

HTPC Sunday School

Opening Assembly

October 6, 2019

Memory Verse: Psalm 121:1-2

Is anyone able to recite these
verses from memory?

Memory Verse: Psalm 121:1-2

1. I lift up my eyes to the hills.
From where does my help come?
2. My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

NEW for this week: Psalm 121:3-4

3. He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.

4. Behold, he who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

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

A Question About Forgiveness

- We come to a point in Christiana's dream in which she sees the place where Christian's burden had come off, and she says, "Something we were told at the gate now comes to mind...namely, that we receive forgiveness by both word and deed; by word, because it promises forgiveness, and by deed, because of what was done to obtain it. I understand something of the promise, but what does it mean to have forgiveness by deed, or in the way that it was obtained? Mr. Great-heart, I suppose you know, so, will you please tell us what you know about this?"
- This raises the important question of what must be done for salvation to be accomplished. It is not uncommon for someone to believe that they themselves must do some sort of good deed to be saved.

Great-heart's Explanation

- Great-heart's answer comes in the next section on page 245 in which he says, "Forgiveness, or pardon, by a deed done is forgiveness obtained by one person for another who needs it. It is not obtained directly by the person who needs it, but by the act or deed of another. So then, to speak to your question more particularly, the forgiveness that you and Mercy and these children have received was obtained by another--namely, by Him who let you in at the Gate. And He obtained it in a twofold way: first, He has covered your need of righteousness with His own, and second, He has shed His own blood that you may be washed in it."
- This answer reminds us of the true gospel of grace, that there is nothing that we do to obtain salvation, but it is all in what Christ has done to obtain salvation for us.
- The book points us to many passages such as Romans 3:25 and Titus 3:5, but one that particularly came to my mind was 2 Corinthians 5:21, "For our sake, he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."
- Christ has not only borne the penalty of sin, but He lived sinlessly. Because the righteous was condemned for the unrighteous, those who are unrighteous may now receive His righteousness. The point is clear in Great-heart's explanation--Jesus makes sinners clean.
- Christiana is still a bit confused and asks the question of how we can get the righteousness of Christ and yet He still be righteous.
- Great-heart here explains just how Christ can truly be our Mediator. Christ has two natures in one Person. There is a righteousness that belongs to both natures, and there is also a righteousness that is derived from the two natures joined into one.
- But then he explains that there is a righteousness which is based on His obedience to the revealed will of the Father. Christ lived sinlessly, He was obedient even unto the point of death, and it is this righteousness that sinners receive. Christ has stood in the place of sinners; therefore, there is no more penalty for believers to pay.
- "But again, in order to obtain forgiveness by deed some price must be paid to God, and something must be provided as a covering for our sins. Sin has sentenced us to the just curse of a righteous law. The only deliverance from the curse that is upon us is that we be justified by way of redemption; a price must be paid for the evils we have done. And this has been done by the blood of your Lord who willingly came and stood in your place, offering to die the death to which you had been sentenced for your sins. He has, therefore, ransomed you from the penalty of your lawbreaking by shedding His blood. He has covered your warped, polluted souls with His righteousness, and because of this, God will pass by you and will not harm you when He comes to judge the world."

Christiana Now Understands

- In this section, Christiana has a joyful response as she sees that not only does justification by faith alone set her free, but it also set her husband free. His Burden is done away with by the Cross, as is her own.
- Ephesians 2:8 says “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not your own doing; it is a gift of God.” Even our faith is a gift, and it is faith in this sacrifice that sets us free, but as Grate-heart reminds Christiana, there is also a deep affection for Christ that develops as a result of understanding this grace.

Her Heartfelt Response

- Christiana here is overjoyed by the fact that even though she herself was a wretch that Christ sought her and paid with His own blood to buy her.
- Great-heart tells her that not everyone receives this faith to believe on Christ, not even all that were at the Cross, but that she herself has received God's special grace.

Simple, Sloth, and Presumption

- At this point the travelers come across Simple, Sloth and Presumption.
- They have been killed, and Mercy asks who these men were
- Great-heart explains that they had slept along the way, indicating that they had not taken the journey seriously. They also had persuaded others to turn away by telling them that the Lord was a harsh taskmaster. This reminds us that sins like these are deadly--their death is a grave reminder of the need to flee these temptations.

The Dirty Spring

- Now they come to the Hill of Difficulty, and Great-heart explains that Christian used to drink from this spring, but because some did not want their thirst quenched it has become dirty.
- The only way to make the water drinkable is to use a good container to get it out, which Christiana and her companions do. The water had been contaminated by enemies of the king.

The Two False Ways

- We see next the paths where Formality and Hypocrisy were lost. Though the paths have been blocked, there are many who out of laziness take these roads. It is a reminder to us not to be given to a purely formal religion or to religious hypocrisy. Though those ways may be easier, they lead to destruction. Proverbs 15:19 says, “The way of a lazy man is like a hedge of thorns.”

