have mercy on him while on his death bed without having repented, was sincerely deceived and the same demon that deceived him, is the same demon that is tormenting him for eternity in hell.