

American Minute with Bill Federer

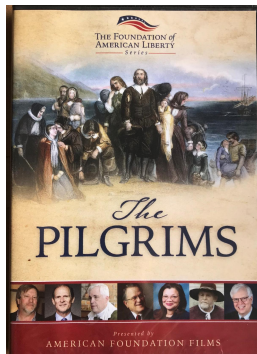
Pilgrim's Progress: John Bunyan imprisoned 12 years for holding unapproved opinions - "The Monster was hideous ... wings like a dragon ... out of his belly came fire & smoke"

[LISTEN \(text to speech\)](#)

What would it be like to be **imprisoned** for 12 years for expressing opinions different than the government's?... [continue reading ...](#)



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This was the fate of **John Bunyan**, author of the world renowned book ***Pilgrim's Progress***.

John Bunyan was born in **Bedford, England** in 1628, a decade before a **Civil War** began in **England**.

The origin of the war can be traced back to the attempted assassination of James the First with the Gun Powder Plot of 1605.

An anonymous letter led to the discovery that Guy Fawkes, a

supporter of Spain, had joined with conspirators to place 36 barrels of gunpowder in a cellar beneath Parliament's House of Lords.

The plan was to blow them up and kill King James the First, who was scheduled to speak that day, and thus return England to a Catholic monarchy.

Though the plot was thwarted, James the First was

afterwards suspicious and intolerant of any dissenting religious group, whether Catholic, Puritan, Presbyterian, or Separatist Pilgrim.

James demanded religious uniformity. A person was not even allowed to make up their own prayers because they could make up one that is wrong, so the government wrote all the possible prayers down in *The Book of Common Prayer*.

When a person felt like praying, they were to just open it to the right page and read the prayer.

It was during this time, in 1620, that the Pilgrims set sail for America.

When King James died in 1625, his son, **Charles the First**, took the throne. As he increased demands for religious uniformity, resistance grew.

In 1637, at the first public reading of *The Book of Common Prayer* which took place at St. Giles Cathedral, in Edinburgh, Scotland,



a market-woman named Jenny Geddes is said to have thrown her three-legged stool at the minister in protest.

This sparked into a riot that led to the Bishops' War, requiring all ministers to be ordained by the Bishop and use The Book of Common Prayer.

Then followed the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, being the Anglicans fighting England's Puritans, Scotland's Presbyterians, and Ireland's Catholics.

This turned into the Catholics fighting Charles the First in the Irish Confederate Wars, 1641-1653; and the Puritans and Presbyterians teaming up to fight Charles the First in the First English Civil War, 1642-1646.

In the Civil War, on the King's side were the **Royalist Anglican "Cavaliers"** and on the other side were the **Puritan**



Parliamentarians and Scottish Covenanters, led by Lord Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell.

In 1644, at the age of 16, **Bunyan** joined the **Puritan Parliamentary Army** and fought under **Oliver Cromwell** during the **English Civil War**.

When **Charles the First** was about to be captured, he surrendered to Scotland. He promised



he would respect their Presbyterian church structure with no bishops. For this, the **Scots switched sides** to fight to **return King Charles to the throne.**



Cromwell defeated them, captured **Charles the First**, and shortly after, he was **beheaded** in 1649.

The Scots crowned his 21-year-old son, Charles the Second as king in return for his promise to respect Presbyterian Church independence with no bishops.

Charles the Second was defeated in the Anglo-Scottish War, and he fled to France in 1651 to be under the protection of his 13-year-old cousin, **King Louis the Fourteenth.**

Oliver Cromwell led the **Commonwealth of England** from 1649 till his death in 1658. The Commonwealth was based on the Puritan covenant, a voluntary relationship with representatives, elected by the people, with God.



Puritan minister William Perkins stated in a sermon, 1624:

"We are by nature covenant creatures, bound together by covenants innumerable and together bound by covenant to our God ... Blest be the ties that bind us."

Cromwell refused to be king but instead took the title "**Lord Protector.**"

Cromwell let **Jews** back into **England** for the first time since **King Edward the First** had expelled them in 1290.

As a soldier, John Bunyan escaped death several times.

He wrote in *Grace Abounding*:

"When I was a Soldier, I, with others, were drawn out to go to such a place to besiege it; But when I was just ready to go, one of the company desired to go in my room, to which, when I had consented, he took my place; and coming to the siege, as he stood Sentinel, he was shot into the head with a Musket bullet and died."



After three years in the military, he returned to live in his cottage in the village of **Elstow**. Being poor and unskilled, he learned from his father the **trade of a tinker**.

