

Interpreter's House (part 2)

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[0:00] Well, we're on that dangerous journey. We've come with Pilgrim to Interpreter's House, and the Interpreter is who? The Holy Spirit.

And He gives us lessons in this house, in the house of His Word, that are absolutely essential to any pilgrim that hopes to make it to the end of the journey.

And we saw last week that we need to ask to be taught. And so, as we read the Scriptures, we ask, Holy Spirit, what is the meaning of this?

And He is more than happy to illumine our eyes and show us wonderful things in His law. Now, we've seen three lessons so far.

There was, first of all, in the parlor, a picture of a grave man. Who was he? A minister of the Gospel. And we saw why it's important for a new convert to be able to distinguish a true minister of the Gospel from a hireling.

[1:04] He needs one that will be a safe guide of his soul all the way home. Then we went into the dusty parlor, and we saw two attempts at cleaning that parlor.

The first one was futile. The more it was swept, the more the dust filled the air. And that represented what? The law. Simply trying to clean up your life with the law.

But then along came a man with the Gospel water and sprinkled it and then swept the room clean. It is the blood of Christ that cleanses us from all sin, and there is no way to cleanse ourselves apart from Christ's work for us.

And so the dusty parlor. And then we went into the room with the two children, passion and patience, and they represented two kinds of people, the people of this world and the people of the world to come.

And one was patient to wait for their good things until the governor said so. The other demanded to have everything right now, but was soon without anything, for he wasted it all, and then he had nothing when the other was to have everything, and that for eternity.

[2:22] So those were the first three rooms in Interpreter's House. They're all lessons found in our Bible, and the Holy Spirit illuminates our minds to them.

The fourth lesson is really one of my favorite rooms in the house. It's the fire burning against a wall. And this is what Bunyan says.

Then I saw in my dream that the interpreter took Christian by the hand and led him into a place where was a fire burning against a wall, and one standing by it, always casting much water upon it to quench it.

Yet the fire did burn higher and hotter. Then said Christian, What means this? The interpreter answered, This fire is the work of grace that is wrought in the heart.

He that casts water upon it to extinguish and put it out is the devil. But in that thou seest the fire notwithstanding burn higher and hotter, thou shalt also see the reason of that.

[3:27] So he had him around to the back side of the wall, where he saw a man with a vessel of oil in his hand, of which he did also continually cast, but secretly, into the fire.

Then said Christian, What means this? The interpreter answered, This is Christ, who continually, with the oil of his grace, maintains the work already begun in the heart, by the means of which, notwithstanding what the devil can do, the souls of his people prove gracious still.

And in that thou sawest that the man stood behind the wall to maintain the fire, this is to teach thee that it is hard for the tempted to see how the work of grace is maintained in the soul.

This is the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, all the way to the end.

The fact that all true believers will continue in the way of holiness, all the way to the end of their life.

Now, it's not that they don't sin, it's not that they don't wander off this path, as Bunyan will teach us,

plainly in his allegory, but they continually repent and get back onto the path.

[4:47] They continually return to the way and keep going. And then we see that the devil does all that he can to quench the fire, the life of grace in our hearts.

He doesn't want us to reach heaven, and he does all he can to put the fire out. But in spite of all of his attempts to extinguish grace, the fire not only continues to burn, but it actually burns higher and hotter.

It burns better because of, not in spite of, the devil's work. That's a precious reality.

We'll unpack. Why is this? Why is it that the devil's attempts to extinguish the flame only cause it to burn higher and hotter?

in your heart, in the heart of a true Christian? Why are the devil's temptations servants to sanctification?

[5:52] Mike? Exactly, isn't it? It sends us running to Christ. We feel our weakness. We feel our need. And we go running to Christ, who is full of grace.

That's the man with the oil secretly pouring it in. And so he gives us more grace. Gives grace to the humble, to those who in their temptations run to him and say, help. Help me, Lord.

