

## **Lesson Fourteen**

### **THE INTERPRETER'S HOUSE #6 - The Valiant Man**

We are continuing our study of *Pilgrim's Progress* in the House of the Interpreter which is the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. We have covered four rooms in this house already and will briefly review them. First, there is the room with the picture on the wall which stood for the true minister of the gospel. The purpose of this was to enable the new convert to know who was a true minister and who was a false prophet. The second room we were taken into was the dusty parlor which stood for the relationship of the law and the gospel. We will see the harmony that is there, and how each one plays a role in bringing a sinner to a settled peace in Christ. Then we went into another room where there were two small children named Passion and Patience. It was here that we learned that these were two types of individuals we would encounter in the world. Patience is the man of the next world or the one who is patiently waiting for the world to come, and Passion is the man of this world, who would have everything now. Then last week in our study we went into another room where we saw a strange sight of a fire burning on the side of the wall and a man pouring water on that fire, and yet it did not go out. Then we were taken to the other side of the wall and found another individual pouring oil down at the base of the wall which stood for the sustaining ministry of the Holy Spirit of God. This is what we would point the new Christian to for his perseverance in the faith and dependance on the grace of God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Now we will enter into the fifth room where we have an entirely different view for us. I will read the portion in the book where Christian goes out on a veranda or upstairs porch and is enabled to view a golden palace. We will read the account for you from Bunyan's own words. Look in your books in the location of "the pleasant palace."

***I saw also that the Interpreter took him again by the hand, and led him into a pleasant place where was built a stately palace, beautiful to behold, at the sight of which Christian was greatly delighted; he saw also upon the top thereof certain persons walking, who were clothed all in gold.***

***Then said Christ, "May we go in thither?"***

***Then 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 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 names of them that should enter therein; he saw also that in the door-way stood many men in armour 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 a very stout countenance come up to the man that sat there to write, saying, "Set down my name, sir;" the which when he had done, he saw the man draw his sword, and put a helmet upon his head, and rush toward the door upon the armed men, who laid upon him with deadly force; 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 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.***

Here we have the account of the fifth room in the House of the Interpreter. It is a vision or a view of a very stately palace which, of course, stands for heaven. Those who are standing on the walls on top of the palace are the inhabitants of heaven, those who the Book of Hebrews describes as those who have already gone on before when it says, "***we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses,***" (Hebrews 12:1). At the door or the entrance of the palace (or heaven), there are some enemies or some guards that are there.

Out in front of the palace, there are many people, all desiring to go into the palace, but none of them want to go through these enemies. They don't want to encounter the opposition. They would like to go into the palace, but they don't want the opposition that is there. Bunyan is going to teach us what that means in just a moment. Then after he views it awhile, he sees a very stately man who with much determination goes up to the individual who is taking down the names at the entrance, and he says, "***Set down my name, sir.***" He desired to enter, and by doing so, he drew his sword, put on his helmet, and fights his

way through the enemies to get into the stately palace which is heaven. This particular section of the Interpreter's house teaches the new convert that there will be a cost to live a godly life. We have seen in our last room that a person shall enter heaven by the persevering grace of God. But lest that give the convert an idea that there is no more to it, and that it will be a bed of roses from here on out, Bunyan would have us to know that the Christian life is a life of struggle. It is a life of effort because there are many enemies in the way. Remember there were enemies in the way before Christian entered into the narrow gate. There were many errors that Satan put in Christian's mind, trying to keep him away from the knowledge of true salvation. Just as there were enemies there, there will be enemies all down the narrow way. So Christian has a life to live, and it is going to cost him.

