

***“The Pilgrims Progress”
Watch And Be Sober
(Pages 16b-20a)***

Introduction:

1. The Last Time We Were With Christian:
 - In The Pilgrim’s Progress:
 - He Was Being Given:
 - A Guided Tour Through:
 - The House Of The Interpreter!
2. And In That House - We Discovered That:
 - The Interpreter:
 - Who Represents The Holy Spirit:
 - Was Teaching Him Some:
 - “Excellent Things” That Would Help Him On The Rest Of:
 - His Christian Journey!
3. So - If You Recall:
 - We Went With Him:
 - Into Three Special Rooms!
 - In The First Room:
 - There Was A Portrait - Of A Very Serious-Minded Man:
 - Who Exemplified:
 - The Kind Of Guide & Friend:
 - That Christian & Every Christian Needs:
 - To Help Us In Our New Life & Walk!
 - The Second Room:
 - Was A Parlor:
 - That Was Full Of Dust!
 - And - When The Man:
 - Who Represented The Law Of God:
 - Started Sweeping:
 - It Caused All That Dust Of Sin & Guilt To Swirl About!
 - But - When The Damsel:
 - Who Represented The Gospel Of God:
 - Started Sprinkling The Pure “Water Of Life” All Throughout The Room:
 - It Reminded Christian That:
 - The Good News Of Jesus Christ Is The Only Thing That Can Make The Soul Clean!
 - In The Third Room:
 - Christian Met Two Children:
 - With The Names:
 - Passion & Patience!
 - Through Whom He Learned:
 - That The Glory Of Heaven Is Worth The Wait!
4. Well With This Instruction Under His Belt:
 - Christian Felt Like He Was Ready For The Journey!
 - But - As We Will Read Tonight:
 - There Was Still More For Him To Learn!
 - Much More!
 - And Lessons Of A Much Graver Sort!
 - Because - As We Read:
 - Starting On Page 16, Paragraph 7:
 - The Author Writes - *“Then I Saw In My Dream That The Interpreter Took Christian By The Hand!”*
 - There Are Four More Rooms - And:
 - Four More Scenes:
 - Far More Difficult Than The Ones He Just Went Through!
 - And So - Into Each One Of These New Rooms:

- Notice As We Read That The Interpreter Tenderly:
 - Takes Christian's Hand!
 - Where First - He "*Led Him Into A Place Where Was A Fire Burning Against A Wall!*"

- Read Until Page 20, Paragraph 3 - Poem:
 - "*And Let Me Be Thankful, O Good Interpreter, To Thee!*"

5. So - We Just Went Through:
 - For More Rooms In The Interpreter's House:
 - Where We Saw Four New Scenes!
 - But - I Think As We Will See Tonight:
 - Each Of Those Scenes Are Related:
 - To Some Of The More Difficult & Challenging Aspects:
 - Of The Christian Life!
 - And - I Think A Good Summary:
 - Of What The Interpreter Taught Christian:
 - Can Be Found In 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8:
 - Where The Apostle Paul Writes -
 - "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us *watch and be sober*. / For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. / But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation!"

6. The Reason We Need To:
 - Like Christian - "Watch And Be Sober" - Is Because Of:
 - The Many Temptations & Threats:
 - That We Will Face:
 - On Our Christian Journey!

* The First Scene - Which Was The Fireplace Scene - Reminds Us Of:

1. *The Great Threat Of The Devil!*

- Because - Even Though - As A Christian:
 - There Is A Fire In Your Heart:
 - Which Represents The "Work Of Grace That Is Wrought In The Heart!"
 - The Devil Is Still There, Trying With All Of His Might:
 - "To Extinguish And Put It Out!"
 - As A Christian:
 - You Must Never Forget That:
 - 1 Peter 5:8 - "Your Adversary The Devil, As A Roaring Lion, Walketh About, Seeking Whom He May Devour!"
 - And What Does Peter Tell Us To Be?
 - "Be Sober, Be Vigilant!"
 - Remember The Story Of Peter?
 - Jesus Told Him In Luke 22:32:
 - "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat!"
 - And - This Is Still A Great Threat:
 - To Each One Of Us!
 - Satan Still Desires To Have You!
 - He Still Desires To:
 - Render You Utterly Useless:
 - For The Lord!
 - And - Perhaps For Some Of You:
 - He Has Done His Work Well!
 - As One Writer Put It - He Has "Induced [In You] Indifference, Lukewarmness, Lethargy, [And] Slothfulness!" (Horner)
 - But - What Does Jesus Say To Peter Then?
 - Luke 22:33:
 - "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not!"
 - This Was & Is The Oil Of Jesus' Grace:
 - Being Poured Onto The Fire Of A Christian's Heart:

- That Causes It To “Burn Higher And Hotter!”