And in response, he pours in more and more grace. It's not because of any strength of our own commitment that the fire keeps burning hotter and brighter.

It's rather a mystery to ourselves. That's what Bunyan says. It's hard to see. And that's why he represents it as if here's the fire burning. And if you want to see the reason it keeps burning, you've got to come around back behind with me.

And I'll show you why it keeps burning. It's not apparently seen to the human eye. Why does it keep burning? Everything that we see, we would say, that fire's gone.

[6:54] It's out for good. And yet it keeps burning. Well, it's a mystery. And Satan too often seems to have his way with us. We stumble and we fall into temptation.

We're weak. And yet, folks, here you are. Week after week. You're here. And the fire is still burning in your soul.

Year after year. You're here. Why is that? How is it that all of Satan's temptations and all the troubles of life have not extinguished your faith?

Well, the Holy Spirit leads us behind the wall to our Savior. It's the secret supply of grace that's found in him. Amen.

Just as the head distributes life to all parts of the body, so it is with Christ. He's the head. And from him, all the body receives life.

[7:54] From the vine to every branch connected to him. There's this supply of sap. Jesus Christ is full of grace and from his fullness have all we received and grace upon grace upon grace.

It's like the waves of the sea that keep splashing upon our shore. So that Bunyan puts in a footnote, 2 Corinthians 12, 9. My grace is sufficient for you for my power is made perfect in weakness.

So there's your weakness, Christian. but that's when my power is made perfect. And that's why temptations are actually means for your growth in grace and the hotter and higher burning of grace in the heart.

So that's the only explanation why the fire of grace is not going out in this heart, in your heart.

Christ, though unseen, is ever faithful to maintain his life in our soul.

And that's the only reason we persevere in holiness to the end. It's because he preserves us by his grace. Turn to Philippians chapter 2 and see how Paul encourages the believers in Philippi with this precious truth.

[9:20] Philippians 2 and verse 13. And we'll read verse 12 for the context. Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. It's God who works in you. The reason you go on desiring to do God's good purpose, the reason you have the ability, the power to go on doing God's good purpose is because God is working in you.

Christ is pouring his grace into your heart. Remove his grace and we would stop desiring to do God's will. We would stop doing his will. And the picture reminds us that we're just as dependent upon the Lord today as we were the first day that we were converted.

I wonder if the Holy Spirit has taught that lesson to your heart, not just from the Bible, but in life and in your experience. Has the Spirit of God ever held you by the hand and said, John, Carl, whoever

you are, you need my grace today as much as you did the first day of your Christian life? Where we feel, we see, and we know in our heart that apart from his grace, we fall away today and we go back to the world, back to our own evil desires.

[11:02] The day he shuts off his supply of grace is the day the fire would go out. Now, do you have any reason to believe that he'll keep on pouring that oil of grace into your heart?

Do you have any assurances, Christian, that there will never be a day where the Son of God withdraws the oil of grace? Jim? His word.

Yeah, give me one. Give me one of his words that would, and I don't just say that to Jim, I'm telling all of you, let's remind ourselves, where is this interpreter's house teaching us this?

Where is the Bible pointing us to this reality? I'd say we're in Jeremiah, where he tells Jeremiah what I know the plans I have to do, to prosper and protect you. Okay.

A promise that he'll prosper and protect his people? Anything that would assure you that that's going to happen all the way to the end and not just for the first five miles?

[12:03] Mark? He began with the word of you and bring it to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. what room in interpreter's house would you find that in?

Philippians 1, 6, right? Right here, across the page. Isn't that a wonderful promise to know that if he's begun a work, he will continue it until the day of Christ Jesus.

He will never stop that work. Any other promises that would assure you that this grace will always be given? Jason? Which says? He who predestined you, I don't forget.

Okay, turn it up and give it to us. If it's a... He justified and glorified him. Okay, that whole chain of graces that begins in God predestining who he sets his love on and his plan is to see us conform to the image of his son and anyone that he predestines he also calls, he also justifies, he also glorifies.

