

“The Pilgrims Progress”
The Wisdom Of This World
(Pages 6b-8)

Introduction:

1. Last Sunday - In Our Journey Through The Pilgrim’s Progress:
 - We Saw Christian:
 - And His - “Fair-Weather Friend” - Pliable:
 - Tumble Into:
 - The Dark & Dirty:
 - “Slough Of Despond!”
 - A Place:
 - Where The Conviction Of Sin:
 - Will Either:
 - **Repel** Someone:
 - **Away** From The Help They Need:
 - Like It Did:
 - For Pliable!
 - Or Else - It Will:
 - **Compel** Someone:
 - To **See** Their Need For Help:
 - Like It Did:
 - For Christian!
2. Well - When “Help” Finally Came:
 - In Bunyan’s Words:
 - “He Gave Him His Hand, And He Drew Him Out, And Set Him Upon Sound Ground, And Bid Him Go On His Way!”
 - So - When We Return To:
 - The Last Paragraph Of Pg. 6:
 - We Find Christian Again:
 - “On His Way!”
 - *Read Through Pg. 8:*
 - *“By That Hill You Must Go, And The First House You Come To Is His!”*
3. On This Part Of Christian’s Journey:
 - We Meet Up With:
 - A New Character - By The Name Of:
 - “Mr. Worldly-Wiseman!”
 - And - The First Description We Are Given About This Man:
 - Is That He Is A “Gentleman!”
 - And - That Must Have Made:
 - A Big Impression:
 - On Our Pilgrim!
 - Since - He Was Nothing Like Him!
 - After All - Christian:
 - Was Still Slumped Over:
 - Because Of The Burden:
 - Of His Sin!
 - And The Rags That Were His Clothes:
 - Were Much Worse Now:
 - Since They Were Still “Bedaubed” With The Muck & Mire Of The Slough!
 - He Must Have Been Quite The Sight:
 - To That “Gentleman!”
 - But - As Bunyan Tells Us - He Also Observed Christian’s”
 - “Sighs And Groans!”
4. So - Along Came:
 - That “Gentleman!”
 - Polished & Proper - And:
 - As We Will See:

- Perceptive & Very Persuasive!

- But - The First Clue:

- As To The True Nature:

- Of This Man - Is Given In:

- The First Paragraph We Read!

- When We Are Told That:

- "Their Hap Was To Meet Just As They Were Crossing The Way Of Each Other!"

- The Paths Of These Two Men:

- Crossed Each Other!

- It Was A Place Where:

- "Two Ways Met!"

- So - They Were Both Headed:

- In Very Different:

- And Distant - Directions!

5. Mr. Worldly-Wiseman:

- Represents What Paul Calls - In 1 Corinthians 3:19:

- "The Wisdom Of This World!"

- And - To Our Pilgrim:

- This Man Was Someone Who "Seemeth To Be Wise In This World!" (3:18)

- So - For Christian:

- And Even For Too Many Of Us Today:

- He Found That:

- There's A Great Appeal:

- In The Wisdom Of This World!

- A Great Appeal!

6. Because - In Christian's Sad Plight:

- Mr. Worldly-Wiseman Seemed To Offer:

- Better Things:

- Than What God Offered To Him!

- He First Seemed To Offer:

1. ***A Better Point To Christian!***

- When Christian Agreed To Hear His Counsel:

- Mr. Worldly-Wiseman Said:

- "I Would Advice Thee, Then, That Thou With All Speed Get Thyself Rid Of Thy Burden!"

- Now - This *Is* What Christian Wanted:

- All Along!

- But - When He First Met Up With:

- Evangelist - What Was His Advice?

- "Fly From The Wrath To Come!"

- If Anything - Evangelist's Advice:

- Would Have *Added* To His Burden!

- But - The Advice Of This Gentleman:

- Sounded So Much More Appealing!

- It Addressed Christian's "Felt Need!"

- But - That Burden & Feeling Of Guilt:

- Was Actually A Gift!

