What is an Apology?

- The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines an apology as a “justification, explanation, or excuse, of an incident or course of action.”
- The word comes from the Greek, *apologia*, which means *defense*.
- In Acts 22:1, the apostle Paul exhorts the people in Jerusalem to “hear my *defense* which I now offer to you.”
What is an Apology?

• To the Philippians Paul writes: “For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me” (1:7).

• Paul defends his work of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles.
Plato’s Apology

“I am more than seventy years of age, and appearing now for the first time in a court of law...And first, I have to reply to the older charges and to my first accusers, and then I will go on to the later ones.”

- Socrates
“Rulers of the Roman Empire, if, seated for the administration of justice on your lofty tribunal, under the gaze of every eye, and occupying there all but the highest position in the state, you may not openly inquire into and sift before the world the real truth in regard to the charges made against the Christians...”
“Bunyan felt it necessary in this poetic preface to explain how his book was written and why it was published. He did not want anyone to think he was being careless either in writing it or in publishing it.”
“LIKE SPARKS FROM THE COALS OF FIRE”
Origin of *Pilgrim’s Progress*

- Bunyan was working on another book, probably *The Strait Gate*, which meets all the requirements for being the one he references.
- When he was almost finished with the first one, he began writing a second (*The Pilgrim’s Progress*).
- He began to think about the journey to heaven in allegorical terms.
Origin of *Pilgrim’s Progress*

- He came up with twenty comparisons (metaphors); when he finished writing them all down, he thought of twenty more.
- Before he knew it, “the ideas were multiplying in my mind like sparks shooting up from hot coals.”
- So he finished the first book and began to work on the allegory.
Origin of *Pilgrim’s Progress*

- It never entered his mind that he would publish it for the world to see; he wrote it “to satisfy myself.”
- He spent his free time in jail working on the book.
- He called it “a diversion, my way of overcoming the kind of wrong thinking that leads me to be disobedient.”
Origin of *Pilgrim’s Progress*

- New ideas kept popping into his mind; “so I wrote and wrote until...well, it turned out to be a rather large volume.”
REACTIONS TO THE FINISHED WORK
A Fork in the Road

• **Positive:** “Let these words live!” “John, publish it.” “It might do good.”

• **Negative:** “Let these words die!” “Don’t publish it!” “It won’t do good.”

• **Bunyan’s response:** “Since you are all divided on the matter, I am going to go ahead and publish it.”
A Fork in the Road

• Bunyan decided to put both groups to the test to see who had offered the best advice.
• While he didn’t want to offend those who were against publishing it, he also didn’t want to rob those who were for it of joy.
• Everyone is not the same. “Some love the meat, while others love to pick at the bone.”
BUNYAN’S RATIONALE
Bunyan’s Defense of Allegory

- Why is it wrong?
- Dark and bright clouds bring forth crops – and the earth refuses to find fault with either.
- Have you not seen the various ways a fisherman attempts to catch fish?
- A hunter uses so many different ways to catch his game. Who can explain all his positions?
Who would not look in an uncommon place if he thinks he might find something of value? (e.g., a pearl in an oyster).

My book is not lacking in things that really matter just because the truths are clothed in bold metaphors.

“Some people have made the truth to sparkle and its rays to shine by using figurative language.”
Bunyan’s Defense of Allegory

• Bunyan claims his critics want straightforward Bible teaching and doctrine. “Metaphors, they say, overpower weaker believers and blind us from the truth.”

• Isn’t it true, Bunyan argues, that God’s laws were presented in the past through types, shadows, and metaphors? If so, we need to be careful that we are not “assaulting the highest Wisdom.”
Don’t be too quick to conclude that I am lacking in solid teaching. “We don’t despise parables, do we?” “My dark and cloudy words do contain the truth as cabinets house the gold.”

“The prophets used many metaphors to set forth the truth. And whoever reflects on Christ and his Apostles will clearly see that truths are presented in figures of speech to this very day.”
Bunyan’s Defense of Allegory

• “Truth, even when presented in allegorical language, informs the judgment, purifies the mind, pleases the understanding, and makes the will more submissive.”

• “Truth also fills the memory with the things that spring from our imagination and soothes our troubles.”
Biblical Examples

• “The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer...He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold” (Ps. 18:2).

• “He (Jesus) replied, ‘Go tell that fox...’” (Lk. 13:32).

• “My people have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water” (Jer. 2:13).
Biblical Examples

• “She (wisdom) is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her” (Prov. 3:18).

• “He is a bear lying in wait for me, a lion in hiding; he turned aside my steps and tore me to pieces; he has made me desolate; he bent his bow and set me as a target for his arrow” (Lam. 3:10-11).
• “Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother” (Gal. 4:24-26).
BUNYAN’S THREE EXPLANATIONS
First Explanation

• “I do not believe that I am forbidden to use the method I have chosen. I am not defiling the words, the ideas, or my readers...I am only trying to advance the Truth, whether I use this means or another.”
Second Explanation

• No one criticizes well-respected men for writing theological works using dialogue. So, let the Truth be free to impact you and me in whatever way pleases God. “For who knows better than the One who first taught us to plow, how to guide our minds and pens for his purposes. God even uses ordinary things to usher in the Divine.”
Third Explanation

- The Bible frequently uses figures of speech, where one thing is used to explain another. As long as I don’t smother the Truth, I am permitted to uses figures of speech. “In fact, by using allegory, I will make the Truth as bright as the light of day.”
THE BENEFIT OF THE PILGRIM’S PROGRESS
First Benefit

• “This book presents you with the story of a man who seeks the everlasting prize. It tells you from whence he came and where he is going; what he leaves undone, and what he does. It also shows you how he runs and runs until he comes to the gate of Glory.”
Second Benefit

• “It exposes those who set out to find life with great energy, all the while thinking they would attain the eternal crown. In my book you will discover the reason why they forfeit all their labor, and die like fools.”
Third Benefit

• If you will be ruled by its counsel, this book will make a traveler of you. It will direct you to the Holy Land. “It will even make the slothful, active; and the blind will see delightful things.”
CONCLUSION
“Would you like to turn aside from your sadness and depression? Would you like to live right, and stay as far away from foolish behavior as possible? Would you like to understand these riddles and their explanation, or will you continue to reject truth in favor of your own private thoughts? Do you love picking at a steak bone, getting as much meat as possible from it? Would you like to see the formation of a man in
Conclusion of Bunyan’s *Apology*

the clouds and listen to him speak to you? Would you like to be in a dream, and yet not sleep? Would you like to laugh and cry at the same time? If you knew you would not suffer any harm, would you like to lose yourself so you could find your true self again? Would you read this book for yourself, even if you don’t know what you are reading, and discover whether you are blessed or not?”
“If so, then come here and lay my book, your head, and your heart together.”