There's no fallout along the way. And so if you've been called to Christ and you're trusting in Christ, you have the promise that this grace that called you to Christ is going to keep you all the way to glory. Good.

[13:16] Romans 8, 28 to 30. Who else? Dare. I will never leave you nor forsake you. Okay. I will never leave you nor forsake you.

Never. So, and then no one will snatch you out of my hand, out of my father's hand. any other promises?

Yes, Becky. John 17, 24, Father, I want you to be with me where I am and to see my glory before you and give me as you're loving the creation of the world.

Where's the comfort in that, Becky? I think the comfort is that when Jesus has something in prayer and especially his prayer that he's going to die for his people and God is praying and God is going to pray.

Hmm. Wonderful to think that the Lord Jesus is praying that about us. Father, I want her, I want him to be with me where I am. So, if Jesus is praying, there's safety.

[14:22] Yes, back here. Was it Steve? 13, 20, 21. Now, the God of peace that brought again from the dead here in the Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

Amen. So, he is working in you. He is equipping you. Doesn't rely upon our commitment, but rather his commitment to see us all the way home.

All right, Scott. Ephesians 1, 14. You are marking him with the seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is the deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's position.

Hmm. You like to buy a product with a guarantee on it? Here's the guarantee. You have the Holy Spirit, and he, in his ministry in your life now, is the guarantee of the full inheritance that's coming. You've been marked and sealed in him. Excellent. Well, the Bible is full of those kinds of promises, and that's the picture here for us in Bunyan's allegory.

[15:44] Why is it important for a Christian just starting out on the journey to be assured of this truth, this doctrine? Why is it critical for him?

Because he's going to run into a lot of problems. All right, and tell me what would happen if he didn't have this confidence? How would it affect him when he hits these problems?

Okay. He may think, well, I must have taken a wrong turn, I'm running into all kinds of problems, but it would discourage him, it would dishearten him.

What is it worth to know in the midst of your trials that Christ is not going to forsake you, but that he will meet you with his grace that is sufficient for you in that trial. That enables you to be a more than conqueror in the trial.

So a Christian is ill-armed who does not know that Christ is not going to abandon him, but is going to bring him safely home to heaven right through his temptations and trials.

[16:55] Jim? Well, and I think too of that passage in Hebrews, very rightly tells us, to consider him who will incur such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not know where he can lose heart.

And he's just told us in that passage, Hebrews 12, that he is the author and finisher of our faith. Yes, he finishes the good work that he started. So these things are meant to keep us from losing heart and giving up.

So Bunyan puts this lesson right up front for the Christian and so we become like the burning bush. Though we're burning, we're not consumed. Just keep on burning though the devil does his worst. Thomas Scott says, how important it is for the Christian to learn this lesson of a complete reliance upon the secret but powerful influence of divine grace to maintain and carry on the sanctifying work that has begun in the soul.

It slays our self-dependence and don't we struggle with that? To think that we can take a step on our own? No, this picture will remind us my only hope of taking another step is in you, Christ.

[18:10] It slays our pride in having come this far. When we look back, we say I've only come this far because there's been grace at every step given to me. It encourages us in our temptations to look to Christ.

If I know there's grace in Christ for me in my trial, then I'll look to him, I'll pray to him, and it gives us assurance and confidence as we carry on in the journey.

So Bunyan found in his own life, remember all the things the devil threw on his fire early on in his life to try to totally extinguish his interest in the gospel, and yet through them all the Lord Jesus kept the fire of faith from going out.

Well, let's be well armed with that reality. anything before we leave this room with the fire burning against the wall. All right. The next lesson takes place in a stately palace.

I saw also that the interpreter took him again by the hand and led him into a pleasant palace, where was built it a stately palace, a pleasant place, where was built a stately palace, beautiful to behold, at the sight of which Christian was greatly delighted.

