The Pilgrim’s Progress

Chapter 3: Evangelist and Goodwill
Review

At the end of Chapter 2, we found Christian turning off the narrow path to make his way to Mr. Legality’s house for help. When he got next to Mount Sinai, however, he was afraid it would fall on him. His burden seemed heavier, he broke out in a sweat, began to shake with fear, and was sorry that he had taken Mr. Worldly Wiseman’s counsel. We saw that no one may be justified by faith and works together.
“Either Christ must live and the Law perish, or the Law remains and Christ must perish. Christ and the Law cannot dwell side by side in the conscience. It is either grace or law. To muddle the two is to eliminate the Gospel of Christ entirely.”
At the beginning of Chapter 3, Evangelist approaches Christian “with a severe and dreadful countenance” after he turned aside to have his burden removed by Mr. Legality in the town of Morality. Christian recounts the conversation he had with Mr. Worldly Wiseman, admitted that he was seeking ease, confessed that he had left the narrow path, and was now in a position of not knowing what to do.
1. Evangelist **used the Word of God** to address Christian’s failure (“Stand still a minute so I can show you the words of God”).

2. He **spoke directly and specifically** to Christian about his sin (“You have begun to reject the counsel of the Most High and to draw back your foot from the way of peace. You risked losing your soul”).
3. Evangelist reminded Christian of the assurance of pardon and forgiveness which is found in Christ alone (“Every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men; stop doubting and believe”).

4. Evangelist reviewed Christian’s recent history with Mr. Worldly Wiseman so Christian could learn from this experience and never forget that “all who rely on observing the law are under a curse.”
“My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth, and one turns him back; let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins.”
Christian’s Response to Reproof

• Is there any hope for me?
• May I now go back and go up to the Wicket-gate?
• Will I not be abandoned for this and sent back ashamed?
• Will my sin be forgiven?
Evangelist’s Words of Restoration

• Your sin is very great.
• You committed two evils: (1) you have forsaken the way that is good; (2) you have walked on paths that are forbidden to you.
• HOWEVER, the man at the gate will receive you – he has good will for men.
• Take severe caution that you do not turn away again, lest you perish from the Way when his wrath is kindled.
Christian at the Gate

• Christian left Evangelist, hurried on his way, and arrived at the Wicket-gate.
• On a sign over the gate were written these words:

  Knock And The Door Will Be Opened To You
“Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks it shall be opened.”
What Does it Mean to Knock?

“We must not only ask, but knock; we must come to God’s door, must ask importunately; not only pray, but plead and wrestle with God; we must seek diligently; we must continue knocking; must persevere in prayer, and in the use of means; must endure to the end in the duty.”

- Matthew Henry
Goodwill’s Three Questions

• Who’s there?
• Where did you come from?
• What do you want?
**Goodwill in Scripture**

- “And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, **good will** (nominative reading) toward men’” (Luke 2:13-14, AV).

- “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men **with whom he is pleased** (genitive reading: **of good will**)” (NASV).
Goodwill in Scripture

• “At that time Jesus answered and said, ‘I praise Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and intelligent and didst reveal them to babes. Yes, Father, for this it was well-pleasing (good will) in Thy sight’” (Mt. 11:25-26).
Goodwill in Scripture

• “He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will (good will) (Eph. 1:5).

• “...for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure (good will)” (Phil. 2:13).
The Exchange at the Gate

- **Christian**: “Are you willing to let me in?”
- **Goodwill**: “I am willing with all of my heart.”
- And with that he opened the gate.
- Bunyan’s marginal note: “The Gate will be opened to broken-hearted sinners.”
- **Goodwill**: “An open door is set before you, and no man can shut it.”
“Knock, and it shall be opened; the door of mercy and grace shall no longer be shut against you as enemies and intruders, but opened to you as friends and children. It will be asked, who is at the door? If you be able to say, a friend, and have the ticket of promise ready to produce in the hand of faith, doubt not of admission. If the door be not opened at the first knock, continue instant in prayer; it is an affront to a friend to
knock at his door, and then go away; though he tarry, yet wait.”

- Matthew Henry
Door in Scripture

- “And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles” (Acts 14:27).
- “I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture” (John 10:9).
Door in Scripture

• “Strive to enter by the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door saying, ‘Lord, open up to us’! Then He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from’” (Luke 13:24-25).
Door in Scripture

• “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me” (Rev. 3:20).
“He opens. He opens a door of opportunity to his churches; he opens a door of utterance to his ministers; he opens a door of entrance, opens the heart, he opens a door of admission into the visible church, laying down the terms of communion; and he opens the door of admission into the church triumphant, according to the terms of salvation fixed by him. He shuts the door. When he pleases, he shuts the door of
opportunity and the door of utterance, and leaves obstinate sinners shut up in the hardness of their hearts; he shuts the door of church-fellowship against unbelievers and profane persons; and he shuts the door of heaven against the foolish virgins who have slept away their day of grace, and against the workers of iniquity, how vain and confident soever they may be.”
“You must keep on praying for light...And above all you must be asking which door is the true one; not which pleases you best by its paint and panelling. In plain language, the question should never be: ‘Do I like that kind of service?’ but ‘Are these doctrines true: Is holiness here? Does my conscience move me towards this? Is my reluctance to knock at this door due to my pride, or my mere taste, or my personal dislike of this particular door-keeper.’”
“St. Paul promised to those who love God not, as we should expect, that they will know Him, but that they will be known by Him (I Cor. 8:3). It is a strange promise. Does not God know all things at all times? But it is dreadfully re-echoed in another passage of the New Testament. There we are warned that it may happen to anyone of us to appear at last before the face of God and hear only the appalling words,
“I never knew you. Depart from Me.” In some sense, as dark to the intellect as it is unendurable to the feelings, we can be both banished from the presence of Him who is present everywhere and erased from the knowledge of Him who knows all. We can be left utterly and absolutely outside – repelled, exiled, estranged, finally and unspeakably ignored. On the other hand, we can be called in, welcomed,
received, acknowledged... Apparently, then, our lifelong nostalgia, our longing to be reunited with something in the universe from which we now feel cut off, to be on the inside of some door which we have always seen from the outside, is no mere neurotic fancy, but the truest index of our real situation. And to be at last summoned inside would be both glory and honour beyond all our merits and also the healing of that old ache.”
“I would be glad to talk all night to bona fide sinners. The inn of mercy never closes its doors upon such, neither weekdays nor Sunday.”