His life changed when he married his young, pious wife. She had two books inherited from her father: Arthur Dent's ***Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven***; and Lewis Bayly's ***Practice of Piety***. Apart from that, the newly-weds owned little, "not having so much household-stuff as a dish or a spoon betwixt us both."

Their first daughter was blind, then they had another daughter and two sons. They began attending the non-conformist Bedford Free Church.

In 1657, at age 29, **Bunyan** became a **Baptist minister**.



During the Commonwealth of England, a period that is also called



the "Interregnum," **Oliver Cromwell** demoted Anglican ministers, including Reverend Lawrence Washington, the **great-great-grandfather of George Washington**.

This led to Lawrence's son, **John Washington**, becoming a merchant and **sailing to Virginia** in 1657.

When Puritan leader **Oliver Cromwell** died in 1658, his son Richard Cromwell could not hold the Commonwealth together.

A royalist movement grew to bring Charles the Second back from France and restore the **monarchy**.

The Commonwealth of England had been, in a sense, **England's "American Experiment."**

Os Guinness stated in an interview, "Thinking in Public," June 5, 2017:

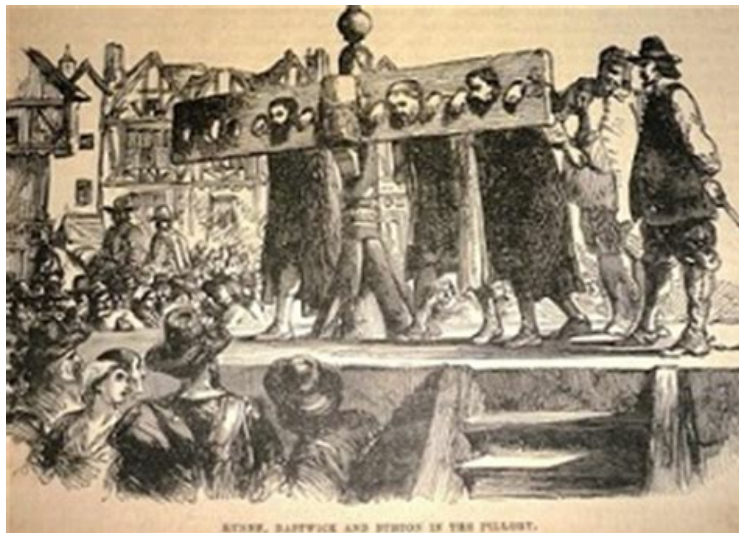
"The covenantal ideas in England were the lost cause, sadly. They failed. The king came back. But the lost cause became the winning cause in New England. And covenant shaped constitutionalism ... The American Constitution is a nationalized, secularized form of covenant."

Admiral William Penn, father of the Pennsylvania's founder, was instrumental in bringing Charles the Second back from France. In return, the King knighted him "Sir" Admiral William Penn.

Once the monarchy was reestablished, Charles the Second began an intense period of royal retribution, arresting and killing those who took part in killing his father.



The purge broadened into a **wave of persecution against of non-Anglican, non-conformist Christians.**



These

included: Catholics, Puritans, Separatists, Baptists, Scottish Covenanters, and other dissenters, who were spied upon, tracked, censored and arrested.

In 1662, **Parliament** passed the **Act of Uniformity**, which required **all preachers** to submit and **believe exactly what the government told them to believe.**

If not, they would not be ordained by an Anglican bishop, which was necessary to get official state permission to preach.

In 1665,

the Cavalier Parliament was overwhelmingly Royalist, Charles saw no reason to dissolve it and force another general election for seventeen years.

The Cavalier Parliament concerned itself with the agenda of Charles' chief advisor, Lord Clarendon (Edward Hyde, 1st Earl of Clarendon).

Lord Clarendon sought to discourage non-conformity to the Church of England; at his instigation, the Cavalier Parliament passed several acts which became part of the "Clarendon Code".

The Conventicle Act 1664 prohibited religious assemblies of more than five people, except under the auspices of the Church of England.

The Five Mile Act 1665 prohibited clergymen from coming within five miles of a parish from which they had been banished. The Conventicle and Five Mile Acts remained in effect for the remainder of Charles' reign.

Other parts of the Clarendon Code included the Corporation Act 1661 and the Act of Uniformity 1662.

Parliament passed the Five Mile Act. This made it illegal for a dissenting preacher to preach within five miles of any town. If they did they were arrested.

Small group Bible studies and prayer meetings were called "conventicles," which comes from the word "covenant." Jesus said, "where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in the midst."

