

The Pilgrim's Progress

By John Bunyan

**HTPC Church-Wide Summer Sunday School Series
June 2 – August 25, 2019**

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Purpose:

As a church, we want to take John Bunyan's masterpiece *Pilgrim's Progress* (part 1 only) and thoughtfully engage with Christian's pilgrimage from the city of destruction (unbelief) to that great Celestial City (heaven), despite all of Satan's traps and snares, taking special note of course of Evangelist and other faithful companions that present Christian with truth from God's Word all along his journey. Throughout our study, we will stop to take a special look at particular traps (the Slough of Despond, the Hill of Difficulty, the Valley of the Shadow of Death, etc.) and examine these at a deeper level asking how we as Christians can face such temptations and possible derailments with courage, confidence, and full faith.

Children and adults together will be encouraged to heed the words of Peter in 1 Peter 2:11 and the writer of Hebrews in Hebrews 10:13-16 understanding with greater awareness both our identity as the pilgrim people of God and the dangers that lurk both within our hearts and around us.

1 Peter 2:11 – *“Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.”*

Hebrews 11:13-16 – *“These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. ¹⁴For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland.¹⁵If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.”*

Hebrews 13:14 – *“For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.”*

Psalm 84:5 (NIV) *“Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.”*

Format:

We will gather each Sunday morning in the Fellowship Hall for our Assembly with all children and adult classes together. During this time we will review where we are in Christian's pilgrimage, learn a pilgrim-themed song and Scripture verses that drive home the pilgrim motif. Classes will then be dismissed to their respective rooms and

each class (children's, primary, middle school, high school, adults) will spend the time studying the same section of Pilgrim's Progress. We will reconvene for the last 5 minutes of class to conclude our time by singing together the song that Bunyan wrote.

Materials:

- *Adults & Teens* – Cheryl V. Ford's translation of *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan
- *Children* – GCP curriculum version, *Pilgrim's Progress: John Bunyan's Classic Story Adapted for Children*
- *Study Guide* –
 - In putting this study guide together, we have largely adapted the work of Dr. Mark Herzer, with his permission. The entirety of his study guide can be found on the blog of the church he pastors, Christ Covenant Presbyterian Church in Warminster, PA (link below).
 - We have also purchased and found Derek Thomas' study guide to be a helpful resource and have received permission to incorporate some of his questions into our study guide. His full study guide can be purchased on Ligonier's website using the link listed below.

Resources:

1. Herzer, M. (2011, March 21). Re: John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, A Study Guide. [Web blog post]. Retrieved from <http://www.ccpc-pca.com/john-bunyan-pilgrims-progress-a-study-guide-lesson-1/>.
2. Ryken, L. (2014). Forward by Leland Ryken. In *Desiring God, The Pilgrim's Progress* (pp. v-vi). [Forward]. Retrieved from <https://document.desiringgod.org/the-pilgrim-s-progress-en.pdf?ts=1446648353>.
3. Thomas, D. (2013). *The Pilgrim's Progress, A Guided Tour: Study Guide*. Sanford, FL. Purchased from <https://www.ligonier.org/store/pilgrims-progress-guided-tour-dvd/>.

***Note:** Throughout the study guide, an asterisk (*) before a question indicates that it is intended to be a discussion question.

Reading Schedule

Week 1: June 2

Adults: Introduction (John Bunyan bio and history of book, pilgrim motif, etc.) – Hebrews 11:13-16

Children: The Adventure Begins (Lesson 1, *GCP*)

Week 2: June 9

Adults: Ch. 1 & 2 (p. 3-21, *Ford*) – Ephesians 2:1-10

Children: Christian Gets Into Trouble (Lesson 2, *GCP*)

Week 3: June 16

Adults: Ch. 3-4a (p. 23-38, *Ford*) – Psalm 51

Children: Interpreter's House and the Place of Deliverance (Lesson 3, *GCP*)

Week 4: June 23

Adults: Ch. 4b-5 (p. 38-58, *Ford*) – 2 Timothy 1:3-14

Children: The Hill of Difficulty and House Beautiful (Lesson 4, *GCP*)