- It Was Placed There By God:

- To Reveal To Christian His Greatest Need!

- Not Just Relief:

- Which Is What The World:

- So Often Tries To Offer!

- But True Rescue:

- Which Can Only Come:

- Through Jesus Christ!

- So - Truly - It Was Evangelist:

- Who Made The Better Point - And:

- Gave The Better Advice:
 - To Christian!
- As George Cheever Once Wrote:
 - “Evangelist had directed Christian to Christ; he had not told him to get rid of his burden, but to go to Christ, and Christ would remove it in good time!”
- But - At This Point, Christian Was Ready To Try Anything:
 - To Get Relief From The Burden Of His Guilt!
 - And So - Mr. Worldly-Wiseman:
 - Also Seemed To Offer:

2. *A Better Path For Christian!*

- This Gentleman Seemed To Know:
 - Quite A Bit About This Path:
 - That Christian Was On!
 - Perhaps Because, At One Time:
 - He Too Had Started Down That Narrow Path!
- But - Like Pliable:
 - It Turned Out To Be More Difficult:
 - Than He Wanted It To Be!
 - So, He Too, Turned Out Of The Way!
 - He Didn't Go:
 - **All** The Way Back:
 - Like Pliable!
 - Because There Were Some Things He Liked:
 - About That Path!
 - Perhaps He Liked:
 - Some Of The Respectable:
 - People He Met! Or:
 - Some Of The Clean & Civil:
 - Places He Went!
- So - Instead Of Going **All** The Way Back:
 - To The City Of Destruction:
 - Which May Have Been More Like:
 - Sodom & Gomorrah!
 - He Found His Way To:
 - The Town Of “Carnal Policy!”
 - A Place That Was:
 - Far More Sophisticated And Civil!
- But - It Was Still:
 - On The Outside:
 - Of The Wicket-Gate!
- And So - To Follow The Path Christian Was On:
 - Was Far Too Dangerous & Inconvenient For Mr. Worldly-Wiseman!
 - He Described It As A Way:
 - Of “Wearisomeness, Painfulness, Hunger, Perils, Nakedness, Sword, Lions, Dragons, Darkness, And, In A Word, Death, And What Not!”
 - Its Almost As If He Was Quoting:
 - The Apostle Paul - About:
 - The Dangers He Faced In His Life & Service For Christ!
 - But - He Forgot The Most Important Part Of That Path - Didn't He!
 - Because - In Romans 8:35 - Paul Asks - “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” - And He Answers - 8:37-39 - “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. / For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, / Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!”
- Mr. Worldly-Wiseman Thought He Was Offering Christian:
 - A Better & A Safer Path!

- But - The Path That Leads Through The Love Of Christ:
 - Is Truly The Safest Path Of All!
- But - Christian Didn't Fully Realize That Yet!
 - So - His New Friend:
 - Seemed To Also Offer:

3. ***A Better Peace For Christian!***

- Even - A Quick & Easy Peace!
 - He Told Christian:
 - "The Remedy Is At Hand!"
- Isn't This What:
 - Anyone With Any Kind Of Sickness:
 - Loves To Hear!
 - "The Remedy Is At Hand!"
- I'm Sure This Is What:
 - That Woman Who Had The Issue Of Blood For 12 Years Thought:
 - In Mark 5 - When - 5:26 - She "Had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse!"
 - But - The Doctors Kept Telling Her:
 - "The Remedy Is At Hand!"
 - "The Remedy Is At Hand!"
 - Try This Medicine! Try This Essential Oil! Try This Therapy! Try This! Try This! Try This! Try This!
 - And - After Years Of Her Life:
 - Disappeared - As Quickly As:
 - Her Money - She:
 - "Was Nothing Bettered!"
- Jesus Tells Us Where True Peace Lies:
 - In John 14:27 - He Said:
 - "Peace *I* leave with you, *my* peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid!"
 - When That Woman With The Issue Of Blood:
 - Touched The Garment Of Jesus:
 - She Knew That:
 - Her "Remedy" Was Then "At Hand!"
 - So It Would Be For Christian!
 - And - So It Will Be:
 - For Anyone Who Seeks To Touch Jesus & Trust In Jesus:
 - As That Woman Did!
- But - Christian Was Not Quite Ready:
 - For That - So:
 - Mr. Worldly-Wiseman Also Seemed To Offer:

4. ***A Better Provision For Christian!***

- Even Inexpensive And Cheap!
 - He Told Christian About:
 - The Town Of "Morality!"
 - And How - "There Are Houses Now Stand Empty, One Of Which Thou Mayest Have At Reasonable Rates; Provision Is There Also Cheap And Good!"
- And That Was Appealing:
 - To Our Poor Pilgrim:
 - Who Was Also:
 - Tired & Lonely & Ragged!
 - But - Even Though At Times:
 - You May Get A True Bargain!
 - Most Of The Time:
 - The Old Adage Is True:
 - "You Get What You Pay For!"

- Because - When It Comes To Spiritual Things:
 - The Best Things:
 - Come At The:
 - Highest Cost!
 - Though Eternal Life:
 - Is A Free Gift:
 - To Those Who Believe:
 - In Christ!
 - Yet - Even That Freedom:
 - Was Not Free!
- Because - As Peter Tells Us:
 - In 1 Peter 1:18-19 - “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; / But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot!”
- There Is No Higher Cost:
 - That Could Have Been Paid:
 - For The Cleansing & Saving:
 - Of Christian’s Soul:
 - Than The Blood Of Christ!
- But To Turn Aside:
 - To A Place Where Rates:
 - Seemed More “Reasonable”:
 - Would Eventually Cost Him:
 - His Own Life Besides!
- But - Perhaps One Other Question:
 - Should Have Come To His Mind:
 - Before Christian Made Up His Mind:
 - To Take Mr. Worldly-Wiseman’s Advice!
 - Why Where There So Many Houses:
 - Standing “Empty” In That Village Of Morality?
 - Why Was The Supply There:
 - So Much Greater Than The Demand?
- The Provision Seemed So Much Better!
 - But If The Location Of That Village:
 - Was Built On Top Of An Old Toxic Landfill:
 - How Many Citizens Would Have Gotten Sick & Died - All Because:
 - The “Rates” Were “Reasonable!”
- But - At This Point:
 - Christian Was Still Blind To All Of This!
 - So - It All Seemed To Him:
 - To Be So Much Better:
 - Than The Path He Was On!
 - And So - Mr. Worldly-Wiseman:
 - Tried To Show Christian:
 - That His Way Offered:

5. *A Better Promise For Christian!*

- The Wisdom Of This World:
 - Wants You To Think:
 - That The “Here And Now” Is:
 - Far Better Than:
 - The “There And Later!”
- The Advice:
 - That Evangelist Gave To Christian:
 - Was Ridiculed By:
 - Mr. Worldly-Wiseman!
 - He Told Christian:
 - That His Book Caused Him To:

- “Run” – “Desperate Ventures, To Obtain They Know Not What!”
- But - His Advice:
 - Would Bring To Christian:
 - “Much Safety, Friendship, And Content!”
 - And - Even More:
 - It Would Reunite Him:
 - To His Beloved Family!
 - “Thou Mayest Send For Thy Wife And Children To Thee To This Village” – Of Morality!
- So - The Wisdom Of This Age:
 - Wants You To Think:
 - That What You Can See & Feel:
 - Is What Is Best!
 - But - What Does:
 - The Apostle Paul Remind Us:
 - As Christian Pilgrims?
 - 2 Corinthians 4:18 - “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. !”
- But - The “Here And Now” Is:
 - So Appealing & So Compelling - Isn’t It?
 - Well - It Was For Christian!
 - And So - As We Will Begin Reading Next Week:
 - “Christian Turned Out Of His Way!”