In 1664, **Parliament** passed the **Act of Conventicles**, which made it **illegal for five or more people to have a religious meeting** apart from the Church of England.

If you were caught with a small group making up your own prayers, the police, similar to the FBI, would bust into your house and arrest you, with the bishop assisting. You would be brought to a secret government hearing room called the "Star Chamber" because it had stars on the ceiling. Similar to recent January 6th-type hearings, they would threaten you with extended sentences if you did confess to things you did not do.

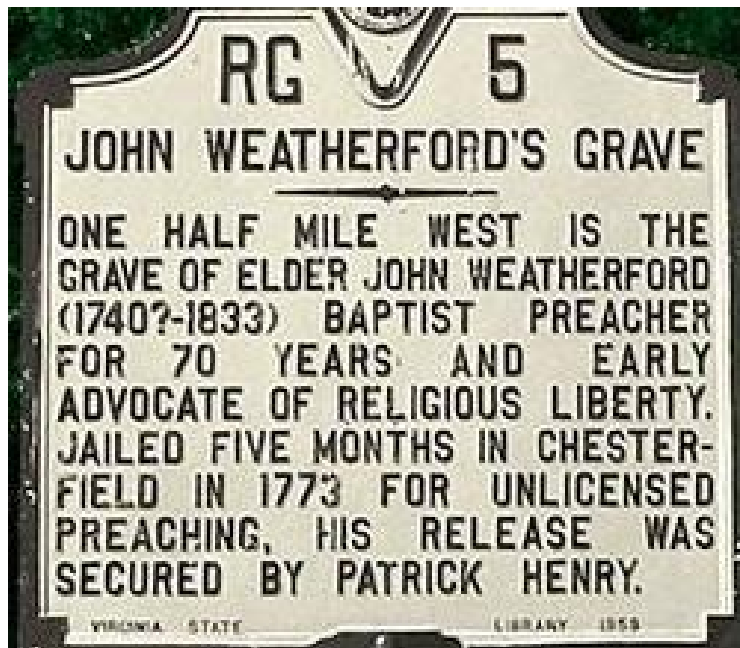
Some were branded on the face as heretics or had their ears cut off. Then they were put in a jail cell for months and years. They did not even feed you. You had to have some friend that missed you who brought you food.

The **Conventicle Act** was changed to the **Riot Act** because you could be planning an insurrection in your little Bible study.

The police would kick in the door, pull out a piece of paper and read the Riot Act, which said **everyone must immediately disperse** or they will be arrested, dragged to the Star Chamber, and thrown in prison.

It was so outrageously severe that it went into the expression — "**Read them the Riot Act!**"

This continued into the next century, where in England's **colony of Virginia**, in the town of **Culpeper**, the Anglican government arrested **Baptist pastors**.



Prior to the Revolutionary War, **James Madison** wrote to William Bradford, January 24, 1774:

"There are at this time in the adjacent **Culpeper County** not less than 5 or 6 well meaning **men in jail for publishing their religious sentiments** which in the main are very orthodox."

In 1660, **John**

Bunyan was preaching in a farm house near Bedford, England, when it was **raided by the police.**

He was bound, **arrested, and dragged away**, all because he was having an **unauthorized religious meeting** and for **preaching without the permission of the government.**



THE ARREST AT THE BARAGEN'S HEAD.

Bunyan wrote in *A Relation of My Imprisonment*:

"Upon the 12th of ... November 1660 ... **the justice ... issued out his warrant to take me ...** as if we that were to meet together ... to do some fearful business, to the destruction of the country;

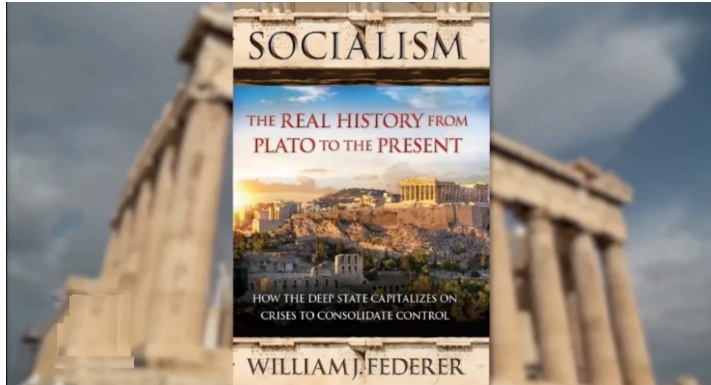
... when alas! the constable, when he came in, found us only with our Bibles in our hands, ready to speak and hear the word of God ...

