

“The Pilgrims Progress”
Next Door To Heaven
(Pages 30-32a)

Introduction:

1. As We Get Back Into Our Series Through:
 - John Bunyan’s Christian Classic:
 - “The Pilgrims Progress” - We Left Christian:
 - In Good Hands!
 - Because He Was:
 - Enjoying Christian Fellowship:
 - In “The Palace Beautiful” - Which:
 - Was Just At The Top Of:
 - The “Hill Of Difficulty” - He:
 - Had Just Climbed!
2. Christian Was Told That:
 - The Palace:
 - Was Built There - For:
 - “For The Relief And Security Of Pilgrims!”
 - And So:
 - The “Palace Beautiful” Is:
 - A Beautiful Description:
 - Of The Local – And Baptist – Church:
 - In Its Ideal Form!
3. Well - When Christian First Arrived:
 - He Underwent A Total Of **Five** Interviews!
 - The First **Two** Interviews:
 - With Watchful & Discretion:
 - Were Necessary In Order To:
 - **Admit** Him Into The Fellowship Of The Family!
 - The Last **Three** Interviews:
 - With Piety, Prudence & Charity:
 - Were Necessary In Order To:
 - Help Him **Grow** As Part Of The Family!
4. That Was A Long Day For Christian!
 - But - It Wasn’t Quite Over!
 - Because - All Of That Was To Prepare Him For:
 - The Family Supper:
 - That We Will Read About Tonight:
 - Starting At The Top Of Page 30!
 - The Supper That The Lord Jesus Himself Initiated!
 - So - As Bunyan Writes:
 - *“Now I Saw In My Dream, That Thus They Sat Talking Together Until Supper Was Ready!”*
 - Read Through Page 32, Paragraph 8:
 - *“And Then He Went On His Way!”*
5. Last Week:
 - In The First Part:
 - Of Our Exploration Of “The Palace Beautiful”:
 - We Learned:
 - What The Christian Church:
 - Is **To Be!**
 - We Are To **Be** A Place Of:
 - Security!
 - Stirring!
 - Sanctification!
 - And - Sympathy!
 - Well Tonight:
 - We Will Discover More About:

- What The Christian Church:
 - Is **To Do!**
 - And We Will Do So:
 - By Looking More Closely At:
 - The **Five Days:**
 - That Christian Spends With His New Family:
 - The Church!
6. Each Day That Christian Spends:
 - In The Palace Beautiful:
 - Is A Day Well-Spent!
 - And I Think Bunyan Has Our Pilgrim:
 - Spending So Much Time Here:
 - Not Just Because Of What Comes Next In The Story:
 - But Simply Because This Is What The Church Is **To Do!**
 - The Church Is To Gather Together!
 - The Church Is To Spend Time With Each Other:
 - And - The Church Is To “Tarry One For Another!” (1 Corinthians 11:33)
 - And So - On:
1. **Day One:**
 - We Learn That The Church Meets Together:
 - To Help Each Other:
 - **Renew Our Fellowship!**
 - With The Lord & With Each Other!
 - At The End Of The First Day:
 - Christian & His New Family:
 - Sat Around A Table For Supper:
 - That Was “Furnished With Fat Things, And With Wine That Was Well Refined!”
 - This Is A Description:
 - Of The Lord’s Supper:
 - Which Is An Essential Part Of:
 - The Worship & Fellowship Of The Church!
 - In Acts 2:42 - When The Church Was First Established:
 - We Find The Essential Elements:
 - Of Their Gathering:
 - “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers!”
 - But - What Was The Purpose:
 - Of These Elements?
 - As Bunyan Points Out:
 - It Was So That:
 - “All Their Talk At The Table Was About The Lord Of The Hill!”
 - It Was All To Be About:
 - Jesus!
 - And So - As We Read - The Family Talked With Each Other:
 - About The Lord And:
 - His Cross!
 - His Compassion!
 - His Church!
 - Christian & The Members Of His New Family:
 - Just Couldn’t Get Over The Fact That:
 - As Bunyan Wrote In The Margin:
 - “Christ Makes Princes Of Beggars!”
 - And This Is What Our Church Is To Do!
 - Whenever We Gather:
 - We Need To Renew Our Fellowship:
 - With Each Other & With The Lord - So That:
 - We Can Experience More & More Of God’s Peace!

