

Simple, Sloth, Presumption and Hypocrisy

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[0:00] Well, we're in Pilgrim's Progress, and last week Christian left the cross full of joy, full of adoring love for his Savior.

And this week we find him laying hold of the very first opportunity that he has to bear witness to Christ. And I trust that we'll see the clear relationship between the two.

That when we're rejoicing in Calvary's salvation, we find it too good to keep to ourselves. And that's the healthy state that we need to maintain, to take longer looks at Calvary.

That was the challenge last week. Did you think about the cross every day this week? Did you meditate on what took place there, what the Lord Jesus was doing for you?

I found it helpful. I didn't make it all the way through the week, I must confess. I started out well. But I found it helpful to sing songs on the cross and to let those songs on the cross lead my thoughts into meditations on what Christ has done for me.

[1:11] Well, we come then to the next meeting of Christian and travelers along the way. I saw that in my dream that he went on thus, even until he came at the bottom, where he saw a little out of the way, three men fast asleep with fetters upon their heels.

The name of the one was simple, another sloth, and the third presumption. Christian then, seeing them lie in this case, went to them. If peradventure, he might awaken them and cried, You are like them that sleep on the top of a mast, for the dead sea is under you, a gulf that has no bottom. Awake, therefore, and come away. Be willing also, and I will help you off with your irons. He then told them, If he that goeth about like a roaring lion comes by, you will certainly become a prey to his teeth.

With that, they looked upon him and began to reply in this sort. Simple said, I see no danger. Sloth said, Yet a little more sleep.

And presumption said, Every tub must stand upon his own bottom. And so they lay down to sleep again, and Christian went on his way.

[2:39] Yet was he troubled to think that men in that danger should so little esteem the kindness of him that so freely offered to help them, both by the awakening of them, counseling of them, and proffering to help them off with their irons.

Well, what do these statements mean then? He finds these three men fast asleep. First, he says that they were a little out of the way. What does that tell us about these three men?

Alright, they were on the wide road. What was that? They had strayed from the path. They're unconverted. They're not on the road. Alright?

The road that... Those that enter through the gate and go on in the narrow way that leads to life. So they're a little out of the way. Secondly, he tells us they all have fetters, chains around their feet.

What does that tell us about them? Sin is still their master. Right. They're slaves of sin. Sin is still their master. And then all of them are sleeping. What does that mean?

[3:52] Unaware? Unalarmed? Again, it's an allegory. And these men went to work every day. And they were awake 16 hours a day.

It's not that they slept 24 hours. But it's saying that spiritually they were not watchful or alert, careless, apathetic. We're told in 1 Thessalonians 5, 6, So then let us not be like others who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.

They're not alert. They're not self-controlled. They're all resting securely. They're thinking they're just fine. And so they have no concern about their eternal souls.

Perhaps it's because they're only a little out of the way. They're not way far off in some very gross outward sins, perhaps.

They're just a little out of the way, Bunyan says. Perhaps that contributes to their deception to think, we're not that bad. Close enough to rest secure and think that they're saved.

[5:02] It's a picture then, these three men sleeping, is a picture of spiritual apathy. And don't we meet with many of these in the world today? That are basically good people, or so they think.

They're not murderers, robbers, adulterers, as the world sees these sins. Most people believe in God. They're not atheists. They have some religion.

They go to church once in a while. But whatever religion they have does more to make them apathetic than it does to awaken them. It soothes their consciences.

And so Christian goes and tries to awaken them to their great danger. And he draws upon the picture in Proverbs 23 and 34. You're like them that sleep on the top of a mast with a bottomless sea below you.

Isn't it a beautiful picture? There's the mast on the sea and the tossing sea. And there up on top is this man. He's a lookout. But he's fallen asleep.

[6:07] And so that means he's not holding on anymore. He's let go and he's just sleeping up there. Well, one toss of the ship could just launch him over into this bottomless sea.

