

The Pilgrim's Progress **Part 1 - the Exodus and the Interpreter**

Discussion starters:

- 1) If "life is a journey", where are we going? (Are we there yet, are we there yet, are we ...)
- 2) What is a pilgrimage?
- 3) Is the book about this life or the one to come?

Scene 1 - Fleeing the city of Destruction

- 1) What do Christian's rags represent (see **Isaiah 64:6**)
- 2) What is the burden or backpack he carries? (**Psalms 38:4**)
- 3) What is the book he is reading and what effect does it have on him? (**Hebrews 4:12**)
- 4) What is the reaction of Pilgrim's family and friends?
- 5) Why do many respond to God's Word with indifference if not outright hostility?
- 6) What does his walking and reading alone tell us of the Christian discipline of solitude?
- 7) What does Evangelist tell Pilgrim to do?
- 8) How is Pilgrim to find his way?
- 9) Is fear a good motivator?
- 10) Do you think most people come to Christ out of love or to escape punishment?
- 11) Who is sent to bring Christian back?
 - What does it mean to be "obstinate"?
 - What does it mean to be "pliable"?
- 12) What are the 4 arguments Obstinate uses to dissuade Christian?
 - Which one has the most "pull" for you?
- 13) What does it mean to "put your hand to the plow" (**Luke 9:62**)
- 14) What is Pliable's motivation for joining Christian?

Scene 2 - The Swamp of Despair (Slough of Despond)

- 1) What is despair?
- 2) How is Pliable like the seed sown on shallow soil (**Matthew 13:20-21**)
- 3) How is Christianity "just a phase" for many?
- 4) Why is despair such a danger for a Christian?

- 5) Why does Christian become “stuck in the mud”?
- 6) Who pulls him out? Who do we have when we get “stuck”?
- 7) What are the steps that Christian could have taken? (**Psalm 37:23-24**)

Scene 3 - Mr. Worldly Wiseman

- 1) Who is Mr. Wiseman? Is he really wise?
- 2) What does he tempt Christian to do?
- 3) Look at **Colossians 2:8**, the word “captive” used here usually denotes a prisoner of war or one who has been kidnapped. How does human reason (philosophy) take us captive?
- 4) Who are Wordly Wiseman’s allies?
- 5) How many Christians fall for their arguments?
- 6) Read **Galatians 3:1-5**. For what is Paul chiding the Galatians?
- 7) Why can’t good works please God?

Scene 4 - Mt. Sinai

- 1) What is morality?
- 2) How is much of what passes for Christianity today Moral Therapeutic Deism (MTD)?
- 3) Why is grace (**Ephesians 2:8-10**) the only hope for salvation?
- 4) What does Christian experience in the Village of Morality?
- 5) Why doesn’t Evangelist simply tell Christian what he did wrong?
- 6) How does this guide us when confronting others who have “strayed from the path”?
- 7) How do you think most people view sin today, even within the Church?

Scene 5 - At the Wicket Gate

- 1) Christian, set aright, proceeds directly to the wicket gate. What distracts us on our pilgrimage to walk in “the Way”?
- 2) Why does Christian need to knock? (**Matt. 7:7-8**) What does this say about works and faith?
- 3) What is Christian’s confession, albeit an uninformed one?
- 4) Why does Goodwill yank Christian through the gate?
- 5) Look at **Revelation 3:7** What (or Who) is this “Door”?
- 6) What is the difficulty of a “narrow path” (**Matthew 7:13-14**)?
- 7) Did the bards get it right with a “Stairway to Heaven” and a “**Highway** to Hell”?

Scene 6 - The house of the Interpreter (see John 14:2)

A) Who is the Interpreter?

- **John 14:26**
- **John 15:26**
- **Ephesians 5:8-10**
- **II Peter 1:19**

B) The Portrait of the Preacher

1) Why must Christian first be taught who is a reliable guide? (**II Peter 2:1-2**)

2) The matching game: match the verses with the description of the Preacher

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|--|-----------------------|
| _____ eyes looking heavenward | a. 2 Timothy 4:7-8 |
| _____ speaking the Word of truth | b. Titus 1:9 |
| _____ put the world behind him | c. I Corinthians 4:15 |
| _____ pleads for reconciliation with God | d. Ephesians 4:11-13 |
| _____ has a gold crown over his head | e. Colossians 3:2 |
| _____ produces children | f. Romans 12:2 |
| _____ nourishes those children | g. 2 Corinthians 5:20 |
| _____ preaches the Truth | h. Ephesians 4:25 |

3) What do many Christians expect from their preachers today?

C) The dusty room

1) Define the things seen in this room

- A) the parlor (**Jeremiah 17:9**)
- B) The dust (**Romans 5:12**)
- C) the sweeper (**Romans 5:20**)
- D) the lass (**Titus 3:5**)

2) Why can't the dust be swept up?

3) What is the water sprinkled on the floor?

D) Passion and Patience

1) Why does Passion laugh at Patience (**Luke 16:25**)

2) Which parable does Passion's plight remind you of?

3) When do you find it most difficult to be patient?

E) The roaring fire (pastor's favorite)

1) What does the fire represent?

2) How does Satan try to "put out your fire"?

3) What is the oil of grace Christ pours into us?

F) The Palace

- 1) Read **II Timothy 4:7** Who are these “shiny, happy, people”
- 2) Who are the guards and why does the palace need guarding?
- 3) What does this tell us about the Christian life?
- 4) How does the “valiant man” fulfill Jesus’ words of **Matthew 11:12**?
- 5) Why did so many others hesitate at the gate? Who are those people?
- 6) What will Christian need to continue on his pilgrimage?
- 7) Why is Christian in such a rush?

G) The man in the iron cage

- 1) Why is this prisoner in despair?
- 2) What does it mean to “grieve the Holy Spirit”? (**Ephesian 4:30**)
- 3) Looking at **Psalms 51**, what does true repentance look like?

H) What dreams may come...

- 1) What imagery would you use to describe the Last Day / Judgment Day?
- 2) Who or what is “chaff” (**Matthew 3:11-12**)
- 3) How could this “nightmare” actually be a blessing?

* Which of these rooms held the most lessons for you?