[19:26] He saw also upon the top thereof certain persons walking who were clothed all in gold. Then said Christian, may we go in thither? The interpreter took him and led him up toward the door of the palace.

And behold, at the door stood a great company of men as desirous to go in, but they dared not. There also sat a man at a little distance from the door at a table side with a book and his ink horn before him to take the name of him that should enter therein.

He saw also that in the doorway stood many men in armor to keep it, being resolved to do to the men that would enter what hurt and mischief they could. Now was Christian somewhat in amaze.

At last, when every man started back for fear of the armed men, Christian saw a man of very stout countenance come up to the man that sat there to write, saying, Set down my name, sir.

The witch, when he had done, he saw the man draw his sword, put on a helmet upon his head, and rushed toward the door upon the armed men who laid upon him with deadly force.

[20:37] But the man, not at all discouraged, fell to cutting and hacking most fiercely. So after he had received and given many wounds to those that attempted to keep him out, he cut his way through them all and pressed forward into the palace, at which there was a pleasant voice heard from those that were within, even of those that walked upon the top of the palace saying, Come in, come in, eternal glory thou shalt win.

So he went in and was clothed with such garments as they. Then Christian smiled and said, I think verily I know the meaning of this.

And because he said that, we don't know what the meaning is. Because he didn't ask, and so it wasn't explained to him. Do you know the meaning of this? Christians may be starting to feel like he knows his way around in his Bible and doesn't need the help, perhaps, of the Holy Spirit for everything.

I know the meaning of this. The meaning is clear. Heaven is not to be had without a fight. That between you and heaven are many opponents.

Those who are resolved to do all that they can to work hurt and mischief for those who would enter. So, if that's the case, if the door is barred by these who are out to do mischief to any who come in, then you must fight to enter.

[22:11] That's the message. You must fight to enter. Acts 14:22. We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God. So this would get back to what was said earlier.

The reality of knowing that there are many hardships to be engaged in battle to be fought to enter the kingdom. This great company milling around the door are desiring to go in, but none of them dared to enter.

They're desiring yet fearful. They're lacking courage. Cheever, the commentary that we passed out, says, ah, what a multitude there are who have some faint desire after heaven and half a mind a thousand times to set out on the way there, but who never do it, who always shrink back because of their fears.

What are some of the fears that keep men from pursuing the kingdom of God? There's great company milling about. They see heaven in its glories and the people dressed in gold. They want to go, but they're scared. What scares people from setting out? I'm sorry?

[23:34] Getting hurt. Getting hurt. Who can hurt you? Okay, the world. The world will oppose you, and that sets many from setting out.

Chuck? Giving up the budget in the sin. All right, there's repentance involved, and we're afraid that if we follow Christ that we'll have no pleasure, we'll have nothing for us, and we're afraid that we'll lose our life when Jesus says it's when we lose it that we gain it and find it.

Dale, you had something. The fear of man. Persecution. What will men think? What will men do if I get dead in earnest about seeking the kingdom of God?

Okay? Fears. Social fears. Fear of losing their life the way that they want it. I want to control my life. I want to make sure that I get out of life what I have coming. And it's a fearful thing to lay down your life and to turn it over to the Lord Jesus.

[24:42] Jesus. And that keeps people from seeking Him. Afraid they won't be able to live the Christian life.

Of course you won't. Only God's Spirit will enable you, and He will do that. But there's one who had courage to enter, and in the footnote he's called the valiant man, the courageous man.

Courage is needed. In Matthew 11, 12, Jesus said that from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men are laying hold of it.

It's not for wimps. It's not for the fearful. In fact, you read in Revelation chapter 21 that scathing judgment upon the fearful, but the cowardly.

Revelation 21, 8. After we've seen those who believe in Christ inheriting the eternal kingdom, but the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, and the idolaters, and all liars, their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

[26:02] This is the second death. Hell is for not just the sexually immoral, for liars, it's for the cowardly. It's for those who are milling around the door wanting to go in, but are too scared and want to save their life.