Week 5: June 30

Adults: Ch. 6 (p. 59-70, *Ford*) – 1 Peter 1:3-9

Children: Through Dark Valleys (Lesson 5, *GCP*)

(No Sunday School on July 7 due to Independence Day Holiday weekend)

Week 6: July 14

Adults: Ch. 7-8 (p. 71-95, *Ford*) – Romans 7:7-25

Children: Christian Meets Faithful (Lesson 6, *GCP*)

Week 7: July 21

Adults: Ch. 9 (p. 97-111, *Ford*) – 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Children: Vanity Fair (Lesson 7, *GCP*)

Week 8: July 28

Adults: Ch. 10-11b (p. 113-130, *Ford*) – 1 Corinthians 4:8-13

Children: Hopeful Joins Christian (Lesson 8, *GCP*)

Week 9: August 4

Adults: Ch. 11c-12 (p. 131-142, *Ford*) – Philippians 1:21-26

Children: Giant Despair and Doubting Castle & Shepherds and the Delectable Mountains (Lesson 9 & 10, *GCP*)

Week 10: August 11

Adults: Ch. 13-14 (p. 143-160, *Ford*) – 2 Peter 1:3-11

Children: Little Faith and the Flatterer (Lesson 11, *GCP*)

Week 11: August 18

Adults: Ch. 15-16 (p. 161-181, *Ford*) – Romans 8:1-11

Children: Hopeful's Testimony, Ignorance, and the Enchanted Ground (Lesson 12, *GCP*)

Week 12: August 25

Adults: Ch. 17 (p. 183-194, *Ford*) – Isaiah 62

Children: The Pilgrims Enter the Celestial City, (Lesson 13, *GCP*)

Assembly Music:

- Opening Song in *June*: “The Christian’s Hope Can Never Fail” by Red Mountain Church
- Opening Song in *July*: “The Cross” by Judy Rogers
- Opening Song in *August*: “Living Waters” by Keith & Kristyn Getty
- Closing Song each week: “He Who Would Valiant Be” by John Bunyan

The Christian’s Hope Can Never Fail

We travel through a barren land,
With dangers thick on every hand;
But Jesus guides us through the vale;
O, The Christian’s hope can never fail.

Huge sorrows meet us as we go,
And devils aim to overthrow;
But vile infernals can’t prevail;
O, The Christian’s hope shall never fail.

Sometimes we’re tempted to despair,
But Jesus makes us then His care;
Though numerous foes our souls assail;
O, The Christian’s hope can never fail.

We trust upon the sacred word,
The oath and promise of the Lord;
And safely through each tempest sail;
O, The Christian’s hope can never fail.

The Cross

Jesus, You hung on the cross to take my burden from me.

It rolled into the open tomb, and I'm forever free!

Jesus, what You bore, was wrath that was meant for me.

Oh, how can I describe such love as You, Lord, have for me?

Jesus, You hung on the cross to give me raiment so new.

You took the rags I wore with shame, oh Savior faithful and true.

You now call me Your own, and I gladly call You "Lord."

And if there be any good in me, it's only because of You.

Jesus, You hung on the cross to put this scroll in my hand.

You placed your mark upon my head, and now before You I stand.

Savior, take my life, and make me what You will.

May Your praise be ever on my tongue till my heart lies cold and still.

May Your praise be ever on my tongue till my heart lies cold and still.

Living Waters

1. Are you thirsty?
Are you empty?
Come and drink these Living Waters
Time unbroken
Peace unspoken
Rest beside these Living Waters

2. Christ is calling
Find refreshing
At the cross of Living Waters
Lay your life down
On Thee, all come
Rise up in these Living Waters

Chorus:

There's a river that flows
With mercy and love
Bringing joy to the city of our God
There our hope is secure
Do not fear anymore
Praise the Lord of Living Waters

3. Spirit moving
Mercy washing
Healing in these living waters
Lead your children
To the shoreline
Life is in these Living Waters

Chorus

4. Are you thirsty?
Are you empty?
Come and drink these Living Waters
Love, forgiveness
Vast and boundless
Christ, He is our Living Water

Chorus

He Who Would Valiant Be

He who would valiant be 'gainst all disaster,
Let him in constancy follow the Master.
There's no discouragement shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent to be a pilgrim.

