

HTPC Sunday School

Opening Assembly

September 22, 2019

Memory Verse: Psalm 121:1-2

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From
where does my help come?

My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

I Lift My Eyes and See the Hills

1. I lift my eyes and see the hills;
From where will come my aid?

My help comes only from the LORD
Who heav'n and earth has made.

2. He'll not allow your foot to slip,
Nor rest while you He keeps.

The One preserving Israel,
He slumbers not, nor sleeps.

I Lift My Eyes and See the Hills (cont.)

3. The LORD will keep you, He's your shade;
The LORD stands at your right.
The sun will do no harm to you,
Nor will the moon at night.

4. The LORD will keep you from all harm;
He'll keep your life secure.
Your going out and coming in
The LORD keeps evermore.

Children's Classes Dismissal

The Pilgrim's Progress

Part 2

Materials

- Books available on Amazon – *The Pilgrim's Progress* by Cheryl V. Ford
- Reading schedules for the class are also available today by front door

Chapter 18 and 19 – Key Texts

- Ephesians 1:17-18 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints
- Ezekiel 36:26-27 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.
- John 6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.
- WCF Chapter 10:2 This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man; who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.

Chapter 18 –

Effectual Call of
Christiana and Mercy

Meeting Mr. Sagacity

- John Bunyan begins to dream again
- It begins with him meeting an aged gentleman - Mr. Sagacity
- They were traveling in the same direction and began talking
- The topics included
 - Christian and his travels
 - City of Destruction – complacency of the people
 - What people said about Christian

Mr. Sagacity reports the following:

- His hazardous journey won many admirers
- Christian's tears of difficulty and trouble were rewarded
 - Psalm 126:5-6
 - Life now without sorrow or grief (Rev 22:1-2)
 - King has provided Christian a rich and pleasant residence
 - Christian enjoys conversation, meals, smiles and favors from the King daily
 - Zech 3:7, John 14:2-3, Luke 14:15
- His Prince is returning to judge everyone for every word and deed
 - Jude v15, Luke 10:16

Christian's Family

- Wife Christiana, and 4 Boys
- Christiana hardened her heart to Christians tears and entreaties
- Second thoughts have done a wonderful work
- Christian's bitter lament – “What shall I do to be saved?” Acts 16:30
- Whim or reality? What is truly Life, what is death?
 - John 1:4, 1 Cor 15:56-57
- “Woe is the day we let him go without us”

Christiana's Dream

- Nightmare –
 - Scroll with her dark and ugly deeds
 - Cry for Mercy
 - Evil concern for her cries for mercy
 - Distract her from these thoughts.
- Blessed Dream
 - Christian in Celestial City
 - Grateful thanksgiving to the Lord for his salvation

Visit by Secret

- Christiana's desires have changed.
- Prays and talks with her boys
- Secret arrives and begins teaching them about the Father.
 - Delights in pardoning offenses to him - Exodus 34:6-7, Psalm 86:5
 - Wants you to come to his table so that he may feed you John 6:35, Rev 3:20, Is 58:14
- The Invitation
 - Wonderful fragrance Song of Sol 1:3
 - The King wanted her to dwell in his presence for evermore
 - Bitter before the sweet, entering the Celestial City through troubles Ps 71:20
 - Keep the invitation safe and close, teach to your children Ps 119:11,54

The Invitation

- The Family Decision
 - Conviction of desperate condition from hardening her and the children
 - The encouragement of the dream and Secret
 - “Come my sons, let’s pack up and set out for the Gate that leads to the Celestial Country
- The Opposition
 - Neighbor Mrs. Timorous – Don’t throw your life away.
 - Christiana – If you knew what I know, you would come with me
 - Timorous – The insanity and danger

Mercy's Decision

- The other neighbor with Timorous was Mercy
- Mrs. T called for Mercy to come away with her but Mercy stood still
 - She had compassion for Christiana and wanted to help her
 - Her heart was concerned for her own soul
 - So she stayed!