Hell is reserved for them as well. It's the forceful men who lay hold of it. There's a violence that's needed, a courage that's needed. And if you don't value heaven highly enough that you're willing to suffer the loss of all things that you may win Christ, you'll never have the courage to battle with the world and the flesh and the devil who will do their utmost to keep you out.

We must value heaven above our very lives. Put on the full armor of God. Rely on God. He strapped on his sword.

He pulled out his sword, popped on his helmet, and he charged. That's the way we go day after day, seeking the kingdom of heaven. God. How would this help Christian early in his life?

Well, it would remind him there are battles to be fought, and when you hit them, Christian, don't get frustrated and think this must not be the right way. No, it's the right way. The Bible tells you over and over there will be persecutions.

[27:19] 1 Thessalonians chapter 3, verses 2 to 4, Paul says, We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow worker, in spreading the gospel of Christ to strengthen and encourage you in your faith so that no one would be unsettled by these trials.

You know quite well that we were destined for them. In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted, and it turned out that way as you well know.

So, important for the Christian to know there's persecution. There are those who would resist my entrance into heaven. Many, in Bunyan's day, remember it was persecuting days that Bunyan lived in.

In England. And many, Bunyan saw many who were fearful, failing to enter the kingdom. Afraid that if they followed God's word, that it would cost them their property.

There were huge fines levied, and all sorts of fears, people being killed, people being banished from the kingdom. And so, Bunyan writes in his allegory of the need for courage.

[28 : 36] And so, he sees those on the rooftop walking in gold. He holds the prize of heaven before him. It's worth whatever painful battles that are in the way to such glory.

God's word. And so, Christian's heart is so stirred by the courageous man that he's ready now to get on with the journey. And isn't that often the way it is, that we see courage in another and our hearts are encouraged.

Paul said that was true of his imprisonment, that many of the brethren in the Lord are more bold to speak the gospel because they see me being put into prison for preaching the gospel. And now, Christian is ready to get on with this journey at once, but interpreter has more to teach him. Thomas Scott says, the time spent in acquiring knowledge and acquiring sound judgment is not lost or wasted, though it may seem to retard a man's progress or to interfere with his more active service.

It's hard for some active people to call a time out on life and sit down and to quiet their hearts and to learn of God's spirit in the scriptures.

[29 : 45] They counted almost as wasted time. I could be doing this and doing that and not just earthly things, even spiritual ministries. And they have a hard time saying, no, I need to see that if I don't call a time out and if I don't draw aside and have the Holy Spirit teach me his word, that I'm not fit to go out and to minister to others and I'm not fit to begin the activities of my day.

Joshua was a busy man with a nation to lead, but he meditated on God's word and said that's where prosperity comes from, from meditating on God's word.

So your lessons learned in scripture and in the quiet place will fit you for the day's activity without which you're not ready for the spiritual warfare. So young Christians may think they've learned enough, but they need more.

And that brings us to the next room. Any questions on the palace and the truth being taught that we must fight to enter into heaven?

There's a battle. Yes, Mark? I think there's a big difference between the courage that relies on Christ for history and the flesh of the courage that relies on my own capacity and my own life.

[31 : 11] Amen. Amen. The one will wither up and not be sufficient, will it? That's right.

The courage comes even in drawing on that previous lesson to know that Christ will be there with his grace to help me through this battle. All right? So it's courage in Christ that Bunyan is pointing us to.

Well, now, said Christian, let me go hence. Nay, stay, said the interpreter, till I've showed thee a little more, and after that you shall go on your way. So he took him by the hand again and led him into a very dark room where there sat a man in an iron cage.

Now the man, to look on, seemed very sad. He sat with his eyes looking down to the ground, his hands folded together, and he sighed as if he would break his heart.

Then said Christian, what means this? At which the interpreter bid him talk with the man. Then said Christian to the man, what art thou? The man answered, I am what I was not once.