So I was taken and forced to



depart ... But before I went away, I spake some few words of counsel and encouragement to the people, declaring to them ... that they would not be discouraged, for it was a mercy to suffer upon so good account ...

We suffer as Christians ... **better be the persecuted, than the persecutors."**



[SOCIALISM - The Real History from Plato to the Present: How the Deep State Capitalizes on Crises to Consolidate Control](#)

Unfortunately, a resurgence of these tactics has been seen in recent times.

As reported by WND.com, November 22, 2021; "So It Begins: FBI Raids Home of Mom Who Protested School Board."

In November 16, 2021, the FBI's heavily armed SWAT team broke down the door of a homeschool mom's house in suburban Colorado and handcuffed her while she was homeschooling her three children. They manhandling her 18-year-old daughter, dragging her up the stairs by her hoodie.

The Administration's Attorney General targeted the mother because she had expressed her views regarding the curriculum used in public schools.

John Bunyan was imprisoned for a **twelve years**, from 1660-1672, and again

1675-1676.



During his imprisonment, **John Bunyan** supported his family by making shoelaces.

It was during this time that he wrote ***The Pilgrim's Progress***, eventually published February 18, 1678.

He died August 31, 1688.



At the time of his death, the world was experiencing momentous events:

- **England's William and Mary** were leading the **Glorious Revolution**;
- **William Penn** was founding **Pennsylvania**; and
- **Ottoman Muslim Turks** were laying siege to **Vienna**.

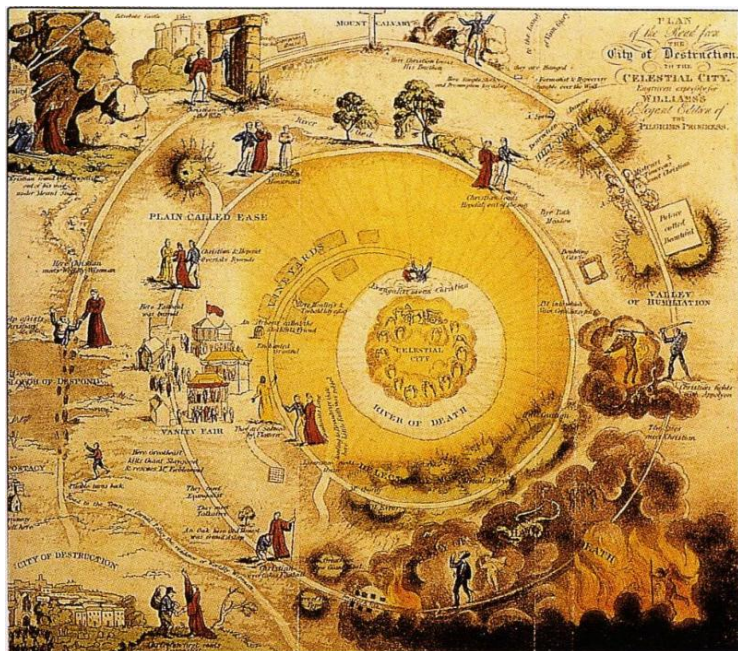
Pilgrim's Progress is an

allegory where a pilgrim traveler, named **Christian**, flees from the **City of Destruction**.



He is directed by **Evangelist** to follow the straight and narrow path toward the **Celestial City of Zion**.

Along the way, he overcomes **temptations, depressions, deceptions, and persecutions.**



The friends and dangers that **Christian** meets along the way inspired many subsequent stories and novels, such as:

- Sir Walter Scott's *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818);
- Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* (1838) is subtitled "**The Parish Boy's Progress**";
- Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Celestial Railroad* (1846);

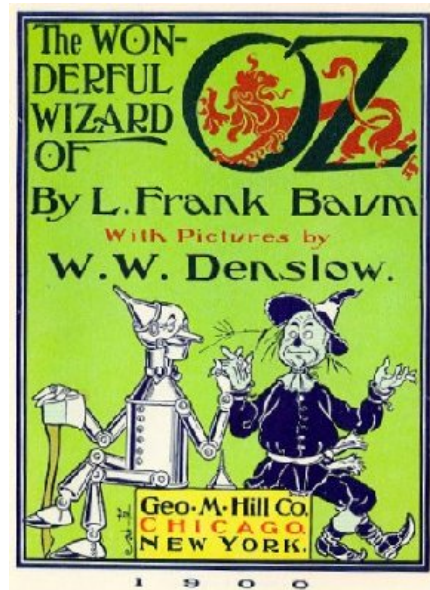
- Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868);