The Neighbors Talk

- Neighbors - Bats-eyes, Inconsiderate, Light-Mind, Know-nothing
- Mrs. T tells them about the journey Christiana was planning
- They prefer to avoid the afflictions
- Who can have peace around such starry-eyed thoughts
- We can be happy as larks focusing on good times

Chapter 19 – Their Pilgrimage Begins

- They begin their journey expressing thankfulness for Mercy
- Christiana tells Mercy of the King – that He delights in mercy Micah 7:18
- Mercy was deeply concerned for her own salvation
- Mercy began to weep for her relative's salvation.
- Our tears will not be lost Ps 125:5-6

The Slough of Despond

- Christiana remembered that Christian was almost smothered in mud here
- The Slough of Despond is where one can have hopeless depression under the weight of sin and its guilt
- She also perceived that the King had commanded it to be good for Christians
- Many pretending to be the King's laborers bring filth and manure instead of stones so they mar instead of mend.
- They crossed carefully to the other side and heard "Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished." Luke 1:45

Wicket-Gate

- Mr. Sagacity leaves John Bunyan to dream by himself
- As they approached the gate they debated on what to be said
- Christiana went first and knocked without an answer
 - Prayer should be made with consideration and fear, as well as faith and hope
- A Dog began to bark as if it was coming after them. It sounded large and frightened them to stop knocking.
- They were afraid to knock and afraid not to knock
- They decided to knock harder, and the keeper asked who was there and opened the gate

Christiana and Her Sons Gain Entrance

- The Keeper asked “Where are you from?” and “What do you want?”
- Christiana answered, “We desire you to graciously admit us to the way that leads to the Celestial City”
- The Keeper marveled at her change of heart who recently abhorred the pilgrim life
- He took her by the hand and led her in and said “Let the children come to me” Luke 18:16
- Then he called the trumpeter to entertain them with should of joy and trumpet sounds Luke 15:7

Mercy's Admittance

- While Christiana was admitted, Mercy stood outside trembling with fear that she had been rejected.
- Mercy became impatient and knocked so loud that it startled Christiana
- The Keeper opened the door and said to Mercy, “My child, arise” Luke 8:54
- He then asked her why she had come and Mercy answered,
 - Christiana had an invitation from the King, but mine was only from her
 - If there is any grace and forgiveness of sins to spare, please allow your poor servant girl to share in them.

Mercy's Admittance

- The Keeper gently led her inside and said “I pray for all those who believe in me, by whatever means they come to Me.” John 17:20
- So they were all received by the Lord and told him, “We are sorry for our sins, and we beg the Lord’s forgiveness.”
- He replied, “I grant you forgiveness because of my word and deed
 - My Word because it promises forgiveness. John 15:3
 - My Deed because of what I did to obtain forgiveness John 17:4, John 20:20

Christiana and Mercy Discuss Their Experience

- They both feared that they would not be admitted
- Mercy thought that Matt 24:41 would be fulfilled – One was taken and the other left”
- Mercy was afraid to knock and afraid not to knock
- Christiana asked, “How did you knock so earnestly?”
- Mercy responded, “Could anyone in my situation help doing the same?”
- Christiana replied that the Lord was pleased with your loud and restless prayer. It made him smile

They Question the Gatekeeper about the Dog

- Mercy said
 - You are always righteous, Oh Lord, yet I ask
 - Why do you keep such a cruel Dog in your yard which caused us to want to flee in fear?
- The Lord replied,
 - The Dog has another owner and has frightened many pilgrims, but it has served to strengthen their resolve at the Gate.
 - I always give my pilgrims help in what the beast tries to do to them.
 - They will face a dog rather than lose what they hope to receive. Dan 6:20-22
- Mercy said, “I confess my ignorance, you do all things well Job 42:3

The Pilgrims Venture Onward

*Blessed be the day that I began
Wishing a pilgrim to be;
And blessed also be that man
Whose example moved me*

*True, it was long before I began
To seek to live forever;
But now I run as fast as I can.
Its better late than never.*

*To Joy from tears; to faith from fears,
We've turned, as we can see;
So from our beginning it now appears
Just what our end will be.*

Discussion Questions

- Christiana and Mercy on several occasions were described as having “concern for their souls.” Describe what they were concerned about. Should Christians have concern for their souls, or only those outside of Christ?
- Once Mercy passed through the Gate, she became concerned about her relatives left in the City of Destruction. Why is compassion befitting for Christians? Discuss as a group whether concern has waned for your loved ones and what could be done to renew concern where needed.
- Christiana had a nightmare (CH 18). Seeing her dark and ugly deeds, she cried out for the Lord to “have mercy on me, a sinner.” Two ill-favored ones concluded that they must get her thoughts off of things to come. Has this strategy been applied to you? What might it look like in our lives, what distracts us from eternity? What is our best defense?

Reminder For Next Week:

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