First lets briefly examine this group of people who are standing outside desiring to go into the palace, but are holding back. Who are these people? These are those people who have carnal views of heaven. They would like to go to heaven, but their view of heaven is some place of comfort and release from trouble. They do not want tribulation, or the persecution and sacrifice that goes with living a godly life. They would have heaven, but they would have it without the cross. Jesus did not go into heaven apart from the cross, so none of his followers will do so. There is a cross to bear. So these are the individuals who would have heaven, but they are not willing to fight the good fight of faith. That is, they do not have a settled determination that heaven is so desirable that they would be willing to sacrifice in order to embrace Jesus Christ and His offer in the gospel. They will eventually apostatize because they do not have that settled determination. There are many individuals who will make a temporary profession of faith, but who go back into the world. They are like the seed which sprung up in the shallow ground (see Matthew 13:5-6). That is, it did not have a root in good soil and when persecution came, it withered away. These are the individuals, that because of an absence of divine grace in their hearts, they will profess Christianity, but they will end up in apostasy. They are described in the Bible as the man that began to build but was not able to finish. They would be desirous of heaven, but they are not willing to pay the price that goes with it.

**Believer, it will cost you three things to be a Christian – the world, the flesh, and the devil. That is what it is going to cost you.**

Now, let us maintain the understanding that salvation is altogether free and without price. Salvation is by grace through faith. It is a free grace. There is a freeness to it, but we must also learn that with that salvation by free grace, there is a price to pay. Believer, it will cost you something to be a Christian. It is going to cost you three things, and they are

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the world, the flesh, and the devil. That is what it is going to cost you. You can't have that and heaven too. Some would tell you that you can. They say, "all you have to do is raise your hand, vote for Jesus, and you can go on having the world, the flesh and the devil." However, that is not so. Those

whom God saves, He also gives a desire to live a godly life, and thereby they distinguish themselves from false professors. So there is a cost. Paul was willing to suffer the loss of all things that he might win Christ (see Philippians 3:8). We should be able to understand that there will be a combined opposition of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

I once heard an evangelist say that salvation, or believing in Jesus Christ, is the easiest thing in the world. What he meant by that is that he was trying to get his hearers to walk down an isle. Now that wasn't so hard just to walk down an isle and receive Christ, but he completely missed the gospel. Listen carefully, and if you can't remember this, it might be good to jot it down somewhere. Salvation is simple, but it is not easy. I hope you understand the distinction. Salvation is simple, when you ask, "What must I do to be saved, Pastor Gables?" **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."** (Acts 16:31). Now that is simple, but some make it so difficult when they confuse the simpleness of salvation with how easy it is. Salvation is simple, but it is not easy, because there are enemies in the way. There are the world, the flesh, and the devil which stand in the way as enemies to keep you from believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a great struggle that goes on in coming to Jesus Christ by faith. Yes, what must I do to enter in the stately palace? **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,"** but there are enemies there to keep you from doing that. Thereby it is not an easy thing. There must be a willingness to fight the good fight of faith. I hope you see that. Salvation is by God's free grace.

Now let's look as we see that Christian is amazed because there are some people wanting to go in the palace, but they don't want anything to do with the difficulties with those who are standing and guarding them from entering into the stately palace.

Then we read:

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

In other words, the brave man said, "Record my name, because I have determined that heaven is going to be my goal, and whatever the cost it is going to take, it is worth the sacrifice that I gain the glories of heaven where my Savior is." So, upon doing that, the man drew his sword and then put a helmet on his head. Let's go in our Bibles to the sixth chapter of the Book of Ephesians.

Here we will have some words of wisdom that every Christian needs to know and to be enlightened to this. That is, the Christian life is a Godly life, and there are going to be enemies to a godly life. Who are those enemies? The world and all it has to offer, the flesh, which is the sin that dwells within us, and the devil. Those three enemies are going to oppose a godly life in Christ Jesus. Therefore, while a person may be at peace with God, he will be at warfare with these enemies. When we come to Christ in true conversion, we are now at peace with God. ***"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*** (Romans 5:1) That is settled. The sin debt is dealt with. Rather than being an enemy of God, we are now at peace with God. But upon obtaining peace with God, at the same time there begins a struggle or a warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil that we never knew existed until we were converted. This is what Paul would set forth in the Book of Ephesians, chapter 6 beginning in verse 10. He says these words:

***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.***

Here are our enemies-- the unseen world. Again, What must we do to be saved? ***"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."*** (Acts 16:31). This is simple faith and trust in the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Now that is simple, but it is not easy, because

there are enemies that we are fighting against, and we must put on the whole armor of God to war against these enemies. Continuing in Ephesians:

***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.***

Here is where Paul bases this teaching that Bunyan sets forth in our picture. That is, take the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. Put on the helmet of salvation. Be grounded in and trusting the grace of God, not in your natural ability, but in God's ability to enable you to lay hold by faith in Jesus Christ. Put on that armor because there is going to

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be a warfare, and that warfare is going to continue until your glorification. When we are justified by faith, we are entered into the gate of conversion, but we are not yet glorified or perfected. We have enemies outside of us, the world and the devil. We have enemies within us, the remaining sins of our flesh, and in order to overcome

these and be an over comer, we must put on the whole armor of God. Now it is true that all of God's people shall overcome. John tells us ***"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world."*** (I John 5:4). Every believer overcomes the world. Yet at the same time, with that there is a teaching of perseverance. In this overcoming, the grace of God is what enables the saint of God to overcome. It is not a passive thing. I think there is a great danger that has to be avoided in those who teach salvation by grace, and that is this. Salvation by grace does not make man passive in his efforts. Just because God saves a person by His grace, does not remove human effort or human responsibility. The same Bible that teaches that all the saints shall be saved, and that none of them shall be lost, also teaches that ***"he that endureth to the end shall be saved."*** (Matthew 10:22). Who is it that endures to the end? It is the person who lays hold in trust and faith in the grace of God

to enable him to overcome. So there is no contradiction in this. The same person who is saved by grace will persevere unto the end by grace. But at the same time this is being set forth, in order to do this, there are means that God has appointed to achieve this. It is, **"Put on the whole armour of God."**

It is interesting that you read in Ephesians chapter 6 that there are parts of armor to cover all of the body except for one part of the body. Does anyone happen to know what that part is? There is no armor for the back. What does that mean? There is no turning back. You have got to burn all the bridges behind you if you are going to go to heaven. You have to determine that heaven is going to be the chief goal, the chief end of your life, and therefore when you set out, you recognize that **"No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."** Those are the words of Jesus in Luke 9:62. The same Jesus who taught that all of His sheep shall enter into heaven, said

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anyone who professes that they are going to heaven and then go back into the world, they are not fit for the kingdom of heaven. There is a perseverance and human effort in the things of God, but that effort is not

trusting in its own natural ability. It is an effort that is looking to the grace of God to enable it to live by faith. A man is not only justified by faith, but he is sanctified by faith, and he will be glorified by faith. So faith is the instrument, and while we are justified having our sins pardoned once and for all, then we seek our daily cleansing which is sanctification. That sanctification comes from the grace of God also, through faith and trust in Jesus Christ. So there is a battle to fight. Fight the good fight of faith. I want to read to you some words by Bunyan in his book on *The Greatness of the Soul*. He rewords the teachings of Christ about the souls who would follow Jesus. Christ said:

For following of me is not like following of some other masters. The wind sits always on my face, and the foaming rage of the sea of this world, and the proud and lofty waves thereof, do continually beat upon the sides of the bark or ship that myself, my cause, and my followers are in; he therefore that will not run hazards, and that is afraid to venture a drowning, let him not set foot into this vessel. So whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, he cannot be my disciple.

Jesus is saying, "Sit down and count the cost. I am going to give you grace. All who comes to me I will in no wise cast out, and I will keep you secure. But before you come to me, I want you to sit down and count the cost, because it is going to cost you something. It may cost you friends, it may cost you wealth, it may cost you this world, and it is going to cost you the world, the flesh and the devil."