[32 : 20] I am what I was not once. What was thou once? The man said, I was once a fair and flourishing professor, both in mine own eyes and also in the eyes of others.

It's not talking about a professor in university, a professor of religion. He professed to know Christ. I was once a fair and flourishing professor, both in my own eyes and also in the eyes of others. I once was, as I thought, fair for the celestial city, and had then even joy at the thoughts that I should get thither. Well, what but art thou now?

Well, I am now a man of despair, and am shut up in it as in this iron cage. I cannot get out. Oh, now I cannot. But how camest thou into this condition?

Asked Christian. Oh, I left off to watch and be sober. I laid the reins upon the neck of my lust. I sinned against the light of the word and the goodness of God.

[33:22] I have grieved the spirit and he is gone. I tempted the devil and he has come. I have provoked God to anger and he has left me. I have so hardened my heart that I cannot repent.

Then said Christian to the interpreter, but is there no hopes for such a man as this? Ask him, said the interpreter. Then said Christian, is there no hope, but you must be kept in the iron cage of despair?

No, none at all. Why? The son of the blessed is very pitiful. Oh, I have crucified him to myself afresh.

I have despised his person. I have despised his righteousness. I have counted his blood an unholy thing. I have done despot to the spirit of grace.

Therefore, I have shut myself out of all the promises and there now remains to me nothing but threatenings, dreadful threatenings, fearful threatenings of certain judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour me as an adversary.

[34:28] For what did you bring yourself into this condition? Asked Christian. For the lusts, pleasures and profits of this world, in the enjoyment of which I did then promise myself much delight.

But now every one of those things also bite me and gnaw me like a burning worm. But canst thou not now repent and turn? No, God has denied me repentance.

His word gives me no encouragement to believe. Yea, himself has shut me up in this iron cage. Nor can all the men in the world let me out. Oh, eternity, eternity, how shall I grapple with the misery that I must meet with in eternity?

Then said the interpreter to Christian, let this man's misery be remembered by thee and be an everlasting caution to thee. Well, said Christian, this is fearful.

God help me to watch and be sober and to pray that I may shun the cause of this man's misery.

Have you found that there are not only the happy scenes in the Bible, but there are fearful scenes in the Bible?

[35:41] There are pages that cause us to shudder. The text that we just read in Revelation 21 about those that are in the lake of fire forever.

Here's a fearful scene painted in the scripture. It's despair. Despair is like an iron cage. Now, he wasn't always in this condition.

He once professed to be a Christian. He thought so himself and others thought so as well. But now he's in despair. He's abandoned by God, but he's serving his sin.

He's got a hardened heart. No repentance. And most of us could give the names of some people like this.

Maybe they were baptized with you many years ago. Maybe you grew up with them and went to Sunday school together, went to church together. And they're nowhere to be found. They're given over to despair.

[36:40] How did he get into such a hopeless condition? Well, he just quit watching over his soul. He talks of his own lust as if they were a wild stallion.

He said, I just laid the reins upon my lust. On the neck of my lust. I just laid the reins there. In other words, I wasn't going to control. I was going to let them lead me wherever they wanted to go. If my pride wanted to gallop over here, I let it.

If my lust for immorality wanted to gallop here, I let it. And I just gave myself over to my own evil desires.

I quit mortifying sin. I quit watching. And so sin mortified him. For what, he says? What was so valuable that you would sell your soul?

Well, he says, the lusts, pleasures, and profits of the world. And though they promised him pleasures then, now they buy it and gnaw him like a burning worm. And Bunyan is teaching us that the pleasures of sin that are for a season will torment us for eternity if we're outside of Christ.

[37:46] Those very sins that promised us such pleasure will be part of the torments of hell. And so Christian asks, is there not yet hope for this man? And the interpreter doesn't tell him he is truly without hope, but he rather directs him to the man and says, you ask him.

