The Pilgrim’s Progress

Chapter 6: The Porter’s Lodge, Part 2
Introduction

Last week we followed Christian as he overcame his fear and made his way between the two chained lions (civil despotism and ecclesiastical tyranny) toward the House Beautiful (the church). Welcomed by the porter (the pastor), Christian revealed his integrity by faithfully recounting the story of losing his roll at the Arbor and having to walk and climb over the same ground three times.
Today we will begin our examination of Bunyan’s understanding of the place of the church in the life of a believer through the literary device of his allegory. As we have seen from the beginning, Bunyan used his imagination to write this classic while in prison in the city jail on the Bedford bridge during the winter of 1675-1676, and rooted his ideas in the people and places he had known since the days of his childhood.
Bunyan’s Imagination

“An artist’s imagination never composes the pictures it offers us *ex nihilo*; no, but the imagination of the greatest writers pushes the dissociation of borrowed elements farther and reassembles them with a freer fantasy. Their imagination is the free and lightsome flight of a bird whose wings have been bred on a thousand thoroughly assimilated substances. Whereas with Bunyan we often have the lumbering flight of a bird whose booty is still in its claws.”
Bunyan’s Imagination

“From his prison he endowed the ideal world of the Bible with the clear forms of the terrestrial universe, and recreated the concrete world, from which he was excluded, with a precision of line if possible greater than there was in fact. He took the real in his vigorous grasp and brought it into his dreams; and this energy of gesture and vision is the better part of his genius.”

-Henri Talon
Professor of English Literature at the University of Dijon
Houghton House
John Bunyan used his mental remembrance of the Houghton House as a representation of the Palace Beautiful.
Mary Sidney Herbert, the Dowager Countess of Pembroke, was a well-educated and well-connected member of the royal court. She built Houghton House on land granted to her by King James I, commissioning the lodge in 1615.

The architect was probably John Thorpe, a well-respected designer; Inigo Jones probably contributed some elements.
Houghton House

- The building was completed in 1621 when King James honored Mary with a visit to Houghton.
- The house is a mixture of Jacobean and Classical styles. The ground floors of two Italianate loggias survive.
- It commands magnificent views and is probably the inspiration for the ‘House Beautiful’ in John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress.*
Houghton House
Houghton House
Houghton House
Houghton House
Houghton House
View from Houghton House
View from Houghton House
Houghton House in Bunyan’s Day
“This house was built by the Lord of the Hill for the relief and security of pilgrims.”
“Now, after all this, can any be at a loss to understand the meaning of the House Beautiful, or that era in the life of the pilgrim at which Christian had arrived? We think everyone will see drawn in these symbols, with great beauty and delightfulfulness of coloring, the institution and ordinances of the visible church of Christ on earth; the fellowship and divinely blest communion, the mutual instruction and
edification, the happiness, hopes, promises, foretastes, enjoyments, growth in grace, and preparation for usefulness, peculiar to this sacred, heavenly kingdom, belonging to the body of Christ, and growing out of a right use of its precious privileges.”

- G.B. Cheever
The Marks of a Biblical Church

“So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:41-42).
Watchful, the Porter

• Watchful is a pastor at the House Beautiful (the church).

• The church universal must consist of particular churches (outposts) that are guided by their own pastors.

• Every Christian should be a member of one of the churches, except those who, for special reasons, cannot join a body of believers.
“I thought you might be interested to know that the Porters Lodge name still is used daily over here. All the colleges attached to Oxford and Cambridge have Porters Lodges. This is the gateway where you enter the particular college and many of those Porters are a law unto themselves; they decide whether they will let you into the college or not.”
Responsibilities of Pastors

• To glorify God.
• To love God above all before he can rightly serve God’s people.
• To labor and pray for the sanctification of the people under his charge.
• To “delight in its (the church’s) beauty, long for its happiness, seek for its good, and rejoice in its welfare” (Richard Baxter, 1615-1691).
Responsibilities of Pastors

• To set his heart on the life to come, above all the affairs of this present world.

• To delight in holiness, love the unity and purity of the church, and detest discord and division.

• To take great delight in public worship of God with His people.