If you're going to sleep, the top of a mast is not a good place to take a nap. That's the picture of our world. They're sleeping spiritually as a man who is just a breath away from hell.

Eternal hell. They're one going. And so he tells them that there's one going about like a roaring lion. And if he catches you like this, you will be certain prey to his teeth.

Turn with me to 1 Peter chapter 5 and verse 8. Clear allusion to this text by Bunyan. 1 Peter 5 and verse 8.

Again, if you're going to take a nap, it would not be best to do so where roaring lions are prowling around.

[7:11] And so he says, Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

However, if the devil's prowling for his prey, what should we be in verse 8? Be what? Self-controlled and alert.

And that's the very thing that these guys aren't. They're sleeping. And their sleeping is a sign of lack of self-control, lack of alertness. Now, their names present three things that feed their spiritual apathy.

Why are they so apathetic? Well, their names tell us. These three things will keep a man easy prey for the devil. First of all, simple. We know the word simpleton.

He's just a simpleton. He's lacking understanding. He doesn't have much experience. He doesn't have wise judgment and discernment.

[8:16] I think perhaps the closest synonym that I could think of was naive. He's naive. He's just not aware of things. And often, it's youth in the Bible that are referred to as simple.

And yes, they are inexperienced and often naive. Now, why is this such a dangerous state to be in, to be simple? Why is that a dangerous state?

An easy target. For what? For temptation. To be deceived. They're easily tricked. Because they're simple. They're naive.

And so if you tell them something, they'll believe you. And if the devil whispers a lie in their ear from some credible-looking man or woman, they believe it.

And with devils and people out to take advantage of people who are naive, it's never a safe condition to stay in. Turn to Proverbs. It's interesting to see that this book was written in part for just such characters.

[9:24] Proverbs chapter 1. Where he introduces the Proverbs to us and tells us who they're for. And in verse 4, he tells us that these Proverbs are for giving prudence to the simple.

Knowledge and discretion to the young. You see how simple and young often are found in parallel. The wisdom of God's Word would cure the simple.

And so wisdom calls out to the simple throughout this passage. Throughout this letter. This book, I should say. Verse 22.

How long will you simple ones love your simple ways? Now you see, it's one thing for the simple one to be simple. It's another thing for him to love his simple ways.

A person can be simple just because of lack of experience in youth. But if he loves his simple ways, he doesn't want to grow up. He doesn't want to mature. He doesn't want to put away childish things.

[10 : 32] He wants to remain childish. It's the 20-year-old still playing around in life as if he was a child. And never wanting to grow up. But loving his simple ways.

Chapter 19. I'm sorry. This is Psalm 19 and verse 7 that says of the law of God. That the statutes of the law are trustworthy.

Making wise the simple. Again, God's law, God's word would cure the simple. It would make him wise. It would educate him out of the class of simpleton into a wise man.

But that's just the problem. He doesn't want to be wise. He does nothing to gain wisdom and understanding and experience as the Proverbs are offering him.

He has no interest in studying God's law to grow in the knowledge of God, in the knowledge of himself, in the knowledge of the way of salvation. He's content to remain as he is.

[11 : 36] So when Christian warns him, he says, I see no danger. I'm fine. Proverbs 1.32 tells us, The waywardness of the simple will kill them.

And the complacency of fools will destroy them. Chapter 7. Gives us a picture of one of these simpletons. He's saying, I saw among the simple.

And I noticed among the young men, a youth who lacked judgment. And he didn't last long with the wayward wife and her seductive words. He saw no danger walking by her house at night.

And he soon found that her house is the highway to hell leading down to the chambers of death. All at once he followed her like an ox going to the slaughter, like a deer stepping into a noose till an arrow pierces his liver, like a bird darting into a snare, little knowing it will cost him his life.

He's naive. He doesn't realize that. And so he's caught and only wakes up when it's too late. So it is with this man simple that Christian passes.