And the man feels as if there's no hope. Now, there are those who are truly hopeless. Romans chapter 1 talks about God giving people over to their own lusts. That there is a line by us unseen that once a man crosses over, God gives them over to their lusts.

Read Romans chapter 1 if you have any questions about that. And you see it there. That God gave them over. They lusted. Men lusted after other men.

And so God just gave them over. Men didn't want God in their lives. They didn't want to give God the glory for his creation. They didn't want to give thanks to him for his blessings. So God gave them over to their impurity and to their lusts.

So there are such people who are truly hopeless whom God does give over. But these are known to God alone. Many times the sinner will feel his case to be hopeless when in fact it isn't.

[39:01] That was the case with Bunyan himself as he was going through all these temptations. Remember how he thought that he had out sinned God's grace? He thought there was no day of grace left for him.

That was him. He was in the iron cage of despair. Was it true? Was he truly hopeless? No. But he felt he was. So I think there's a fine touch here when Bunyan says, well, you ask him.

He's not saying that the man is hopeless. He's telling us this man feels like he's hopeless. And indeed, there are those who are hopeless once God gives them over. But they are known to God alone.

So as long as there's breath, there's there's hope. And we pray, we witness, we call to Christ. But here's an important lesson for us.

It's a caution to us. He says, may you remember this so that it will be a caution to you on your way to heaven to keep watching and praying against sin, to remain alert to the dangers that are within and without.

[40:06] Don't take sin lightly when you're tempted to give in to your evil desires and to lay the reins on the neck of your lust. Remember this once flourishing, professing Christian now locked up in the iron cage of despair.

Now, Bunyan strikes the balance of the Bible. He's given us the promises of our eternal security in Christ. And you were well loaded with those promises and encouragements.

Christ secretly pouring in the oil. Wherever he started a true work of grace, he will continue it to the end. But there's also in the Bible warnings of destruction.

If we fail to keep watch, if we fail to pray, if we fail to mortify sin, there are warnings that tell us we are not going to enter into heaven.

So you have these two kinds of rooms in the Bible. And Bunyan takes us into both, that we might learn the lessons of both.

[41:08] Both are important for Christians to travel to heaven with. The very warnings, as Paul says, I beat my body, I buffet my body, lest I, after preaching to others, should become a dakamas, rejected as reprobate silver.

It's been proven in the fire to not be true. Paul had such great confidence. I know in whom I have believed. I'm sure, I'm confident that he's able to keep what I've committed unto him until that day. And yet he says, I must watch and pray. Because if I don't, I won't make it. So you have both warnings and promises. Warnings to persevere in grace to the end and promises that Christ is the one who will enable us to persevere.

You see, the warnings, no Christians should say, I am beyond the need of warnings. That is a dangerous, dangerous thing to say. Rather, the warnings that are given to you are part of that oil that is being poured into you to make you walk very carefully, to keep you from falling away. And so we find Bunyan bringing both kinds of truth to the baby Christian to fit him for the journey. The last room is a trembling dreamer.

[42:32] I don't have time to read it just to say he paints a picture of a man who's just woken up. And he was dreaming of the day of judgment. And he wasn't ready. And he wakes up just trembling.

And that, too, is a picture that sends Christian on his way, recognizing that this world isn't going to just carry on forever, but there is coming a day of judgment when it will no longer be a dream but reality.

And, O my Lord, prepare my soul for that great day. O wash me in thy precious blood and take my sins away. In Christ we're ready for that great day. Some people in his dream rejoiced when Christ was coming.

And other people trembled and ran to the rocks, calling on them to cover them. And that's the reality. You're in Christ. You have every reason to rejoice that the coming of the Lord draws near.

May the Lord give us to know the reality of his grace in our hearts, the longing for Christ to come. Important lessons for the journey.

[43 : 37] We're to journey to heaven with the expectation of Christ's coming and his final judgment when he will stand for us and plead his own righteousness. So, bon voyage.

Happy journey in another week as you go out into this world. Take the lessons that the scriptures give us. Amen.