Who so beset him round with dismal stories
Do but themselves confound—his strength the more is.
No foes shall stay his might; though he with giants fight,
He will make good his right to be a pilgrim.

Since, Lord, Thou dost defend us with Thy Spirit,
We know we at the end, shall life inherit.
Then fancies flee away! I'll fear not what men say,
I'll labor night and day to be a pilgrim.

Week 1 Introduction

Reading: Pages ix-xxi in *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, edited by Cheryl V. Ford; Supplemental notes below (Herzer and Ryken)

Bible Reading: Hebrews 11:13-16

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Brief History & Introduction (By Dr. Mark Herzer)

John Bunyan (1628-1688) was the son of a “Tinker” (one who works with metal, pots and pans). He wrote this book in Jail (Gaol). Bunyan began this book after March of 1668 and it was first published in 1678. The second edition came out before the end of 1678 in which he added many new passages. The third edition included a few more additions. He saw twelve editions of this work before he died in 1688. It is an allegory written to describe the pilgrimage of a believer. The second part of the book (which recounts Christiana’s travel) was published in 1684 and the second edition two years after.

John Bunyan was a non-conformist, which means, he did not conform to the liturgy and theology of the Church of England. Many publishers were fined and harassed for publishing non-conformist books but many either for truth sake or for profit, published them. Bunyan went through a deep spiritual struggle before being converted (his account in *Grace Abounding...*). He was jailed for illegally preaching (needed the State’s permission to preach as well as to use certain facilities in which they could gather to hear sermons). Bunyan married Elizabeth (three children). While in jail, he made shoelaces to make money for the family. He was in and out of jail several times. Charles Spurgeon said this of Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*: “Next to the Bible, the book that I value most is John Bunyan’s ‘*Pilgrim’s Progress*.’ I believe I have read it through at least a hundred times. It is a volume of which I never seem to tire; and the secret of its freshness is that it is so largely compiled from the Scriptures. It is really Biblical teaching put into the form of a simple yet very striking allegory.” [1]

[1] *Pictures from Pilgrim’s Progress* (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications), 11.

An Allegory (by Leland Ryken)

Much more could be said about the story qualities of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, but the really essential final thing that we need to note is that Bunyan's story is an allegory. An allegorical story is one in which the literal, physical level of action is intended as a picture of something else. Double meaning is at the heart of allegory. The details in an allegorical story stand for something else. In *The Pilgrim's Progress*, for example, a slough or bog (modeled, incidentally, on a notorious bog on the outskirts of Bunyan's home town) stands for spiritual despair over one's lost state. There is a right way and wrong way to deal with the allegorical aspect of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The wrong way is to slight the literal, physical level of action on the premise that the religious meaning is what really matters. The right way is to abandon ourselves to the story qualities of the work and let the second level of understanding grow out of that narrative experience. Giant Despair first of all needs to be a terrifying giant in our imagination, and then he becomes a picture of psychological and theological realities. Allegory can easily become reductionistic, but this need not happen. For example, a character with the allegorical name of Talkative is immediately recognizable to us: he is someone who talks too much. But the Bunyan magic is such that Talkative is simultaneously (a) a personality type, (b) a social type (the overly talkative person who quickly becomes a social pest), and (c) a spiritual reality (someone who substitutes talk for genuine faith and Christian action). The allegorical names of Bunyan's characters should not lull us into thinking that they are one-dimensional.

Discussion Questions:

1. *Have you ever thought of your Christian life as a pilgrimage? Do you remember a starting point to your pilgrimage?

