

## THE CELESTIAL RAILROAD

March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 – The Celestial Railroad

Part 8 – The Palace Beautiful and It's Ladies

The Palace Beautiful And Its Ladies in this allegory is a type and shadow of the local church, where those who are born again Christians gather for fellowship, the teaching of the Word of God etc. The church is where the body of Christ corporately gather together. Today, the message in The Celestial Railroad shows again that the broadness of contemporary Christianity has not made it a stopping place for those who choose to ride the train. Please read page 5 & 6 by [clicking on this link](#).

It's interesting that this week, International Women's day was celebrated. I wonder if there was any talk about these types of ladies (allegorically speaking), Miss Prudence, Miss Piety, Miss Charity etc., God fearing women and attributes that need to abide in followers of Christ? I doubt it was the topic of discussion.

In our story we read about the Palace Beautiful and the ladies that abide there: "*This is a wonderful improvement indeed," said I. "Yet I would have been glad of an opportunity to visit the Palace Beautiful, and be introduced to the charming young ladies – Miss Prudence, Miss Piety, Miss Charity and the rest – who have had the kindness to entertain pilgrims there."*

The passenger/author who makes this statement, comes to find out that there is no stopping or resting place at the local church. It would seem as those riding this fast train have no need of regular participation and involvement in church but have filled that need with many other secular alternatives.

In Pilgrims Progress we read a commentary from [BunyanMinistries.org](http://BunyanMinistries.org), about Christian residing at the palace beautiful. It says; "*Christian's Careful Investigation to Qualify for Entrance. A careful distinction is made here between Bunyan's belief in a separated church gathered out of sinful society and the comprehensive Church of England establishment that was wedded to the monarchical State. In other words, local church membership in a Nonconformist fellowship required a testimony to regeneration and personal salvation, in contrast with mere nominal association with the Church of England by the populace in general through the formal administration of baptism. Hence, Christian, poised outside the Palace Beautiful, portrays the new convert about to be investigated before such membership in a separated church is granted.*"

How many go to church, whatever denomination, week after week in mere nominal association, but no regeneration, repentance, nor personal salvation experience? How many have been baptized when they were babies, assuming that they're on their way to heaven because of it? The Bible is clear that our salvation is based upon our confession of faith in Jesus Christ; so, a baby who has been baptized into a church has no ability to confess Jesus as their personal Saviour and hence, are not born again.

Christian is investigated by 5 individuals at the Palace Beautiful which represents the Church, about his beliefs and experience in Jesus Christ. In the nonconformist church in which Bunyan was in, there was no just showing up for church, saying they're a member of it because they showed up nominally. There was a questioning of spiritual truths as to why they wanted to be a member of that church.

In Pilgrim's Progress, the character 'Watchful' who is the porter, describes the purpose of the Palace. "*THEN Christian spoke to the porter, : Sir, what is the purpose of this house? And may I reside here for the night?: The porter answered, :This house was built by the Lord of the Hill, and he built it for the relief and security of pilgrims.:2 The porter also asked from where he had come and where he was going. It is for the relief, security, and refreshment of bona fide pilgrims. Hence, it is not a haven for a mixed multitude (I Pet. 2:5) as can be expected in the world (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43).*"

**1 Peter 2:5** describes the body of Christ – the church – as this; "*you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*"

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After this investigation he is then questioned by a dignified and beautiful lady named Discretion. *What is intended, it seems, is the portrayal of the Palace Beautiful, and therefore a biblical local church, as a fellowship of holy and pure faith, that is illustrated by means of virginal purity and undefiled feminine virtue.*

[BunyanMinistries.org](http://BunyanMinistries.org)

The Apostle Paul says this in **2 Corinthians 11:2**; *“For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”* Also, in **Ephesians 5:27** he says; *“that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”*