[12 : 46] The next time pilgrims pass this way, they find simple in a different condition. His chains are no longer around his heels, but around his neck.

And so you can't stay simple for long. It's dangerous condition. Alexander White. Too many evil people and demons are about to mislead the simple, that they will not remain both simple and safe for long.

So that's the first man, simple. And again, if we have children at home, we have lessons to learn about the simple.

Sloth is the second. Now, sloth had a, Alexander White says, sloth had a far better head than simple had. But what of that when he made no better use of it?

And don't we know people who have knowledge, but they don't make use of it? This man's lazy. That's what sloth means.

[13 : 50] He answers Christian with, yet a little more sleep. Now, that's the theme song of the sluggard, isn't it? A little more sleep, a little more slumber. It's Proverbs 6, 9 through 11.

How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep? A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest. And poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.

Now, that's true of physical sloth. And that's what the Proverbs are talking about. But Bunyan is applying it spiritually and is saying there's also a spiritual sloth where people are too lazy to actually be a doer of the word.

A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more enjoyment of my sin, a little more just laying around like I am without the hard work of changing and of repenting and putting off and putting on. It's just laziness. It's a love of ease. And again, we find that all over today that many are looking for a soft form of Christianity, an easy form of Christianity that will not be too demanding on them.

[15 : 08] Watching and praying against sin, mortifying sin, putting sin to death. Oh, these things are too hard. Give me an easy religion.

And Alexander White says, We all have enemies in our own soul that never sleep, whatever we may do. There are not chains on their heels.

They never procrastinate. They never say to their master a little more slumber. So what are you doing to cast that enemy out? Have you any armor on?

Any weapons of offense and precision against that enemy? Any. So sloth loves his easy ways and is in great danger.

It's said of Alexander the Great that he used to leave his tent at midnight and go around the camp and spear to his post any sentinel found sleeping.

[16:04] It'd be the last time they would sleep on their watch if he found them. Sloth too, in Bunyan's allegory, was later found hanged to death.

Caught sleeping. There is an enemy on the prowl. So Johann Freystein says in that hymn that we sing, Rise, my soul, to watch and pray.

From thy sleep awaken. Be not by the evil day, unawares or taken. For the foe, well we know, oft his harvest reapeth, while the Christian sleepeth.

So let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. Simple, sloth, and now presumption. Presumption. Presumption promises himself that he's okay.

He presumes upon the grace of God. Oh, God will forgive my sin. God will overlook it. He presumes upon tomorrow. Oh, I know I should do this, but I'll do it tomorrow.

[17:12] Always manana, manana. He presumes upon his own safety, regardless of how he lives and toys with temptation. Regardless of how many lions are about.

No, I'm safe. And this keeps him from getting serious about his soul. From watching and praying. From seeking the Lord Jesus Christ. His words to Christian, when warned of his danger, Every tub must stand upon its own bottom.

In other words, This is none of your business. Each man should answer for himself. I'll answer for me. You will answer for you.

So mind your own business. Don't bother us. We're in no trouble at all. So all three of these go back to sleep. In carnal security. All unaware of their real danger.

And Christian went on his way, troubled for them. Remember what he said? He was troubled that men in such danger should so little esteem the kindness of someone wanting to awaken them.

[18:25] It's a good sign when we don't just walk away from people in the world who are apathetic toward the gospel and say, Well, I warned them. That's their problem.

No, we ought to walk away grieved in our hearts. Lord, this person doesn't have a clue the danger he's in.

She doesn't have an idea at all that she's sleeping on the mast and just one breath away from eternal destruction. Lord, wake them up. He's burdened.

He's witnessed out of the fullness of the joy of Calvary love. He's witnessed and he finds an absolute apathetic response. And so he's troubled.

He's troubled in heart. And had not Christian himself once been in this very category? Sleeping on the top of the mast. Living in the city of destruction without a care about it.