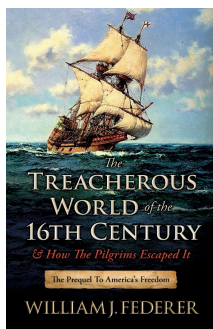
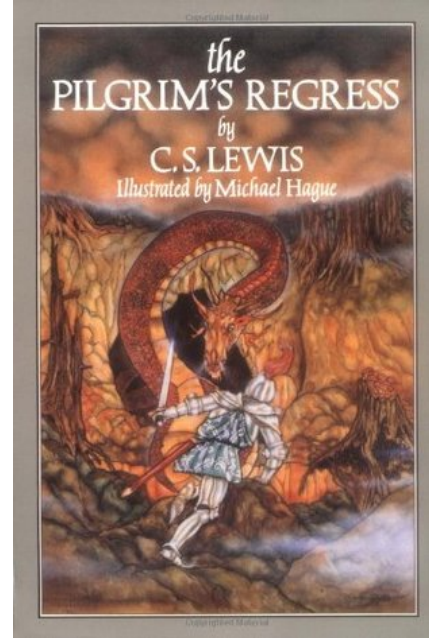
- Mark Twain's *Innocents Abroad or the New Pilgrim's Progress* (1869);



- L. Frank Baum's *Wizard of Oz* (1900);



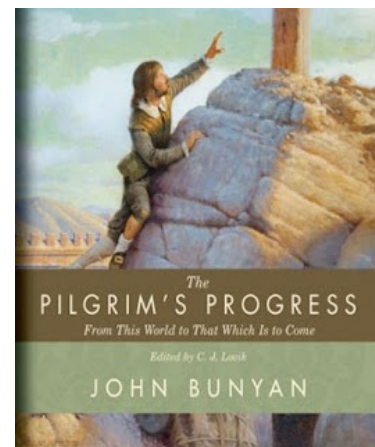
- C.S. Lewis' *Pilgrim's Regress* (1933).



[The Treacherous World of the 16th Century & How the Pilgrims Escaped It: The Prequel to America's Freedom](#)

John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* was translated into over 200 languages and, after the Bible, was the **world's best-seller** for hundreds of years.

It has never been out of print.



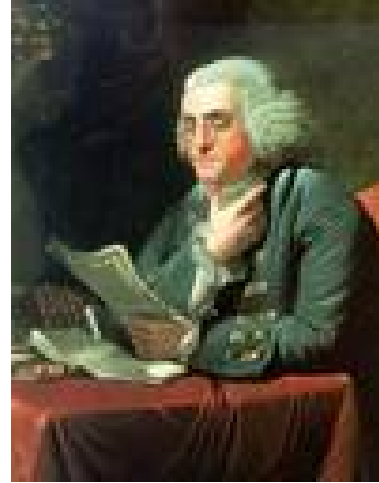
Considered **one of the most significant works of English literature**, it was found in nearly **every colonial New England home**, along with the **Bible** and **Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, 1563**.

Ben Franklin wrote in his *Autobiography*:

"From a child I was fond of reading, and all the little money that came into my hands was ever laid out in

books.

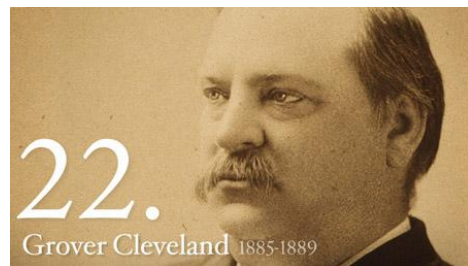
Pleased with *The Pilgrim's Progress*, my first collection was of **John Bunyan's** works in separate little volumes ..."



Franklin continued:

"My old favorite author, **Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*** ... has been translated into most of the languages of Europe, and suppose it has been more generally read than any other book, except perhaps the Bible."

President Grover Cleveland had memorized *The Pilgrim's Progress* as a youth, commenting:



"I have always felt that my training as a minister's son has been more valuable to me as a strengthening influence than any other incident in life."

President Theodore Roosevelt stated while laying the cornerstone of the office building of the House of Representatives, April 14, 1906:



"In **Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*** you may recall the description of the man with the muck-rake,

the man who could look no way but downward, with the muck-rake in his hand, who was offered a celestial crown for his muck-rake,

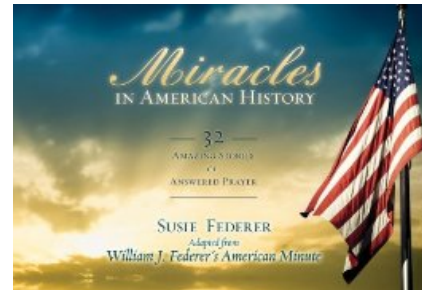
but who would neither look up nor regard the crown he was offered, but continued to rake to himself the filth of the floor."