You see, Jesus didn't pull any wool over peoples' eyes. He didn't get them to sign on the dotted line whereby they bought a vacuum cleaner, and then later He reads the fine print to them when He gets them into the membership of the church. No. He reads the whole thing to His would-be followers. "If you are going to follow Me, I want you to know that the Son of Man doesn't even have a place to lay His head. He said, ***"foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."*** (Matthew 8:20). He was merely telling His would-be followers, "I have nothing that I can offer you in the material realm, except spiritual salvation." Now how many would want to follow a person like that? Lets compare this with following Caesar. Look what you could gain from following Caesar. What about Alexander the Great? If you become one of Alexander's followers when he conquers countries, you will get a lot of wealth, maybe receive acres and acres of land. But what did Jesus have to offer? He said, "My followers, I can't promise you a thing except there is going to be a cross. All of you that want spiritual peace and joy within, and you are willing to pay the price for that to trust in My grace that I will sustain you, come on and follow me. But if you are not willing to deny mother, father, brother and sister, etc. you cannot be my disciple." So Jesus demanded total allegiance to His person, and to His Lordship.

So what is He saying to us? What is this setting forth for us? He is saying that it is going to cost something to be a Christian, and that salvation by God's free grace does not remove the struggle. In fact, the struggle just really begins. The difference is that we are not struggling against God. We are struggling against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Before we were converted we were fighting against God, His laws and commands. Now then our enemies come from another source. We have made peace with God, but now there are enemies in the way. I think this wonderfully balances out the teaching of salvation by free grace, and at the same time it does not remove human responsibility to carry out the duties and commands of Christ. It does not point one to himself, but it points one to Jesus Christ



and His free grace.

There is another text I would like for us to look at in Matthew chapter 11. This is a very significant text of Scripture. In my entire ministry, I have only heard one message on this text of Scripture that is brought out by the modern ministers of today. I want you to look at it. Maybe some of you old timers may have heard this preached on years ago, but there is a reason why this text of Scripture isn't preached on today. Look at Matthew 11:12 - ***"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."*** Did you know that was in the Bible? That is a strange passage of scripture to our modern ears. Notice that this text says the ***"kingdom of heaven suffers violence."*** There are enemies that are opposed to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. His kingdom is a kingdom of righteousness and godliness, but the world, the flesh and the devil are opposed to that kingdom. They are resolved and set against it. This kingdom shall not overthrow Christ's kingdom. That is what the sinner's rub is when Jesus comes to him in the gospel. The sinner has a kingdom, but it is a sinful kingdom and he is violently opposed to the kingdom of Jesus Christ because it means that he must repent, lay down his arms, turn over his kingdom unto another, and begin worshiping another King instead of himself. The kingdom of heaven suffers violence because there are enemies who are opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ. But at the same time, notice that the violent take it by force in order to enter into this kingdom. We must resolve that we will have that kingdom above all things. The kingdom of heaven has enemies who are opposed to it, but anyone who would enter into that kingdom, must desire it above all other kingdoms, and he must become violent about it by saying, "I am determined heaven is what I shall have." That is what the Scripture means when it says "he shall take it by force."

As I mentioned just a second ago, I have heard only one message on that text in the last thirteen years. Do you know why this text isn't preached on today? It is because in the way the modern gospel is presented, heaven is just something you can just trip right into, just as easy as falling off a log. However, my friend, in order to go to heaven, there must be a determination to have Jesus Christ. It is not like all of these others here in this vision who were looking, wishing and saying, "Oh, I would like to go there!" It is like the individual who says, "I shall have heaven regardless of the cost." Jesus has set forth the cost. Salvation is by "free" grace, but it is going to cost you something.

I remember an old colored preacher who preached salvation by free grace. He took up an offering one night. One of his members didn't want to give anything in the offering, (It must have been a Baptist Church), so he got up and objected, "Preacher, I thought you preached that salvation was free. Now you are taking up an offering." The preacher said,

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"Yes, it is sort of like the water in this town. The water is free, but it costs something to pipe it to you." That is sort of the way salvation is. It is by free grace, but there will be a cost when you lay hold on that free grace. There is going to be a struggle. The

enemies who are opposed to righteousness, the world, the flesh and the devil, are going to rise up and do all they can do to destroy you, and were it not for God's grace dwelling within, you would not have a chance of overcoming. That is why Bunyan would not point us to ourself, but he would point us to the One who is pouring the oil on the other side of the wall. The enemy is pouring water upon our faith, but Jesus Christ is pouring grace into our lives, and therefore, He enables us to persevere. So, again, there are enemies against heaven, and those who would go to heaven are going to have to encounter these enemies.