- So - Even Though:

- The Threat Of The Devil Is Great:

- The Grace Of The Lord:

- Is Greater Still!

- Because The Grace Of Jesus Christ:

- Even Though At Times:

- It May Seem Like:

- A Secret & A Silent Grace:

- Working Behind The Scenes Of Your Christian Life!

- Yet - His Grace Is Still:

- A Sufficient Grace - And:

- A Sustaining Grace!

- So That - You Don't Need To Fear!

- Because - As Romans 8:31 Tells Us:

- “If God be for us, who can be against us?”

- In Your Christian Journey:

- You Need To Remember That:

- God's Grace Is Greater:

- Than The Threats Of The Devil!

* The Second Scene - Which Was The Palace / Castle Scene - Reminds Us Of:

2. ***The Great Threat Of Danger!***

- This Scene - Some Have Described As:

- The Story Of Pilgrim's Progress In A Nutshell!

- It's A Scene Where One Lone, Solitary Pilgrim:

- Boldly Approaches The Palace:

- Takes Unto Himself “The Whole Armor Of God!” (Ephesians 6) :

- And Fights The Good Fight Of Faith:

- Until He Makes His Way In!

- This Is A Scene That All Christians:

- Are Already Somewhat Familiar With!

- This Is Why When Confronted With This Scene:

- Christian - On P.17/P6 - “Smiled And Said, I Think Verily I Know The Meaning Of This!”

- Its Because Of What We Find In:

- Acts 14:22 - “That We Must Through Much Tribulation Enter Into The Kingdom Of God!”

- And So - We Must Be Ready:

- For That Tribulation - And:

- Those “Many Dangers, Toils, And Snares!” That John Newton Described In “Amazing Grace!”

- But - What Do Many Say About:

- This Christian Life & Journey Today?

- They Say That:

- You Can Even Have “Your Best Life Now!”

- But - This Is Not What The Bible Says About The Christian Life!

- The Apostle Paul Describes The Christian Journey:

- As A Fight!

- “Fight The Good Fight Of Faith” - He Says In 1 Timothy 6:12!

- It's A Fight:

- Against The World, The Flesh & The Devil!

- But - Even Though:

- The Threat Of Danger Is Great:

- The Glory Of The Lord:

- Is Greater Still!

- The Glimpses Of Glory:

- That This Man Had:

- Gave Him The Courage & Strength To Fight On & Never Give Up:

- As The Words Kept Ringing In His Ears - "Come In, Come In! Eternal Glory Thou Shalt Win!"

- In Your Christian Journey:
 - You Need To Remember That:
 - God's Glory Is Greater:
 - Than The Threats Of Danger!
 - That's Why Paul Could Say:
 - In 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 - "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; / Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed!"

* The Third Scene - Which Was The Cage Scene - Reminds Us Of:

3. ***The Great Threat Of Despair!***

- This Is, Perhaps, The Most Difficult Scene:
 - In The Interpreters House:
 - Because It Tells Us What It Is Like:
 - To Have "No Hope, And Without God In This World!" (Ephesians 2:12)
 - The Man In The Cage:
 - Identifies Himself As:
 - "Once A Fair And Flourishing Professor!"
 - A Professor Of The Faith:
 - That Christian Professes Himself!
 - But - What Happened To Him?
 - It All Started, He Said:
 - When - "I Left Off To Watch And Be Sober!"
 - And Then - It Got Worse From There!
 - As The Men Have Been Looking At:
 - In The Book Of Hebrews:
 - There Are Some Stern Warnings:
 - About Wilfully Sinning And:
 - Trodding Under Foot The Son Of God! (Hebrews 10:29)
 - When You Continue To Persist In Sin:
 - Without Care & Without Concern In Your Life:
 - It May Be Because:
 - You Are Yet Without Christ!
 - And - If You Are In That Condition - Hebrews 10:31 Warns You That - "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!"
 - This Man - It Turns Out:
 - Was A Counterfeit Christian!
 - He Did Not Give All Diligence:
 - To "Make [His] Calling And Election Sure!" (2 Peter 1:10)
 - And So - He Had Committed Apostasy Against The Lord!
 - He Drew Back - As He Said:
 - "For The Lusts, Pleasures, And Profits Of This World!"
 - And It Appears That:
 - He Had Reached The Point Of No Return:
 - Where God "Gave [Him] Over To A Reprobate Mind!" (Romans 1:28)
 - And Now - There Was No Light In His Darkness That He Could See! He Was In Complete Despair!
 - As George Cheever Once Wrote:
 - "The Full Sight And Sense Of Any Man's Sin, Without The Sight And Sense Of A Savior's Mercy At The Same Time, Would Be Sufficient To Cast The Soul At Any Time Into Utter Despair!"
 - But - When It Seems That:
 - The Threat Of Despair Is Great:
 - The Gift Of The Lord:
 - Is Greater Still!
 - The Gift Of Repentance For Sin!