After the questioning by Discretion, he is further investigated and approved by the virtuous ladies, Prudence (wisdom), Piety (spiritual devotion), and Charity (love). *No doubt Christian is also judged in terms of his desire for company with such virtuous ladies. A person with unholy interests at heart is likely to balk at such an environment. However, this pilgrim is unanimously confirmed for entry. He is invited inside and welcomed. Tentatively waiting at the threshold of the house, Christian is at last invited to enter with an accompanying congregational chorus of welcome. For Bunyan, local church membership was a serious matter that must be based upon regeneration, not mere creedal affirmation.* [BunyanMinistries.org](http://BunyanMinistries.org)

We read again in The Celestial Railroad our passenger author says; *"This is a wonderful improvement indeed," said I. "Yet I would have been glad of an opportunity to visit the Palace Beautiful, and be introduced to the charming young ladies – Miss Prudence, Miss Piety, Miss Charity and the rest – who have had the kindness to entertain pilgrims there."*

What he's alluding to is that he would have been glad to visit church, being introduced then to wisdom, spiritual devotion and love, the love of Christ. It's interesting as we read this as it would seem our passenger author, although he likes the improvement of modern travel on the Religious Celestial Railroad, and sincerely desired to have visited the Palace Beautiful and been introduced to those who kindly entertain pilgrims, is soon easily swayed in the opposite direction by Mr. Smooth-it-away. The smooth lies of the devil deceived him.

**Romans 16:17-18** says this about avoiding divisive persons like Mr. Smooth-it-away; *“17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. 18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.”* Avoid means to you don't get in contact with them, stay and walk away from them, you don't even entertain them.

Our story continues saying; *"Young ladies," cried Mr. Smooth-it-away, as soon as he could speak for laughing. "And charming young ladies! Why, my dear fellow, they are old maids, every one of them – prim, starched, dry and angular – and not one of them, I will venture to say, has altered so much as the fashion of her gown since the days of Christian's pilgrimage." "Ah, well," said I, much comforted, "then I can well dispense with their acquaintance."*

How many have talked about churches in that way today? How many have made it very clear how old fashioned is the need of church today? Angular meaning sharp, pointed or stiff in character, lacking smoothness or grace. They're lies from smooth talking divisive people.

Once again, we can see the evading of any and all investigations as to whether they would be genuine Christians by the circumvention of stopping at the local church. Mr. Smooth-it-away, their ring leader, is very quick to paint a picture of the pure Christian fellowship of Miss Prudence, Miss Piety, Miss Charity and the rest, to be old fashioned, outdated and no longer needed for the Contemporary Believer and that if truth be told after investigation, those on the train would not qualify to enter or be a member of the Palace Beautiful, a symbol of

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the nonconformist Church, because they are not born-again, for they have bypassed this requirement and removed going through the Wicket Gate (Jesus), as a part of their Christian Pilgrimage.

That's why our passenger author is so easily able to dispense of their acquaintance and continue to fellowship with other believers on The Celestial Railroad, who all have excluded fellowship with Prudence (wisdom), Piety (spiritual devotion), and Charity (love), and have replaced it with a religious, traditional, Bible belief system that is void the born again requirement, void of being a member of the church, and void of being able to enter the into the Celestial City - Heaven.

How many counterfeit Bible believers today have **bypassed** the requirement to be born again, and have excluded any and all possibilities of being interrogated by Prudence (wisdom), Piety (spiritual devotion), and Charity (love), and other Christians, as to whether they qualify for church membership and have continued on the Celestial Religious Railroad of easy believing in the Bible without truly repenting of their sins.

**1 John 1:8-10** says; *“8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”* You see, those on The Celestial Railroad have no truth in them because they've hidden their sins from sight and mind – safely stowed away.

In **Luke 6:46-49**, Jesus says these sobering words; *“46 But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say? 47 Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. 49 **But he who heard and did nothing** is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”*

How many today have called Jesus, Lord, and yet refuse to obey what He's commanding them to do? Many believe in Jesus, believe in the Bible, their church attendance, their Bible knowledge etc. But they're not even following the protocol to become born again, not repenting of their sins and asking Jesus to forgive them of their sins, they're not inviting the Holy Spirit into their body to become His temple, they've avoided going to the local church, they've settled for a more contemporary but nominal way of serving the Lord, that which is more comfortable, and not so old, archaic and angular, something that doesn't have the appearance of piety, prudence and love.