President Bill Clinton remarked at the Retirement of **General Colin Powell** in Arlington, Virginia, September 30, 1993:

"General Powell, I am reminded of the words of another young valiant warrior, spoken when, like you, he was finishing one journey and beginning a second.

... John Bunyan wrote in *Pilgrim's Progress* of the warrior valiant at the end of his life, as he prepared to present himself to the Almighty."

[Miracles in American History- Amazing Stories of Answered Prayer](#)



John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* began:

"As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den, and I laid me down in that place to sleep: and, as I slept, I dreamed a dream.



... I dreamed, and behold, I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his

own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back.



... I looked, and saw him open the book, and read therein; and, as he read, he wept, and trembled;

and, not being able longer to contain, he brake out with a lamentable cry, saying, What shall I do?"

Leaving the **City of Destruction**, **Christian** was chased by **Obstinate** and **Pliable**, who tried to get him to turn back.

Determined to keep going, he was mired in depression and doubts crossing the **Slough of Despond**, but was rescued by a man named **Help**.

Christian was easily led astray by **Mr. Worldly Wiseman** from the town of **Carnal Policy**.

He then tried to obey all the burdensome rules and regulations of **Mr. Legality**.

He was almost crushed by **Mt. Sinai** till **Evangelist** reappeared and rebuked him, putting him back on the narrow path -- the **King's Highway** of grace.



Mr. Worldly-Wiseman directs Christian out of the way.

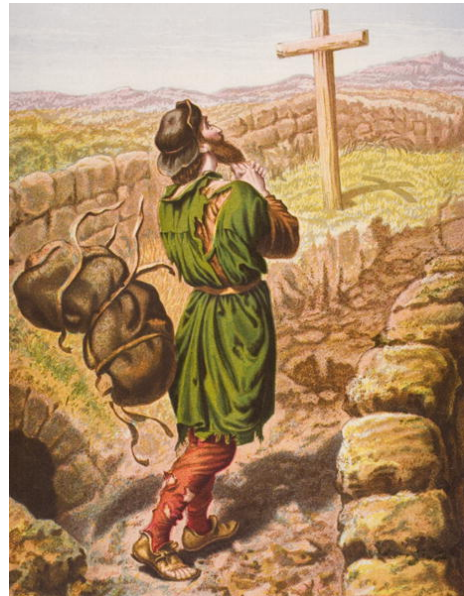
At the door of the **Wicket**

Gate, Christian was shot at by the arrows from **Beelzebub**. Just in time, **Goodwill** reached out and yanked him through the doorway.



Continuing along in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan wrote:

"**Christian** ran thus till he came at a place somewhat ascending, and upon that place stood a cross ...



So I saw in my dream, that just as **Christian** came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back."

Traveling further in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan wrote:

"Then said **Christian**, You make me afraid, but whither shall I fly to be safe?...

To go back is nothing but death; to go forward is fear of death,



and life-everlasting beyond it. I will yet go forward ...

... Frighted with **the sight of the lions** ... **Christian** said to himself again,

These beasts range in the night for their prey; and if they should meet with me in the dark ... how should I escape being by them torn in pieces? ...



... He lift up his eyes, and behold there was a very stately palace before him ... He entered into a very narrow passage ... he espied two lions in the way ...

The **porter** at the **lodge** ... perceiving that **Christian** made a halt as if he would go back, cried unto him, saying,

'Is thy strength so small? Fear not the lions, for they are chained, and are placed there for trial of faith where it is, and for discovery of those that had none. Keep in the midst of the path, and no hurt shall come unto thee' ...

... He went on, trembling for fear of the lions, but taking good heed to the directions of the porter; he heard them roar, but they did him no harm ..."

John Bunyan continued, that at the **Palace Beautiful**, **Christian** was clothed in the **Armor of God**,

He then had to go alone through the **Valley of Humiliation**, where he recited Psalm 23:

"Yea, though I walk through the



Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Christian traveled further:

"But now, in this **Valley of Humiliation**, poor **Christian** was hard put to it ... a foul fiend coming over the field to meet him; his name is **Apollyon**.

... Then did **Christian** begin to be afraid, and to cast in his mind whether to go back or to stand his ground.

