When we last saw Christian and Faithful, they were reflecting on their experience with Talkative. In a masterful, brief summary, Bunyan speaks through Christian to remind Faithful that “your words and his lusts could not agree. He would rather leave you than reform his life.” Then Faithful expresses his own satisfaction about his conversation with Talkative and maintains hope that “he might think about it later on.”
A Wilderness Experience

As Christian and Faithful continued on their journey toward the Celestial City, they found themselves going through a wilderness.
A wilderness is a wild and uncultivated land, uninhabited, or inhabited only by wild animals, ‘a tract of solitude and savageness’ (Johnson), a place of danger and extreme, harsh conditions. Therefore, figuratively speaking, it is a place in which one wanders or loses one’s way; a place of loneliness, pressure, fear, worry, and testing which is totally unpleasant to the flesh.
How is your life like a wilderness?

“Move always into the book, not out of it, from the concept to the image...” (C.S. Lewis).
Psalm 63 is by David when he was in the desert of Judah.

“O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water.”
“But he brought his people out like a flock; he led them like sheep through the desert. He guided them safely, so they were unafraid; but the sea engulfed their enemies” (Ps. 78:52-53).

“To him who led his people through the desert, His love endures forever” (Ps. 136:16).
"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland. The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the desert and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, the people I formed for myself, that they may proclaim my praise."

- Isaiah 43:18-20
“God knows our need of the wilderness experience. He knows where and how to bring out that which is enduring. The soul has been idolatrous, rebellious; has forgotten God, and with a perfect self-will has said, ‘I will follow after my lovers.’ But she did not overtake them. And, when she was hopeless and forsaken, God said, ‘I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.”

- Lettie Cowman, Streams in the Desert
Evangelist...Again

• For the third time, Evangelist speaks into the lives of Christian and Faithful.

• “He met Christian at the beginning of the pilgrimage to instruct him in the way to the cross. He met him after Christian’s failure at Mt. Sinai to correct his errors. Now he meets the two pilgrim’s to prepare them for the trials they will endure at Vanity Fair” (Wiersbe).
Evangelist...Again

• Bunyan sees Evangelist not only as someone who seeks to present the gospel to unbelievers, but also as one who personally disciples believers in the words and ways of our Lord Jesus Christ.

• “Shepherd the flock of God among you, not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness” (I Peter 5:2).
“The love of God is characterized by a longing for the eternal welfare of every living soul. The surest way for this to be manifested is through faithful instruction in the whole counsel of God for every believer. This was fundamental to [Richard] Baxter’s understanding of the pastor. ‘The first and main point, which I submit to you is that it is an unquestionable duty of all ministers of the church to catechize and teach personally all who are submitted to their care.’

Richard Halverson
Chaplain, U.S. Senate
1981-1994
• **Encouragement:** “You have continued in the right way to this very day.

• **Promise:** “In due time you will reap, if you do not lose heart.”

• **Reward:** “The crown is before you, and it is an incorruptible one.”

• **Exhortation:** “Run that you may obtain it...Hold on to what you have.”
Revelation 3:11

“I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.”

- Jesus Christ
The Words of a Soul Friend

• **Warning:** “You are not yet out of the range of the devil.”

• **Exhortation:** “Let the kingdom always be before you and believe with all your heart in the things that are invisible.”

• **Warning:** “Let nothing that is on this side of the heavenly world get within you.”
• **Exhortation:** “Guard your hearts and beware of the lusts that lie within, for they are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.”

• **Promise:** “You have all power in heaven and earth on your side.”
Wisdom for the Journey

• “You know that in every city chains and afflictions wait for you.”
• “More trials will immediately follow.”
• “In that town (Vanity Fair) you will be faced with hardened enemies who will exert a lot of pressure on you and will ultimately kill you.”
• “Be faithful even unto death.”
• “Conduct yourselves like men...commit your souls to God.”
Two Are Better Than One

• You are in the wilderness, feeling alone, afraid, worried, and very thirsty. Who would you call on for help? Whose presence and counsel provide you with strength and encouragement?

• Are you investing in the lives of others so that they may be strengthened and encouraged by your presence and counsel when they are in the wilderness?