2. *Read this quote found on page xiii in the Cheryl V. Ford edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress* and discuss:

“Those who relish the path of ease will not appreciate the path of the pilgrim; nevertheless, those who are weak will find comfort therein. While the magnificent grace of God ever manifests itself, also evident is the narrowness of the path. We stand beholding the glorious cross of Christ; yet we are also forced to embrace the cross that the Christian, too, must carry.”

3. *The very context in which this book was written, Bunyan's imprisonment, speaks volumes to us about the Christian life. Read the following excerpt from page xi in our book and discuss what we can learn from Bunyan:

“...Like Paul, turning bitterness into blessing, he carried on a prison ministry from within his cell. He ministered to other prisoners and virtually became a prison chaplain to other preachers and Christians who had been jailed...He wrote, ‘I never had in all my life so great an inlet into the Word of God as now. These Scriptures, that I saw nothing in before, are made in this place to shine upon me. Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now; here I have seen and felt him indeed...His ministry was enriched beyond measure as he willingly suffered for the cause of Christ.’”

Week 2

Reading: Pages 3-21 in *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, edited by Cheryl V. Ford

Map: City of Destruction, Slough of Despond, Mt. Sinai

Bible Reading: Ephesians 2:1-10

***Note:** Throughout the study guide, an asterisk (*) before a question indicates that it is intended to be a discussion question.

1. The City of Destruction is the starting point for Christian's spiritual journey and ours. What does it represent and what is so destructive about it?

2. How did Christian get the Burden on his back?

3. What is the Slough of Despond? What role does it play in the Christian life according to Help? (p. 11)

4. *Obstinate and Pliable come on the scene; how do they each respond to Christian urging them to leave the City of Destruction? Compare their responses:
 - a. Obstinate
 - i. What does he love?

 - ii. Why can't he feel what Christian feels?

 - b. Pliable
 - i. What is his initial reaction?

- ii. Where is his burden? What do you make of that? (Note Question #2 above)
5. *Mr. Worldly-Wiseman sees Christian's burden and recommends that he to go to the Village of Morality to meet Mr. Legality to remove it. How will the Burden be removed according to Mr. Worldly-Wiseman?
6. Why is the hill to the Village of Morality so high? What does it represent? (p. 16; cf. Romans 3:20)
7. With what does Evangelist present Christian? (p. 18)
8. *What three-step strategy does Mr. Worldly-Wiseman use? What might this look like in reality?
9. What is the Wicket Gate to which Evangelist directs Christian again as his only hope?

Week 3

Reading: Pages 23-36 in *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, edited by Cheryl V. Ford

Map: The Wicket Gate, Interpreter's House, Place of Deliverance

Bible Reading: Psalm 51

***Note:** Throughout the study guide, an asterisk (*) before a question indicates that it is intended to be a discussion question.

1. Christian arrives at the Wicket gate, stands at the door, and _____. (cf. Matthew 7:7)
 - a. How does he enter? (Who opens the door and literally pulls him in?)
 - b. What threats are there outside the gate?
 - c. What do you think Bunyan is trying to convey here? (cf. Revelation 3:8)
2. Interpreter leads Christian through his house and shows him spiritual realities illustrated in each of seven rooms. A few notes from each room:
 - a. Room 1: The picture – who is in it?
 - b. Room 2: Dust in the Parlor represents original sin. How does the law add strength to sin?
 - c. Room 3: Patience and Passion – who is better off?
 - d. Room 4: Fire burning against a wall – what role does the devil play in this picture? Who and what does the man behind the wall represent?
 - e. Room 5: What does the battle outside the Palace picture?

- f. Room 6: Read Luke 8:13 – how is the Man in the Iron Cage like the one whose seed is sown on the rock? How did he get to this hopeless place?
 - i. What should the Man in the Iron Cage serve as an example of for all believers?

 - g. Room 7: A man rose from his bed and was frightened in seeing the day of God’s judgment at hand. Are Christians supposed to live in fear like this?
3. *Remember on p. 26 that Christian was told to continue bearing his burden until he arrived at the Place of Deliverance. How did the sight of the cross alone loosen his burden? What do you think this represents? His conversion or assurance of salvation?
4. *Why is Interpreter’s House so important for Christian and for us? Discuss one room that particularly makes an impression on you.
5. What do the three shining beings do? What does all this mean?