[19:25] That was all before. He was on his way to hell too. Destruction was coming on him. And he didn't have a care until he started to read. Read the book in his hand.

And then the burden came on his back. But he can remember what it's like to be a man unconcerned about his soul. And now he's burdened not only for his own soul, but for the souls of others who are still asleep.

Bunyan's footnote. There is no persuasion that will do if God openeth not the eyes. He sought to awaken them.

But it's not just a human battle. There's a spiritual battle. And as long as the eyes are closed, they won't see their danger. So there needs to be the inward persuasion of the Holy Spirit to come alongside of our own words.

Christian hasn't forgotten that man in the iron cage. Remember he saw him in Interpreter's house? How did you get into that condition of hopelessness? He asked. Well, I cease to watch and be sober.

[20:36] And those words are still ringing in Christian as he sees these not watching and not sober. So we have simple sloth and presumption.

Those are temptations to us as well. As long as there's a world, the flesh, and the devil, we must not sleep as do others, but be alert and self-controlled.

Any questions or discussion about these three men and what we've seen about them this morning? Is it not our world that people are sleeping?

Struck with the similarity of Bunyan's world and ours, though hundreds of years lie between. Well, let's read on then.

As he was troubled thereabout, he espied two men come tumbling over the wall on the left hand of the narrow way. And they made up pace to him, or they caught up with him.

[21 : 35] And the name of the one was Formalist, and the name of the other, Hypocrisy. So, as I said, they drew up unto him, who thus entered with them into discourse. Gentlemen, whence came you, and whither do you go?

Formalist and Hypocrisy said, well, we were born in the land of vainglory, and we are going for praise to Mount Zion. Formalist and Hypocrisy. These are not exactly the same, but they're very closely related.

They're often found in the same person. What's a formalist? A legalist? There's a hint in the very name that he bears. What's he concerned about?

Forms. Outward forms. The show. The externals of religion. The form of religion. The husk.

Baptism. The Lord's Supper.

Church attendance. Church membership. Giving of money. Things that are the outward forms of religion. But he denies its power.

[22 : 37] He knows nothing of the inward heart of true religion. What's a hypocrite? Well, I pretend to be something someone who is not. That's good. The very idea of hypocrite had the idea of a mask.

And when people put masks on, they want you to think that they're somebody other than who they are. And that was the original idea of the word. The stage actor who had the mask and was playing a part that was not himself.

And so the hypocrite is one who is trying to give an image of someone that he's really not inside.

And Jesus says of them, they draw near to God with their mouth and they honor him with their lips.

But all the while, their hearts, what they really are, is far from God. Isaiah 29. So words say one thing. Their hearts say another. Their outward form says one thing.

But inwardly, they're something else. Now they're both from the town of Vainglory. Well, what does that teach us about these? It says that they're seeking their own glory.

[23 : 44] That's what's behind their religion. Formalist thinks that God ought to be very pleased with him because of all these outward forms of religion that he does. And hypocrisy does all that he does in religion in order to be seen by men.

Matthew 6. That's why the Pharisee prays on the street corner that he might be seen and heard by men. That's why when he fasts, he dishevels his face and his clothes to make it clear to everyone else that, oh, he's fasting today.

How holy he is. And when he gives, he gives with great trumpet and fanfare that everyone might see how much he gives. He does what he does, Jesus says, in order to be seen by men.

And therefore, he's received all the reward he's going to get. But when you give, when you fast, when you pray, do it in secret as unto your Father in heaven who sees in secret.

And your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. So the hypocrite, as well as the formalist, do what they do to receive praise from men.

[24 : 50] And they're both going to Mount Zion, or so they claim. They're on their way to heaven. Formalists and hypocrisy are some of the most deceived people in the world.

They make a claim on heaven just as much as you and I would. Now, again, Bunyan himself was once formalist and hypocrisy. Remember when we studied his life before we started the journey?

After his wicked youth, he cleaned up his act. Remember that period in his life? And he started going to church and became very faithful in outward forms.