• To seek to introduce unbelievers to Jesus Christ.
Responsibilities of Pastors

- To unfold for his people the great mystery of redemption.
- To teach his people as much as he can about the Word and the works of God.
- To offer care to every individual person who is in his flock.
- To seek the restoration of fallen Christians.
- To faithfully preach and teach the Word.
Responsibilities of Pastors

- To bring consolation and encouragement to those in time of need.
- To rightly administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper.
- To lead the church in prayer.
- To equip and prepare believers to use their own spiritual gifts.
- To make disciples and disciple-makers.
Discipleship

“At some time during the second year of my first pastorate, I was captivated by a text in Mark’s gospel (3:14) where it is recorded, ‘Jesus chose twelve and ordained them to be with him.’ The importance of this simple text to my future ministry was absolutely incalculable. Jesus was going to start a movement which would reach the whole world and last forever. He had three years in which to do it. And He deliberately
Discipleship

devoted Himself to twelve men. He did not neglect the multitudes, but He ‘discipled’ twelve men. It occurred to me that such a strategy could not be improved upon and it gave me direction for my ministry to the present moment.”

- Dr. Richard C. Halverson
  Chaplain, United States Senate (1981-1994)
The Kingdom Keys
“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Mt. 16:19).
The Four Women (Virtues)

• Discretion, Prudence, Piety, & Charity
• “Hence see the necessity of a Christian’s giving good evidences, that he is really possessed of those graces of piety, prudence, and charity or love, before he can enjoy the communion of saints. True faith in Jesus is never alone, but is always attended with a train of Christian graces. These are the evidences of he faith of God’s elect” (William Mason).
“None ought to be admitted into the church of Christ, but such as can give good evidence that they are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and are sincere pilgrims in the way of the heavenly city.”

- William Mason
Questions for Christian

• What is your name?
• Where have you come from?
• Where are you going?
• How did you become a Christian?
• What have you seen and experienced on your journey?
• What made you begin your journey in the first place?
Questions for Christian

• How did you come out of your country and travel this way?
• Did you come by Interpreter’s House?
• What else did you see along the way?
• You saw more than this, didn’t you?
• At times, do you think about your own country?
Questions for Christian

• Do you still think about the things you used to think about in the City of Destruction?
• Do you find that sometimes the sinful desires and temptations seem to be gone, but at other times are so strong that they perplex you?
• Can you remember the means by which you gain victory over these sinful desires?
Questions for Christian

• What is it that makes you so desirous of going to Mount Zion?

• Do you have a family?

• Why didn’t you bring them along with you?

• Did you pray to God that He would bless the counsel you gave to them?

• Did you tell them about your own sorrow and your fear of destruction?
Questions for Christian

• Why would your family not come?
• Could you have inhibited their coming with you by the way you lived your life, even though you used persuasive words?
1. Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in His sovereign mercy?

2. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?
3. Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the followers of Christ?

4. Do you promise to support the Church in its worship and work to the best of your ability?

5. Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church, and promise to study its purity and peace?
When the Church Causes Pain

• Grievously mistreated by other believers.
• Falsely accused or criticized.
• Abandoned in a time of need.
• Conflict with the leadership.
• Terribly misunderstood.
• Unbiblical counsel.
• Legalistic rather than offering grace.
The Lord’s Supper
Now I saw in my dream that they sat talking together until supper was ready. Then they sat down to eat. The table was full of delicious food and fine wine. All of their conversation at the table was about the Lord of the Hill, what He had done, why He did what He did, and why He had built the house. By what they said, I perceived that He had been a great Warrior and had fought with and slain him that had the
The Glory of Christ

power of death, but not without great danger to Himself. This made me love Him all the more...

They talked until late in the evening. After they prayed and committed themselves to the Lord for protection, they went to bed. Pilgrim stayed in a large chamber upstairs with a window that opened towards the rising of the sun. The name of the chamber was Peace. There he slept until morning.”
Peace
Paul wrote to the Romans: “Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1). This is peace with God which has been brought about through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The peace of God (Phil. 4:7) is a subjective experience based on a life of prayer.

Christian has both as he sleeps in Peace.
Bunyan’s Concluding Poem

Where am I now? Is this the love and care
Of Jesus, for the men that Pilgrims are?
Thus to provide! That I should be forgiven!
And dwell already the next door to Heaven.