Week 4

Reading: Pages 37-58 in *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, edited by Cheryl V. Ford

Map: Hill of Difficulty, Path to Destruction, Path to Danger, House Beautiful

Bible Reading: 2 Timothy 1:3-14

Reflection: “If you have assurance of your justification, do not abuse it. It is abusing assurance when we grow more remiss in duty; as the musician, having money thrown him, leaves off playing. By remissness, or intermitting the exercises of religion, we grieve the Spirit, and that is the way to have an embargo laid upon our spiritual comforts.” –Thomas Watson

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1. Simple, Sloth, and Presumption resist Christian's warnings. Do you know of anyone like one of them? Explain.
2. *Formality and Hypocrisy are convinced that the way they came in was just fine. They say, “What does it matter...if we are in, we're in.” (p. 40) What is their point and what's the problem with it? What “short-cuts” to the Christian life have you witnessed or personally experienced?
3. What does the Scroll represent and what are ways that Christian could have avoided losing it? (p. 45)
4. Describe why Christian is so joyful in finding it.

5. Must all believers climb up the Hill Difficulty?
6. What are Christian's motives for wanting to stay at the House Beautiful?
7. *Christian abhors the country he came from. What if the overall (secret) tendency and affection was that he yearned for that country? What would that tell us about Christian?
 - a. Do you have this same abhorrence of your life before Christ?
8. Prudence asks Christian about the remnants of that old country in him. How does Christian describe this experience?
 - a. Where do you see remnants of your life before Christ still present in your Christian life and how ought you think about those things in light of Scripture?
9. What does the Supper represent?
10. What does the Study represent?
11. What does the Armory represent? Do all Christians avail themselves of this? How is it related to the Study?

Week 5

Reading: Pages 59-70 in *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, edited by Cheryl V. Ford

Map: Valley of Humiliation, Valley of the Shadow of Death

Bible Reading: 1 Peter 1:3-9

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1. What do you think the Valley of Humiliation represents? Why does it follow Christian's stay in the House Beautiful? What might we learn from this sequence?
2. *What strategies does Apollyon use in attacking Christian? Have you ever experienced such attacks?
3. How does Christian withstand these attacks from Apollyon?
4. When Christian was beaten down by Apollyon, he "nimblely reached" out to grab the Sword to stab Apollyon. What does this represent? (cf. Ephesians 6:17)

Week 6

Reading: Pages 71-95 in *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, edited by Cheryl V. Ford

Map: None this week

Bible Reading: Romans 7:7-25

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1. What allure does Wanton represent? What does he mean he wasn't sure if he wholly escaped her?
2. *The "Old Man" was "Adam the First," and he kept knocking Faithful down. What is the point of this encounter? How do we avoid this danger or pitfall?
3. Faithful met Discontent in the Valley of Humiliation. What was Discontent's method of argumentation?
4. Summarize Shame's line of argument. What was Faithful's response? Which for you is more threatening – Discontent or Shame?

5. Describe Talkative in your own words. What kind of “religion” is found in his house?

6. In discussing the grace of God in the heart, Faithful insists on making a distinction from Talkative’s first point. Describe the difference between their points/perspectives.

7. What was Faithful getting at in challenging Talkative regarding “great knowledge of Gospel mysteries”?

8. What is an “experimental confession”? How does Faithful’s explanation unmask Talkative’s religion? What is the difference?

9. *As you come across Talkative in chapter 8, what are patterns that seem familiar to you in your own life regarding your attitude toward sin. Do you abhor sin or simply cry out against it? What is Bunyan’s concern with Talkative and how should we confront those with similar tendencies?