And he was very proud of that. In fact, he thought he pleased God more than all the other men in England. And so Bunyan himself was in these men's shoes.

He enjoyed a good reputation for religion throughout the town. And he was puffed up whenever he heard the people talk about, Yay, that John Bunyan, he's changed. And all of this when he says he had no knowledge of Christ at all.

[25 : 57] Didn't even know that there was such a thing as a Christ. So there are a lot of formalists and hypocrisies in our day as well. And especially as we live here in the middle of the Bible Belt, or as someone said, the buckle of the Bible Belt.

We have a lot of formalists and hypocrisies. Oh, I go to such and such a church. And they just hang their hat and their hope of heaven upon the outward forms.

Oh, I was baptized. I'm a communicant member of this church. And so on. Now, these are the kind of people that need to be evangelized as well.

It's not just the unchurched who never have ever heard the Bible. No, it's people that go to church. Like Bunyan did. If he had never been evangelized, he'd have gone to hell in church.

From his church pew. So Christian engages them in conversation. And notice how he deals so pointedly with them. And he asks a question and backs it up with Scripture.

[27 : 01] He doesn't mince words. He sets forth the truth plainly. And in this, he's like our Lord. Remember how he dealt with formalists and hypocrisy, hypocrites of his day? Who were they?

They were the Pharisees, right? They were the foremost, the hypocrites and formalists of his day. And you turn up Matthew 23 or any passage for long and you'll bump into how clearly he lays out the real condition compared to what they claim to be.

Self-deceived formalists are not awakened by a lullaby of smooth religious talk. It's truth plainly spoken in love under the power of the Spirit.

So listen how Bunyan or Christian deals with these formalists who tumbled over the wall into the way and say they're on their way to Mount Zion.

Why came you not in at the gate which standeth at the beginning of the way? Know you not that it is written that he that cometh not in by the door but climbeth up some other way the same as a thief and a robber?

[28 : 10] Or they said that to go to the gate for entrance was by all their countrymen counted too far around and that therefore their usual way was to make a shortcut of it and to climb over the wall as they had done.

Oh, Christian said, but will it not be counted a trespass against the Lord of the city whether we are bound thus to violate his revealed will? They told him that as for that he needeth not to trouble his head thereabout.

For what they did they had custom for and could produce if were needed testimony that would witness in that would witness for them for more than a thousand years.

But said Christian, will your practice stand a trial at law? They told him that custom, it being so long standing as about a thousand years, would doubtless now be admitted as a thing legal by an impartial judge.

And besides, said they, if we get into the way, what's it matter which way we get in? If we're in, we're in. Thou art but in the way who, as we perceive, came in at the gate, and we are also in the way that came tumbling over the wall.

[29 : 27] Where in now is thy condition better than ours? What does it mean that they came not in at the gate? What have we seen that the gate represented?

The Lord Jesus. Okay, the Lord Jesus. An entrance into Christ is conversion. The gate was conversion. And so these men are not converted.

They're found in the way. They're found doing some of the same things that real converted people are. But they didn't get in through conversion the way Christian did.

No true conversion to Christ. And why? Christian wants to know. Well, it's too far. It's too far. What do we learn about their religion?

Well, it's a comfortable religion, isn't it? And they're all for coming to church when it's convenient, for being baptized, and the outward duties, if it suits their fancy.

[30 : 24] But the inward demands of conversion to Christ, they have no stomach for that. That's too far to go. That's too hard. Humiliation for sin, self-examined by the word, self-examined by examination by the scriptures, the way of repentance that leaves you willing to cast your soul upon faith in Christ alone.

Well, that's too humbly. That's too far to go. To deny yourself, to take up your cross, and to follow him wherever he leads. You see, their flesh shrinks away from this, from anything that costs them any pain in religion.

So to enter through the gate of Christ means to renounce your own religious deeds, any goodness in yourself, and to cast yourself upon Christ. But that's too long of a way round for vain glory.