- You Must Never Forget That:
 - Repentance & Sorrow For Sin:
 - Is A Gracious Gift Of God!
- In Romans 2:4 - The Apostle Paul Writes:
 - “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”
- Do Not Despise:
 - The Goodness & Forbearance & Longsuffering Of God!
 - Do Not Hold Back The Tears:
 - When God Brings Them To Your Eyes, In Godly Sorrow For Your Sin!
- Because - To Despise His Goodness - And:
 - To Resist His Gift Of Repentance:
 - Will Lead You To Despair:
 - Like This Man In The Iron Cage!
- Remember These Words From The Prophet Isaiah:
 - Isaiah 55:6-7 - “Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: / Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon!”
- In Your Christian Journey:
 - You Need To Remember That:
 - God's Gift Of Repentance Is Still Greater:
 - Than The Threat Of Despair!

* The Fourth Scene - Which Was The Chamber Scene - Reminds Us Of:

4. *The Great Threat Of Doom!*

- When The Time Comes For You To Be Judged:
 - By God - On The Final “Day Of Judgment!”
 - And - Even Though In Bunyan’s Tale:
 - This Is A “Dream Within A Dream!”
 - It Reveals To Us:
 - Biblical Reality!
 - Hebrews 9:27 Reminds Us That:
 - “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment!”
- The Man Who Had This Dream:
 - Which Was - In Truth - A Nightmare:
 - Was Relieved When He Woke Up!
 - The Sights & Sounds In His Dream:
 - Were So Fearful!
 - Because - As He Said:
 - “I Was Not Ready For It!”
- Are You Ready:
 - For The Judgment Of God?
 - In Romans 14:10 - We Are Told:
 - “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ!”
 - In 2 Corinthians 5:10 - We Are Told:
 - “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad!”
 - All Too Often We Live Our Lives:
 - As If We Will Not Appear Before God!
 - The “Judge Of All The Earth” - Who:
 - “Searcheth All Hearts!”
- The Judgment Was Something:
 - That John Bunyan Himself:
 - Kept Close In His Mind & To His Heart!
 - He Once Wrote A Long Poem Titled:
 - “Of Judgment!”
 - He Describes Jesus In This Way:
 - Behold ye now the majesty

And state that shall attend
This Lord, this Judge, and Justice high
When he doth now descend.
- He comes with head as white as snow,
With eyes like flames of fire;
In justice clad from top to toe,
Most glorious in attire.
- His face is filled with gravity;
His tongue is like a sword;
His presence awes both stout and high,
The world shakes at his word.

- Are You Ready To Meet Jesus:
 - As Your Judge?
- Because - When It Seems That:
 - The Threat Of Doom Is Great:
 - The Gathering Of The Lord:
 - Is Greater Still:
 - For All Those Who, By Faith In Him, Are Looking For & “Love His Appearing!” (2 Timothy 4:8)

Conclusion:

1. When It Was Almost Time For Christian To Leave:
 - The House Of The Interpreter:
 - He Was Asked - “Hast Thou Considered These Things?”
2. I Want To Ask You The Same Question Tonight!
 - Have You Considered These Things?
 - How Are You Dealing With:
 - The Threat Of The Devil?
 - How Are You Handling:
 - The Threats Of Danger:
 - All Around You?
 - How Will You Make It Through:
 - The Threat Of Despair? And:
 - How Will You Appear Before God With:
 - The Threat Of Doom?
 - The Answer To All Of These:
 - Begins In The Room:
 - With That Fireplace!
 - The Oil Of Christ’s Grace:
 - Must Be In The Fire Of Your Heart!
 - Only Then:
 - Will You Be Ready!
 - Only Then Can You:
 - “Watch & Be Sober!”
 - 3. Be Sure To Consider These Things:
 - In Your Own Mind - And:
 - Let Them “Prick Thee Forward In The Way Thou Must Go!”

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