Week 7

Reading: Pages 97-111 in *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, edited by Cheryl V. Ford

Map: Vanity Fair

Bible Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Reflection: “Grant, Almighty God, that we may remember ourselves to be pilgrims in the world, and that no splendor of wealth, or power, or worldly wisdom may blind our eyes, but may we always direct our eyes and all our senses towards the kingdom of thy Son. May we always fix them there, and may nothing hinder us from hastening on in the course of our calling, until at length we pass over the course and reach the goal which thou hast set before us.” —John Calvin

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1. What is Vanity Fair and why must all pilgrims go through it? Is there any way to avoid it? (p.101)
2. Why was there such “hubbub” over and opposition to the pilgrims’ arrival into the town of Vanity? What three things made these pilgrims so different from the rest of the people? How is this instructive for us as Christians?
3. *In what ways specifically do you find yourself resistant to standing out in the ways that Faithful and Christian did?
4. What do you find the nature of Evangelist, Faithful, and Christian’s relationship(s) to be? Why are these relationships crucial in this particular scene? How is this instructive?

5. *As you read the list of “merchandise” for sale in Vanity Fair, what wares are most tempting and alluring to you? What is good about these things that God created and how has sin corrupted them? (p. 100)

6. *Sometimes when we hear stories of Christian martyrs, it is easy to forget that they were real people who did not have “inside knowledge” of God’s full will and purpose in their sufferings. On p. 105, we read, “But, committing their lives to the all-wise will of Him who rules over all things, they contentedly waited for the further unfolding of His will and purpose.” This type of quiet submission to the sovereign hand of God could not have developed overnight. How can we be presently cultivating this type of spirit as we await the trials to come and/or endure present sufferings?

7. *On p. 107, Faithful says that “Any rules, laws, customs, or people who are not in harmony with the Word of God, are, in reality, diametrically opposed to true Christianity.” What are some alleged “gray areas” in our day that we must instead call “diametrically opposed to true Christianity”?

8. How and why did Christian escape prison? (p. 110)

Week 8

Reading: Pages 113-130 in *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, edited by Cheryl V. Ford

Map: A Plain Called Ease, By-Path Meadow

Bible Reading: 1 Corinthians 4:8-13

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1. Christian and Hopeful enter into a “brotherly covenant.” What does this mean?
2. Describe the kind of family from which By-ends comes. What kind of picture is he trying to paint?
3. How is he different from the “stricter sort” of religious people?
4. *What is By-ends’ description of Christian and Hopeful and why is it so? How have you seen strict adherence to the Word of God be offensive to professing Christians?

5. By-ends' understanding of the Christian walk is all wrong. What kind of people would make this statement? Explain how one can argue his case.

6. Mr. Money-love believes they have Scripture and Reason on their side. How would he have come to this conclusion?

7. Who is Demas? Are there men and women like him in the church today? (cf. 2 Timothy 4:10)

8. *What sort of sneaky, "non-monetary profit" can be acquired through religious performances? How might you be tempted in these ways?

9. What is the difference between Lot's wife and Hopeful? How is Christian instrumental in preventing Hopeful from ultimately going into the Silver-mine? What can we learn from him?

Week 9

Reading: Pages 130-142 in *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, edited by Cheryl V. Ford

Map: Doubting Castle, Delectable Mountains

Bible Reading: Philippians 1:21-26

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1. On p. 131 we read that “Christian felt doubly sorrowful because it was his ill-advised haste that had brought them into this distress.” What did this “haste” look like in the prior chapter?
2. Why is it so crucial that the two pilgrims remember that “all authority does not lie in the hands of Giant Despair”? How does being reminded of this reality “stabilize” Christian’s mind? (p. 133)
3. What effect does praying have on the pilgrims on the Saturday night encounter? What does the Key called Promise represent?
4. *Christian and Hopeful are tired from their journey and are arrive at the Delectable Mountains seeking rest. What might these “restful mountains” symbolize? Why are they so important?

5. *The Puritans used to describe the Lord's Day as "the market day of the soul?" From which spiritual goods and delicacies does your soul most benefit on the Lord's Day?