From vain glory to self-condemnation and trust in Christ alone. Too far to go. So beware of shortcuts in religion that bypass true conversion.

True conversion is an important doctrine to understand from the scriptures. There's a lot that flies by the name of conversion that is not entering through the gate. That simply is not denying ourselves.

[31:49] Taking up our cross and following Christ. That is not saving faith. All shortcuts lead to hell. And there's all sorts of them in our own day.

So that's the first answer that they gave to him. Why did you not come through the gate? It's too far. The second, well, the usual way with us who live in vain glory is to climb over the wall.

To avoid coming through Christ. The usual way. What does that tell us about their religion? It's the popular religion. It's the way that everybody goes from the town of vain glory.

The path is well beaten. Their relatives, their friends, their neighbors all come this way. And he argues a long-standing custom that is on their side. Tradition.

That's their cry. And that carries more weight with them than the word of God that Christian keeps pointing them back to. But what about what the Lord of the way has said?

[32:52] Oh, you need not trouble your head about that. Violating the Lord's will. Don't trouble yourself about that. Wall jumping has more than a thousand years to speak for itself.

And so the Roman Catholic Church puts the testimony of popes and cardinals and tradition on equal authority as the scriptures. That's what the Pharisees were doing.

Jesus calls them hypocrites in Matthew 15, 7. You thus nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition. You ignore this.

You'll chuck this for the sake of your tradition. And that's not only true of Roman Catholics. It's true in Protestant churches as well.

That people will cling to traditions. Unwritten traditions that have no backing in the scripture. So Jesus says of their worship. They worship me in vain.

[33:52] Their teachings are but rules taught by men. Matthew 15, 9. So it's a comfortable and a popular religion that suits them. Though Christian is all for scripture.

Therefore, other things. Example, custom, precedent, testimony, tradition. But then Christian says, Will your practice stand a trial at law?

What's he pointing to? The judgment. There's a trial coming. Will your religion stand?

Will your practice stand there? And they say, Something this old would doubtless be admitted as a thing legal by an impartial judge.

In other words, their thought is that God and his justice will be like, I think it ought to be. They're expecting that in the day of judgment, he will nod.

[34:53] Well, sure. Something this long that's gone on has got to be accepted. They have wrong ideas about God. Their thoughts of God are too human, as Luther said.

It's not the judge of the Bible. Besides, they say, if we get into the way, what's it matter how we get in? Whether through the gate as you or over the wall as we. If we're in, we're in. We're both in the way.

So how is your condition better than ours? Well, he tells them. Christian says, I walk by the rule of my master.

You walk by the rule, the rude working of your fancies. You are counted thieves already by the Lord of the way. Therefore, I doubt you will not be found true men at the end of the way. You come in by yourselves without his direction, and you shall go out by yourselves without his mercy.

To this they made him but little answer. Only they bid him look to himself. Then I saw that they went on every man in his way without much conference, one with another.

[35:59] Say that these two men told Christian that as to laws and ordinances, they doubted not, but that they should as conscientiously do them as he. Therefore said they, We see not wherein thou differest from us, but by that coat that is on thy back, which was, as we think, given thee by some of thy neighbors to hide the shame of thy nakedness.

Christian, by laws and ordinances, you will not be saved since you came not in by the door. And as for this coat that is on my back, it was given me by the Lord of the place whither I go.

And that, as you say, to cover my nakedness within. And I take it as a token of his kindness to me, for I had nothing but rags before.

And besides, thus I comfort myself as I go. Surely, think I, when I come to the gate of the city, the Lord thereof will know me for good, since I have his coat on my back, a coat he gave me freely in the day that he stripped me of my rags.

I have moreover a mark in my forehead, of which perhaps you have taken no notice, which one of my Lord's most intimate associates fixed there in the day that my burden fell off my shoulders.