- 1 Thessalonians 5:13 - "Be At Peace Among Yourselves!"

- But Then - On:

2. **Day Two:**

- We Learn That The Church Meets Together:

- To Help Each Other:

- **Renew Our Faith!**

- In The Lord & His Word!

- On The Second Day Of Christian's Visit:

- He Was Brought Into The **Study** Of The Palace:

- So That He Might Learn More About:

- The "Lord Of The Hill!"

- In The Study:

- There Were All Kinds Of Books!

- There Were Books About:

- The Doctrines Of The Lord!

- In Which He Read About:

- "The Pedigree Of The Lord" & That He Was "The Son Of The Ancient Of Days!"

- There Were Books About:

- The Deeds Of The Lord!

- "The Acts That He Had Done!" - And:

- There Were Books About:

- The Disciples Of The Lord!

- And Their Service For Him:

- Both Ancient & Modern!

- Here - Bunyan Quotes A Portion Of:

- Hebrews 11:33-34 - "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, / Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens!"

- And The History Of Their Faith:

- Was Meant To Increase His Faith:

- And Our Faith!

- And So We See - That This Too:

- Is What Our Church Is To Do:

- When We Gather Together!

- Through The Preaching & Teaching Ministries:

- Of The Church:

- We Need To Renew Our Faith:

- In The Lord:

- So That Even More Stories Of Faith Might Be Added To These!

* And Then - On:

3. **Day Three:**

- We Learn That The Church Meets Together:

- To Help Each Other:

- **Renew Our Fortifications!**

- So That We Might Be Ready To:

- 1 Timothy 6:12 - "Fight The Good Fight Of Faith!"

- On The Third Day Of Christian's Visit:

- He Was Brought Into The **Armory** Of The Palace:

- So That He Might See:

- "All Manner Of Furniture Which Their Lord Had Provided For Pilgrims!"

- Christian First Sees:

- The Weapons Of Christian Warfare!

- Which Is A Summary Of Ephesians 6:10-18 - "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. / Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the

wiles of the devil. / For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. / Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. / Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; / And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; / Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. / And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: / Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints!”

- Christian Then Sees:

- The Wonders Of Christian Warfare!

- The Common Tools:

- Used By God’s Servants:

- Like Moses’ Rod & David’s Sling!

- These Tools Remind Us That:

- “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!” (1 Corinthians 1:27)

- But - Christian Was Also Shown:

- The Special Tool:

- That Will Be Used By The Lord:

- His Great Sword Which He Will Use To Slay The Man Of Sin!

- All Of This Is Used:

- To Show Christian & To Show Us That:

- We Are Not Yet:

- The “Church At Rest!”

- We Are Still:

- The “Church Militant!”

- And So - This Too:

- Is What Our Church Is To Do!

- When We Gather Together:

- We Need To Renew Our Fortification:

- By Equipping Each Other:

- With The Spiritual “Weapons Of Our Warfare!”

* Now - Those Were Three Very Full Days! But Then We Come To:

4. **Day Four:**

- Of Christian’s Visit To The Palace Beautiful!

- But - If You Noticed:

- There Wasn’t A Whole Lot:

- That Went On On Day Four!

- In Fact - Bunyan Devotes Only One Sentence To That Day!

- On Day Four:

- Christian Was Ready To Go!

- But - He Was Urged To Stay:

- Until The Next Day:

- So That - “If The Day Be Clear” - They Could “Show [Him] The Delectable Mountains!”

- This Tells Us That:

- Day Four Was **Not** A Clear Day!