Conclusion:

1. Does The “Wisdom Of This World”:
 - Appeal To You:
 - In These Same Ways?
 - Does It Seem Like:
 - What The World Has To Offer You:
 - Is Better Than:
 - What God Has Offered You?
 - Perhaps:
 - A Better, Safer Path?
 - A Better, Easier Peace?
 - Better, Cheaper Provision?
 - And Even - A Better Promise?
 - Remember What Paul Tells Us:
 - In 1 Corinthians 3:19 - “For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness!”
2. The Wisdom Of This World:
 - Is Not Safer – Not Easier – And Certainly Not Cheaper:
 - In The End!
 - Even As Jesus Said In Matthew 16:26:
 - “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”
3. The Wisdom Of This World:
 - Is Not Better!

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- But - What Did He Really:
 - Think About Him?
- Mr. Worldly-Wiseman Lumped Him Together:
 - With “Other Weak Men” - Who:
 - Were Enamored With That Book!
 - And Considered Him A Simpleton:
 - Who Was “Meddling With Things Too High” For Someone Like Him!
 - He Also - Not So Subtly:
 - Called Him “Crazed In [His] Wits” Because Of His Burden!
- This Is What The “Wisdom Of This World” Really Thinks:
 - About God’s:
 - Ministers, Message, And Moving!
 - Its All A Bunch Of:
 - Foolishness!
 - They Will Say:
 - When Confronted By The Truth:
 - You Are A Fool!
 - A Fool:
 - To Believe What You Believe!
 - In A Book Filled With Fairy-Tales?
 - Creation? Sin? Flood? Jesus?
 - To Live Like You Live!
 - A Life Of Sacrifice!
 - Sundays? Weekends?
 - To Think As You Think!
 - That Your Reward Is In Heaven!
 - But What Does Our Book Say?
 - 1 Corinthians 1:25-29 - “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. / For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: / But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; / And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: / That no flesh should glory in his presence!”
- So - Do Not Let:
 - The “Wisdom Of This World” Deceive You!
 - Though What It Offers You:
 - Seems So Appealing!
 - Remember That It Is:
 - Antagonistic:
 - To The Wisdom Of God!
 - And That Is Why - We Also Need To See That:

3. ***There’s A Great Alarm:***

- From The Wisdom Of This World!
 - A Great Alarm!
 - What Are The Warning Signs:
 - Of This World’s Wisdom?
 - What Should Christian – As Well As We – Be Looking Out For?
 - Watch Out For:
 - The Comfort Of This World!
 - That Was All That Mr. Worldly-Wisemen:
 - Focused On With Christian!
 - Comfort!
 - A Comfortable Life!
 - With - “Much Safety, Friendship, And Content!”
 - To Live A “Normal” Life:

- Like Everyone Else!
- Live The American Dream!
 - Work For The Weekends!
 - Get A Home In The Suburbs!
 - Retire At The Villages!
- Wasn't This The Goal Of The Rich Man:
 - In Jesus' Parable - In Luke 12:19-20 - "I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry!" / But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"
- Remember:
 - 1 Corinthians 3:19 - "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God!"

Conclusion:

1. There's More That Can Be Said:
 - About The Dangers Of:
 - The Wisdom Of This World! Like:
 - The Compromise:
 - That It Demands!
 - Or Like:
 - The Civility:
 - That It Pretends!
 - With The Goal To Just "Live By Honest Neighbors, In Credit And Good Fashion!"
2. But - None Of These:
 - Worldly Virtues:
 - Will Get Rid Of A Single Smudge:
 - Of The Guilt A Person Has:
 - Because Of Their Sin!
 - Only One Thing Will!
 - And That Is What:
 - Mr. Worldly-Wiseman:
 - Would Consider Foolish!
 - And That Is - 1 Corinthians 1:24:
 - "Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God!"
 - 3. So - When:
 - The Path Of This World's Wisdom:
 - Crosses The Path Of God's Wisdom:
 - Which Way Will You Turn?
 - Which Way Will You Go?