Contemporary, as we've mentioned in other messages, is not referring to styles, instruments or technology involved in worship, or even what the church building may physically look like etc., but is referring to the spiritual requirements, doctrines of truth from God's word that Jesus explicitly laid out for those who want to follow Him must do.

Those on the Celestial Railroad may call Jesus LORD, but have not done what he said. Are you one like that? How are you building your temple, your house? Is it built on the Rock, Christ Jesus, or on shifting sand which will end in destruction? Are you listening to the smooth lie which says it's old fashioned, out dated and no longer needed for the contemporary Bible believer to build their house on the Rock? The church was instituted by Jesus as it's a representation of His body, and it needs to be adhered to. It must be part of the born again Christians life.

I've heard it said time and time again by Bible believers who are obviously not born again, that preaching the need for ongoing repentance in order to obtain salvation is legalistic, old fashioned, outdated, and that just by simply believing in Jesus you are saved, when in reality they've been smoothed away and talked into boarding the fast track to hell on The Celestial Railroad.

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Just a quick overview of the word's prudence, piety and charity that Mr. Smooth-it-away shuns the need of for those on his train, considering them as old maids, prim, starched, dry and angular.

**Prudence** is Wisdom applied to practice.

Prudence implies caution in deliberating and consulting on the most suitable means to accomplish valuable purposes, and the exercise of sagacity in discerning and selecting them. Prudence differs from wisdom in this, that prudence implies more caution and reserve than wisdom, or is exercised more in foreseeing and avoiding evil, than in devising and executing that which is good. It is sometimes mere caution or circumspection. Prudence is principally in reference to actions to be done, and due means, order, season and method of doing or not doing.

**Piety** from pius, or its root, probably a contracted word.

1. Piety in principle, is a compound of veneration or reverence of the Supreme Being and love of his character, or veneration accompanied with love; and piety in practice, is the exercise of these affections in obedience to his will and devotion to his service. Piety is the only proper and adequate relief of decaying man.
2. Reverence of parents or friends, accompanied with affection and devotion to their honor and happiness.

**Charity**

1. In a general sense, love, benevolence, good will; that disposition of heart which inclines men to think favorably of their fellow men, and to do them good. In a theological sense, it includes supreme love to God, and universal good will to men.

Today we see the lies of Mr. Smooth-it-away:

- in discrediting the local church for those who are on his train.
- his lies for you not to receive instruction in being prudent, to be pious or to walk in love.
- the lies that he doesn't want you to come under the interrogation in the local church where you'll come under the conviction of the Holy Spirit and realize that you're a sinner in need of a Saviour and that you must be born again.
- The lies that you're on your way to heaven, but in reality, you're on your way to hell. If you've ever burned yourself or know burn victims, you know the excruciating pain suffered. Imagine what hell will be like. An unquenchable flame for eternity, not a flash in the pan. Find a video on hell and let it sink in the eternal fire and separation from God that it is.

Hell was made for the devil and his angels, not you. But in denying the plan of salvation through pride, God has no alternative but to send you there when you die. He is holy and just and is giving you even again today, the opportunity to repent. It is NOT HIS WILL that you spend eternity apart from Him, He's given you the salvation plan.

The only way to get to heaven is by being holy and that can only happen when you obey the salvation plan that Jesus gave us. We're not discouraging people from believing, because believing is part of being a Christian. But you can't trust believing only for salvation. Don't just believe in Jesus by calling Him Lord, and not obey what He's commanded you to do. Get off the train, go to the wicket gate keeper, Jesus Christ, repent of your sins that you're carrying, receive His forgiveness, receive the Holy Spirit to come live in you to make you holy. Then continue to go to the local church where you can grow in wisdom, spiritual devotion and love.

Remember, there is no dual citizenship in Christianity. You're either a citizen of the kingdom of heaven for eternity or a citizen of the kingdom of hell for eternity, you have to give up one to obtain the other.