[37:13] I will tell you moreover that I had then given me a roll sealed to comfort me by reading as I go on the way. I was also bid to give it in at the celestial gate in token of my certain going in after it.

All which things you lack, and lack them because you came not in at the gate. To these things they gave him no answer, only they looked upon each other and laughed.

Then I saw that they went on all, save that Christian kept before, who had no more talk but with himself, and that sometimes sighingly and sometimes comfortably.

Alas, he would be often reading in the roll that one of the shining ones gave him, by which he was refreshed. We're both in the way, so how is your condition better than ours?

Well, I'm following the word of God. And so in dealing with religious people, like formalists and hypocrisy, we do well to show them that their quarrel is not with us, but with God.

[38:19] And show them from the scriptures. You walk by what's comfortable, popular in tradition. I walk by the Bible. It's what God says. And one day the one who gave us these words will judge us by these words. How will it go with you then?

They can't answer him, and so they tell him to mind his own business. And they say then, besides, we're just as conscientious about keeping laws and ordinances as you.

So what's the difference? And he says, by laws and ordinances you will not be saved. Since you came not in by the door, he's saying a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ.

And they turn to ridicule him for his coat. He agrees. He had nothing but rags before. I'm nothing but a beggar wearing someone else's garments. That's a good trait of the Christian, isn't it?

To own what we are. It's a glory in Christ's righteousness. He takes great comfort in that righteousness of Christ. They have no such coat.

[39:18] And he's confident that in this coat, he will be received at the gate. Since he has the Lord's coat on him. Alive in him, my living head, and clothed in righteousness divine, bold I approach the eternal throne, and claim the crown through Christ my own.

They can't appreciate these things, the righteousness of Christ. These things are foreign to them. So they ridicule. They turn to ridicule and they smirk.

They look at each other and laugh. What about this guy? And so Christian walks alone, unable to hold fellowship with mere formalist, doesn't have the root of the matter, hypocrite, doesn't delight in Christ.

There's not enough commonality just in the outward forms to develop true fellowship. It's those who have the root of the matter in us that we find fellowship with.

And so he goes along talking with himself, sometimes sighingly and sometimes comfortably. What makes you sigh? It says a whole lot about us.

[40:35] What makes us sigh? Christian no doubt sighing about the state of formless and hypocrisy again, unable to convince them. Thinking of his three that he met sleeping along the way, he sighs.

But also he goes along other times comfortably. What gives you comfort? Is it the righteousness of Christ? The robe that's on you? Is it the promises of God?

The assurances of Scripture? Spurgeon has these comments about him going along, sometimes sighingly, sometimes comfortably, talking with himself.

Spurgeon says, I know that John Bunyan never saw me, but he has sketched my portrait most accurately, for that is just the style in which I talk to myself, sometimes sighingly and sometimes comfortably.

I look within, and then I talk sighingly. Then I look to Christ, and that enables me to talk comfortably. I look around and see all sorts of trials and troubles, and then I talk sighingly.

[41:40] Then I look up to my Father's love, and I talk comfortably. I look sometimes to some of the Lord's people who are not walking as they should, and then I talk sighingly.

Then I think of the Lord's eternal purpose to present them faultless before the presence of His glory, and then I talk comfortably. A man passed me in the street the other day, talking to himself so loudly that I thought he was speaking to me.

It is not always wise to do that. But still, as we go through the world, we might talk to worse people than ourselves. May I make a suggestion that I know some friends who are very fond of talking.

If they would not mind talking more to themselves, the bad reputations of their neighbors would not be so quite known so fast, and it would be quite as pleasant for themselves, I should think. Some

people do love gossip and scandal, but it would be better if they would do as David did and pour out their souls in talking to themselves.

To talk about divine things to your own soul and to hold communion with your own heart upon your bed is a wise and blessed exercise. Well, let's learn from that and plead with God to open the eyes of simple, sloth, presumption, formalist hypocrisy.

[42 : 58] We're dismissed.