But he considered again that **he had no armor for his back**; and therefore thought that to turn the

back to him might give him the greater advantage with ease to pierce him with his darts.

Therefore **he resolved to venture and stand his ground ..."**

Bunyan added:

"The monster was hideous to behold; he was clothed with scales ... wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, and out of his belly came fire and smoke ...



Apollyon

straddled quite over the whole breadth of the way, and said ... prepare thyself to die; for I swear by my infernal den, that thou shalt go no further; here will I spill thy soul.



... And with that he threw a flaming dart at his breast; but **Christian** had a shield in his hand, with which he caught it ...

Apollyon as fast made at him, throwing darts as thick as hail; by the which, notwithstanding all that **Christian** could do to avoid it, **Apollyon** wounded him in his head, his hand, and foot ..."



APOLLYON VANQUISHED BY CHRISTIAN.

Bunyan concluded:

"This sore combat lasted for above half a day, even till **Christian** was almost quite spent; for you must know that **Christian**, by reason of his wounds, must needs grow weaker and weaker ...

... **Christian's** sword flew out of his hand. Then said **Apollyon**, 'I am sure of thee now.'

And with that he had almost pressed him to death, so that **Christian** began to despair of life;

but as God would have it, while **Apollyon** was fetching of his last blow, thereby to make a full end of this good man, **Christian** nimbly stretched out his hand for his sword, and caught it, saying,

... 'Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall I shall arise'; and with that gave him a deadly thrust, which made him give back ...

And with that **Apollyon** spread forth his dragon's wings, and sped him away, that **Christian** for a season saw him no more ...



A more unequal match can hardly be, --
Christian must fight an angel; but you see,
The valiant man by handling **Sword and Shield**,
Doth make him, though a **Dragon**, quit the field."

Soon after this horrifying experience, **Christian** met a fellow-pilgrim named **Faithful**, and the two of them traveled to **Vanity Fair** where they were almost enticed with pleasures and every worldly temptation.



As they maintained holy lives and resisted the sensual traps, the townspeople grew incensed at them.

Faithful confronted the sin of the town and they were jailed in a cage.

A rigged jury sentenced **Faithful** to be martyred.

President Ronald Reagan greeted Australia's Prime Minister, June 30, 1981:

"**Robert Louis Stevenson** wrote, 'We are all travelers in what **John Bunyan** calls the wilderness of this world.'

And the best that we find in our travels is an honest friend - they keep us worthy of ourselves."



Christian escaped, and met another traveler, **Hopeful**.

The straight and narrow path was rocky, so they took a

parallel softer path along the **Hill Lucre** which gradually got them lost.

They were trapped by **Giant Despair**, who chained them in **Doubting Castle**.

The **Giant** threw **poison** and a **dagger** into the cell and **told them to commit suicide**.

Depressed in the dungeon they prayed and sang, as the Apostle Paul did when in a dungeon.:

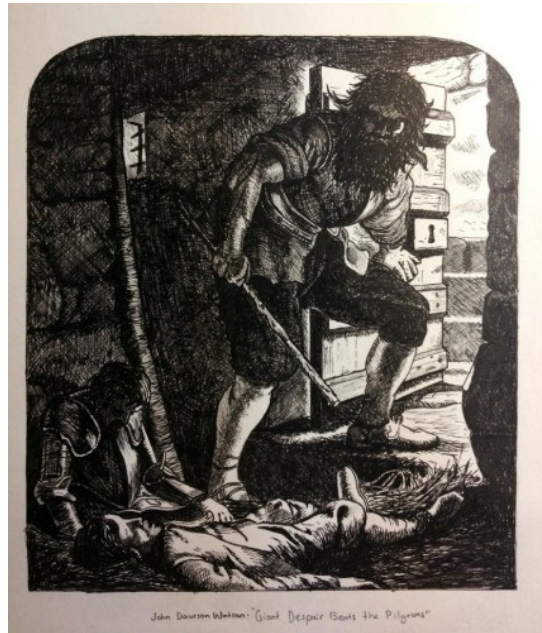
Christian and Hopeful "... began to pray, and continued in prayer till almost the break of day.

Now, a little before it was day, good **Christian**, as one half amazed, brake out in this passionate speech: -- What a fool, quoth he, am I, thus to lie in a stinking dungeon, when I may as well walk at liberty! I have a **key** in my bosom, called **Promise**, that will, I am persuaded, **open any lock in Doubting Castle**."

They escaped and made it back to the **King's Highway**.

They were almost led astray by **Flatterer** and nearly fell asleep crossing the **Enchanted Land**.