6. What kind of "errors" should we avoid in light of the Hill called Error? (cf. 2 Timothy 2:17-18)

7. Christian and Hopeful are led to Mount Caution, the very mountain in which they almost died. Here they are shown a "By-way to Hell;" what does this represent?

8. Why is it important to recognize that a door to Hell can be found right in the middle of the delectable mountain? What lessons should we learn here?

9. *Christian and Hopeful are given a sight of the Celestial City through the "Perspective Glass." When did they best see the City – when they were at peace or afraid? Is getting a glimpse of the "Celestial City" a vital necessity to our pilgrimage?

Week 11

Reading: Pages 161-181 in *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, edited by Cheryl V. Ford

Map: None

Bible Reading: Romans 8:1-11

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1. *As Hopeful shares his testimony of how he came to faith in Christ, he gives three reasons as to why he doesn't immediately repent of his sin? What are these and which of these, if any, do you find familiar in your own testimony? (p. 162)
2. How are Hopeful's attempts at mending his life ultimately deceptive to his heart regarding the condition of his soul?
3. What eventually brings Hopeful to see his need for a Savior?
4. What do you make of Hopeful praying unceasingly before God revealed His Son to him? (p. 166)

5. *Describe Hopeful's new life in Christ on p. 168. What are marks of your new life in Christ and how can you humbly distinguish between your old self and new self in these ways, giving thanks to God?

6. Summarize why Ignorance thinks he is going to Heaven. What do you find to be unbiblical about his reasoning?

7. Hopeful and Christian talk to Ignorance about the need for a revelation of Christ; what were they trying to convey in this conversation?

8. What did you find helpful about Christian's explanation of Godly fear and the three ways to recognize it in our lives? (p. 176)

9. *What is your usual response to fear or anxiety arising in your heart? How does this section challenge that natural bent, if at all?

Week 12

Reading: Pages 183-194 in *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, edited by Cheryl V. Ford

Map: The Country of Beulah, The River, The Celestial City

Bible Reading: Isaiah 62

***Note:** Throughout the study guide, an asterisk (*) before a question indicates that it is intended to be a discussion question.

1. What is the Country of Beulah like? What two places and one person does Bunyan say this place is beyond? (p. 183)
2. What type of sickness and affliction do Christian and Hopeful experience in this place? (p. 184)
3. The River is entitled "The Unavoidable River" in our version of the book. Why is it unavoidable? What does the River represent?
4. *What do you make of the depth of the River seeming/being different for everyone, according to the Shining Ones? (p. 186)

- a. Describe Christian's experience in passing through the River. What frightens him?
 - b. Describe Hopeful's experience in passing through the River. What makes him so steady?
5. Christian and Hopeful, upon entering the Celestial City, ask the Shining Ones what is required of them in this place. What is their answer? (p. 189)
6. *Bunyan closes this part of the book with the conclusion of Ignorance's pilgrimage. How did he cross the River? How does this fit with the earlier narrative of Ignorance's character?
7. *Why is the following sentence so important? "Then I saw that there was a way to Hell, not only from the City of Destruction, but even from the Gate of Heaven itself." (p. 193)

8. *Bunyan concludes with the following remarks. Prayerfully reflect on his words and consider how you might “ponder his metaphors” as you/we conclude this study.

*Now reader, I have told my dream to thee;
See if you can interpret it to me
Or to yourself or your neighbor, but take heed
Of misrepresenting, for that, indeed,
Will bring you no good but, instead, abuse;
By misinterpreting, evil ensues.*

*Take heed also, that you don't be extreme
In playing with the limits of my dream.
Don't let this allegory now conclude
By sending you laughing or causing a feud;
The childish or fools in this way can be,
You, though, the substance of my work must see.*

*Draw back the curtains, look within my veil;
Ponder my metaphors, and please do not fail;
There, if you seek them, are things you will find
That will be helpful to an honest mind.*

*So what if my dross you find there, be bold;
Throw it away, yet preserve all the gold.
What if my gold is wrapped up in ore?
Who tosses the apple because of the core?
But if you cast all away as just vain,
I do not know when I might dream again.*