Now this is serious! Man, woman, boy and girl, have you resolved to say to Jesus Christ, "Sir, set my name down! I don't care what comes, I love you more than I love anything in this temporal life, and regardless of what it costs, I am going to serve You." Can you say with Joshua, **"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."** (Joshua 24:15) Have you made that determination, or have you perhaps been like the individual who is always wavering? One day you desire heaven, but the next day you gratify yourself by playing around with the devil and the things of this life. Then you go to church, and get a little excited about the things of God. Then you go back out in the world and are excited about the things in the world. You are never settled. You never have a settled principle that has a purpose you are shooting for. If you don't have a goal that you are shooting at, you are not going to hit it. When the Christian sets out, he must say, "I am going to have Jesus Christ to enjoy Him throughout all eternity. Set down my name, Sir." Have you made that determination? I hope you have.

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***heard from those that were within, even those that walked upon the top of the palace, saying, "Come in, come in; Eternal glory thou shalt win."***

What is that but saying the words of our Lord, ***"Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful,"*** (not slothful, not lazy, not indifferent, not hiding the talents in the ground), ***"thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."*** (Matthew 25:21). Can't you just begin to picture in your mind this scene as the battle is about to begin and the drums begin to roll. You see the enemies there in the land and the soldiers lined up between the two armies. The man goes into battle and says, "I am going to have Christ at all costs. Nothing shall keep me back." *"I am resolved no longer to linger charmed by the world's delight."<sup>1</sup> "I am pressing on the upward way, new heights I'm gaining every day."<sup>2</sup> Nothing shall hold me back. I will have Christ above all things. *"Onward Christian soldiers marching as to war."<sup>3</sup> What kind of war is it? Is it out here with physical swords killing the members of our human race? No, no, it is *"with the cross of Jesus going on before."* ***"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."*** (Ephesians 6:12). Do you have that determination, or are you like an old dead log floating down the stream never having any opposition? Is that the way you think you will make it to heaven? No, my friend, heaven is up, not down. Old dead fish will float down the stream but it takes a live one to go up stream. In other words, there will be a struggle, there will be an effort. It is not this attitude, "Well, there is nothing more for me to do, now." Oh, my friend, when you see the enemies that are all around us, it will humble you and drive you to Jesus Christ, whereby you are made to see that you must have Him! Is that a settled thing? You will never grow in grace until that is settled.**

I will close with this statement: I have never known a person to have true Biblical assurance of salvation and who was growing in grace that had not first of all settled this question we have talked about tonight. Do I want the world, or do I want Jesus Christ? I

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<sup>1</sup> [I Am Resolved](#) by Palmer Hartsough

<sup>2</sup> [Higher Ground](#) by Johnson Oatman, Jr.

<sup>3</sup> [Onward Christian Soldiers](#) by Sabine Baring-Gould

have never known a person to grow in the things of the Lord as long as he or she goes one way, and then bends the other way. Settle it tonight even now young person and say, "I don't care what comes into my life, I am going to be a Christian and I am going to live for Jesus Christ."

Let us pray:

Father, I pray that by Thy sustaining grace You might give us the determination that "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." I pray that even though no one goes with us, that we may go on and fight the good fight of faith. As we look around and see that the world seems to out-number us, and our friends would mock and make fun of us, that we would look unto You, the Author and Finisher of our faith. That You might enable us to fight the good fight of faith. That You might enable us to be over comers through the blood of Your Son. That You might give us the faith which is the victory that overcomes the world. Encourage us tonight in Thee. We pray that we may have all our idols of self confidence destroyed and thrown into the heap. That You might lift us up and encourage us tonight to trust in Thy sustaining grace which enables us to overcome all the temptations that would lie ahead of us even yet. Seal this truth to the minds of Your people, for we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.