Seeing **Immanuel's Land** in the distance, they saw someone walking toward them



in the opposite direction.



They ran into **Atheist** going in the opposite direction, who told them that there was no Heaven and no God, and that they should turn back.



They refused and kept going ahead.

Thankfully, they had been previously warned by **Shepherds**, so they continued on.

They finally came to the last test, **the River of Death**.

They saw a man named **Ignorance** get into a ferryboat named **Vain Hope**, trusting in his good works instead of **God's grace**.



The ferryman took him across, but he ended up on a byway to **Hell**.

Christian and **Hopeful** took courage and began wading across the **River of Death**.

It kept getting deeper and deeper, but they kept going forward in faith trusting in God's promises.

They sank under the billowing waves, till they were

suddenly pulled out on the other side.

They were ushered by angels and gloriously welcomed into the **Celestial City of Zion**:

"Now while they were thus drawing towards the gate, behold a company of the heavenly host came out to meet them ...

... These are the men that have loved **our Lord** when they were in the world, and that have left all for his holy name ... that they may go in and look their **Redeemer** in the face with joy.

... Then the heavenly host gave a great shout, saying, **'Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.'**"



... Oh, by what tongue or pen can their **glorious joy be expressed!** ...

... Now I saw in my dream that these two men went in at the gate: and lo, as they entered, **they were transfigured**, and they had raiment put on that shone like gold.



There was also that met them with harps and crowns ...

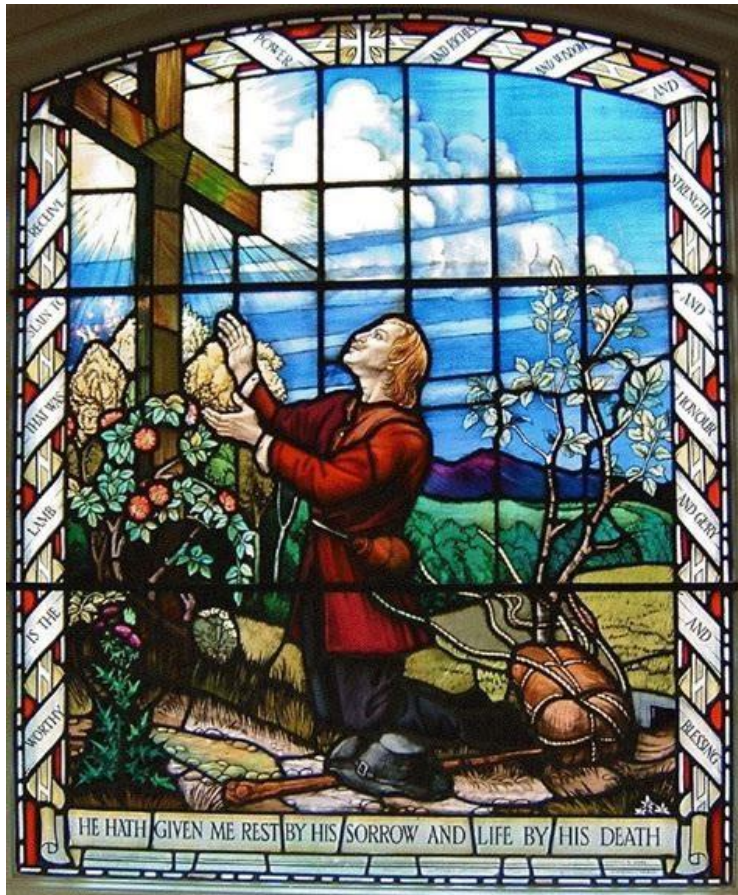
... Then I heard in my dream that all the bells in the city rang again for joy, and that it was said unto them, **'Enter ye into the joy of your Lord.'**

... I also heard the men themselves, that they sang with a loud voice, saying,

'Blessing and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'

President Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote January 19, 1936:

"When **Theodore Roosevelt** died, the Secretary of his class at Harvard, in sending classmates a notice of his passing, added this quotation from ***Pilgrim's Progress***:



'My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and **my courage and skill** to him that can get it.

My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought His battles who now will be my rewarder.'"

--

[Read as PDF ... Pilgrim's Progress: John Bunyan](#)

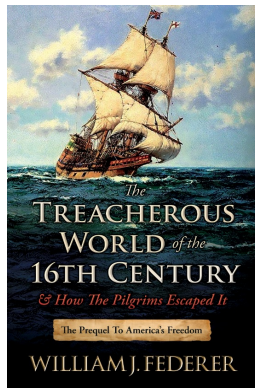
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