- Perhaps It Was A Bit Drab & Dreary:

- Gray & Cloudy:

- And Not The Best Day:

- For Christian To Set Out On His Own!

- We Even Get A Hint:

- That Christian May Have Been A Bit Melancholy:

- Since Those Mountains:

- “Would Yet Further Add To His Comfort!”

- And - For This Reason - I Think We Can Learn Something More:
 - About When The Church Meets Together!
 - We Need To Help Each Other:
 - **Renew Our Focus!**
- You See - Not Every Day:
 - The Church Meets:
 - Is An Exceptional Day!
 - Sometimes There Are Days:
 - That Aren't Very Clear & Comforting For Us!
 - There Are Days:
 - Of Struggle:
 - When A Member Of Our Church Family:
 - Has Gone Home To Be With The Lord!
 - There Are Days:
 - Of Sorrow:
 - When A Member Of Our Church Family:
 - Has Wandered From The Fold!
- And So - This Too:
 - Is What Our Church Is To Do!
 - Even On Those Cloudy Days!
 - We Still Need To Gather Together:
 - And Renew Our Focus:
 - On Those Things That Are Clear To Us!
 - The Lord & His Love!

* And That Then Takes Us To Christian's Final Day At The Palace Beautiful!

5. Day Five:

- In Which We Learn That The Church Meets Together:
 - To Help Each Other:
 - **Renew Our Foresight!**
- It Seems Like:
 - Christian Might Have Been A Bit Down:
 - After All The Things He Heard & Saw:
 - As Well As - The Sweet Fellowship He Enjoyed:
 - With His New Family!
 - Perhaps He Wondered:
 - If He Would Ever Have The Same Character:
 - As Watchful & Discretion & Piety & Prudence & Charity!
- Well - This Is What Day 5 Was All About!
 - It Was To Encourage & Edify Christian:
 - By Giving Him A Vision Of:
 - The "Delectable Mountains!"
 - Now - Those Mountains:
 - Are Situated Just Outside Of The Celestial City!
 - This Means That:
 - Those Mountains Do Not Represent Heaven!
 - So - What Else Could They Represent?
 - Ken Puls - The Delectable Mountains:
 - "Represent The Church From The Vantage Point Of A More Mature Believer!"
- In Other Words:
 - The Members Of The Church:
 - At The Palace Beautiful:
 - Wanted To Encourage & Edify Christian:
 - To Stick With The Church!
 - Though There May Be:
 - Many Days Like Day 4:
 - Yet - The Church Is What God Had Given Him & All Christians:
 - To Prepare Us For Our Future Home!

- And This Too:
 - Is What Our Church Is To Do!
 - When We Gather Together:
 - We Need To Renew Our Foresight & Vision:
 - Of The Lord And His Church!

Conclusion:

1. And With That:
 - His New Family Took Him Back To The Armory:
 - So That He Might Prepare Himself:
 - For The Next Stage:
 - Of His Pilgrimage:
 - Which We Will See Next Sunday!
2. But - I Want To Finish Tonight:
 - By Noting What Christian Said:
 - To Watchful - As They Said Their Good-Byes!
 - He Said - "Well, Good Porter, The Lord Be With Thee, And Add To All Thy Blessings Much Increase, For The **Kindness** That Thou Hast Showed To Me!"
3. Above All Else:
 - This Is What Our Church:
 - Is To Both **Be & Do!**
 - We Must Be & Do:
 - "**Kindness!**"
4. So - As We Spend Our Days Together:
 - Renewing Our:
 - Fellowship!
 - Faith!
 - Fortification!
 - Focus! And:
 - Foresight!
 - May All That We Do:
 - Be Tempered With Kindness!
 - Ephesians 4:32 - "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you!"

Grace Baptist Church
Stephen Elmer, Pastor
 4245 North 200 West
 Greenfield, Indiana 46140
 317-326-2362
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com