Climbing the Hill of Difficulty

- In this section we see how difficult the road uphill is, which reminds us of the trials and difficulties of the Christian life. But when they come to a resting place, it is seen that that rest is greatly comforting.
- The youngest of the boys says, “I now remember what my mother has told me-- that the way to heaven is like climbing a ladder, while the way to hell is an easy slide downhill. I would rather climb the ladder to life than go easily down the Hill to death.” “But going downhill is easy,” said Mercy. But the boy, whose name was James replied, “I think that the day is coming when going downhill will be the hardest of all.”
- This serves as a reminder that the hardships of the Christian life end in reward, but the ease of the unbelieving life ends in eternal destruction.
- Great-heart issues a warning after Christiana loses her bottle. He says that sleep and forgetfulness are the reasons one loses things on this path. He reminds them not to fall asleep but to keep watch.

A Stage For Warning

- Now we come to a frightening scene in which Mistrust and Timorous who tried to dissuade Christian from his journey are seen as a warning and example. The tongues of these two had been burned for trying to hinder him from his journey.

The Lions and Giant Grim

- Now that they have reached the hill-top they come face to face with the lions. Bunyan was using this illustration to represent persecution from the state.
- The Lions are chained but they meet a Giant named Grim. Grim is one who goes out of his way to prevent pilgrims from getting into the palace. Great-heart slays Grim, and then they make their way to the palace.
- Those who persecute Christians ultimately do not win.

The Gatekeeper's Lodge

- On their way to the palace they come to the Gatekeeper's Lodge, who welcomes Great-heart.
- Great-heart is a familiar face, as he often helps pilgrims on their journey.

Great-heart Must Leave

- Though Christiana and her companions request that Great-heart remain with them, his answer is simple: “I do as my Lord commands me,” said Great-heart. If He will appoint me to be your guide all the way through, I will willingly do so. But in this you failed at the beginning. When He told me to come this far with you, then you should have begged Him to allow me to go the rest of the way with you; He would have granted your request. However, for now I must withdraw.”
- We must as Christians bring our requests before God.

Welcomed Into the House

- There was a great rejoicing now that Christian's family was at the house. This is a testimony to Christian love and rejoicing at the work of the Lord in each other's hearts and lives.

They Go to Bed and Mercy's Dream

- Christiana requests that she may sleep in the room her husband stayed in, claiming her own surprise that she would ever follow him on his pilgrimage.
- The next morning, Mercy recounts her dream to Christiana. It seems to be a dream about what is promised. She begins bemoaning the hardness of her own heart, and many mock her, but then one comes to lead her to a golden gate. Here she sees a throne and is welcomed as a daughter. This is an encouragement on the way, that this is the place to which they are travelling.

They Begin the New Day

- Christiana and her companions are invited to stay at the House a while
- This is what she desired as she would like to learn from Prudence, Piety and Charity.

Prudence Quizzes Christiana's Sons

- As Prudence quizzes the first of the sons, she asks about who made and saved him. He acknowledges that he is a creature of the Triune God, and that this same Triune God saved him. The Father saves by His grace, the Son saves by His righteousness, death, blood and life. The Spirit saves by His regenerating work. She notes that Christiana has taught her children well.
- The next son is quizzed, and tells of who man is, what sin is and what salvation is. He acknowledges that sin has left man in a miserable state, but that God has saved man for His own glory, and that there is everlasting happiness in this salvation.
- The next son is quizzed as well. He describes heaven as a place that is absolutely blessed because God dwells there, hell as a place that is horrible as it is the abode of sin and death and the devil.
- When asked why he wants to go to heaven, he answers, "So that I may see God and be able to serve Him without weariness; that I may see Christ and love Him forever and ever; that I may have the fullness of the Holy Spirit living inside me, which I will never be able to fully enjoy here."
- Do we have this desire to see God?
- The final and oldest son is quizzed. He acknowledges that God is eternal and nothing pre-existed Him. The Bible is His Word, and though the child cannot understand it all, he can trust it fully because God is wiser than him. All that is in it is for his good. He then affirms the resurrection of the dead.

Prudence Admonishes the Boys

- Prudence tells the boys to listen to their mother, edifying conversations, and learn from God's general revelation.
- She says their ultimate task, however, is to meditate on the Bible.
- Are we meditating on the Word and submissive to it?

Discussion Questions

- What does it mean to be saved by the deeds of Christ? What has Christ done to accomplish salvation? Does what Christ has done move you in the same way it moved Christiana? What causes our hearts to grow cold to the gospel?
- How can ease present a danger and a hindrance to living the Christian life? Why does Christiana's son say, I think that the day is coming when going downhill will be the hardest of all?"
- How does Great-heart's departure motivate us toward prayer? What are some of the things that keep us from praying?
- In Prudence's first quiz, it is seen that salvation is a work accomplished by the Trinity. Why does it matter that salvation is a Trinitarian act? How does this encourage you?
- In her third quiz, Christiana's son explained that he wanted heaven because he wanted to see God. Do you dwell on heavenly things regularly? What distracts us from thoughts of heaven and seeing God?
- Prudence admonishes the boys to meditate on the Word. What is your posture toward the Word of God? Do you meditate on it and receive it well? How does this impact our listening to the Word preached?

Reminder For Next Week:

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