The Pilgrim's Progress

Chapter 4: Interpreter's House, Part 1
Last week we saw that Christian found his way to the Wicket-gate where he knocked until Goodwill responded and opened the door. Christian wondered if he would let him in. Goodwill responded, “I am willing with all my heart.” With that, Bunyan tells us, he opened the gate.
As Christian was stepping through the Wicket-gate, Goodwill grabbed him and pulled him. Beelzebub, he said, and those with him, shoot arrows at those who come up to the gate with the intent to kill them before they enter.
At the end of their conversation, Goodwill told Christian that, after he had gone some distance from the gate, he would come to Interpreter’s house and would be shown some excellent things.
Interpreter

• Interpreter is the Holy Spirit.
• Bunyan wrote the word *illumination* in the margin of his text.
• The Holy Spirit illumines Christian’s heart and mind and shows him some “excellent things” which he will need on his journey to the Celestial City.
“If therefore your whole body is full of light, with no dark part in it, it shall be wholly illumined, as when the lamp illumines you with its rays.” In other words, the meaning may be paraphrased as follows: “So, if your entire person is full of spiritual light [holiness, wisdom, spiritual rejoicing, etc.], it will be really illumined. In fact it will be as bright as when the lamp is shining upon you with undiminished brilliance” (Hendriksen).
1. A picture of a very serious person hanging on the wall
2. A very large parlor that was full of dust
3. Passion and Patience
4. A fire burning against a wall
5. A beautiful, stately palace
6. The man in the cage
7. The man who dreamed about the final judgment
You have been asked to write a résumé for the next pastor of your church. What would your standards and qualifications be?
“I am in conversation right now with a dozen or so men and women who are prepared to be pastors and who are waiting to be called by a congregation. And I am having the depressing experience of reading congregational descriptions of what these churches want in a pastor. With hardly an exception they don’t want pastors at all – they want
managers of their religious company. They want a pastor they can follow so they won’t have to bother with following Jesus anymore.”
The First Image: A Pastor

• His eyes were looking up to heaven.
• He had the best book in the world in his hands.
• The law of truth was written on his lips.
• The world was behind him.
• He stood as if he were pleading with men.
• A crown of gold hung over his head.
The Image: Shepherd & Sheep
The Oversight of the Flock

• We must labor for the conversion of the unconverted;
• We must give advice to inquirers who are under conviction of sin;
• We must study to build up those who are already partakers of divine grace;
• We must exercise a careful oversight of families;
The Oversight of the Flock

• We must be diligent in visiting the sick;
• We must be faithful in reproving and admonishing offenders;
• We must be careful in exercising Church discipline.

- Richard Baxter, The Reformed Pastor
The Manner of this Oversight

1. Purely for God, and the salvation of souls;
2. Diligently and laboriously;
3. Prudently and orderly;
4. Insisting chiefly on the greatest and most necessary things;
5. With plainness and simplicity;
6. With humility;
The Manner of this Oversight

7. With a mixture of severity and mildness;
8. With seriousness, earnestness and zeal;
9. With tender love to our people;
10. With patience;
11. With reverence;
12. With spirituality;
13. With earnest desires and expectations of success;
14. Under a deep sense of our own insufficiency, and of our dependence on Christ;

15. In unity with other ministers.

- Richard Baxter, The Reformed Pastor
The Character of a True Minister

“The first lesson here inculcated relates to the character of the true minister: for nothing can be more important to every one who inquires the way to heaven, than to be able to distinguish faithful pastors from hirelings, blind guides, and false teachers; who are Satan’s principle agents in deceiving mankind, and in preventing the stability, consistency, and fruitfulness of believers. This portrait and its key need no
The Character of a True Minister

explanation: but all, who sustain, or mean to assume, the sacred office, should seriously examine it, clause by clause, with the Scriptures from which it is deduced; inquiring impartially how far they resemble it, and praying earnestly for more exact conformity; and every one should be extremely careful not in intrust [sic] his soul to the guidance of those who are wholly unlike this emblematic representation. For
The Character of a True Minister

surely a slothful, frivolous, dissipated, licentious, ambitions, profane, or contentious man, in the garb of a minister, cannot safely be trusted as a guide in the way to heaven! He, who never studies, or studies anything in preference to the Bible, cannot be qualified to ‘unfold dark things to sinners!’ and he who is abundantly more careful about his income, ease, or consequence, than about the souls of his flock, cannot be
followed without the most evident danger and the most inexcusable folly!"

- Thomas Scott, D.D.
Sheep Need Shepherds

- Sheep can become **distressed and downcast** (John 9:36).
- The sheep **hear his voice** (John 10:3).
- The sheep **follow the shepherd** (John 10:4).
- The good shepherd **lays down his life** for the sheep (John 10:11).
- Pastor (shepherd)-teacher is a spiritual gift (Eph. 4:11)
Sheep Need Shepherds

- It is the duty of shepherds to feed their sheep (John 21:15-17). “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd (feed) the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 21:28).
Sheep Need Shepherds

• “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; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory” (I Peter 5:2-4).
“This office is the first in the Church, both for dignity and usefulness. The person who fills it has in Scripture different titles expressive of his various duties. As he has the oversight of the flock of Christ, he is termed bishop. As he feeds them with spiritual food, he is termed pastor. As he serves Christ in the Church, he is termed minister. As it is his duty to be grave and prudent and an example to the flock, and to
govern well in the house and kingdom of Christ, he is termed presbyter or elder. As he is sent to declare the will of God to sinners, and to beseech them to be reconciled to God through Christ, he is termed ambassador. As he bears the glad tidings of salvation to the ignorant and perishing, he is termed evangelist. As he stands to proclaim the Gospel, he is termed preacher. As he expounds the Word, and by sound
doctrine both exhorts and convinces the gainsayer (the one opposed to the teaching), he is termed teacher. As he dispenses the manifold grace of God, and the ordinances instituted by Christ, he is termed steward of the mysteries of God. These titles do not indicate different grades of office, but all describe one and the same officer.”
Wolves!
Wolves

• “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; therefore be shrewd as serpents, and innocent as doves” (Mt. 10:16; cf. Lk. 10:3).

• “...the wolf snatches them (the sheep), and scatters them” (John 10:12).

• “I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock” (Acts 21:29).
“He who is a hireling, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, beholds the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees, and the wolf snatches them, and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling, and is not concerned about the sheep” (John 10:12-13).

The Greek word for hireling means “one who is hired for reward”; “day-laborer.”
Hireling

• The word is used only one other time in the New Testament, in Mark 1:20 – “And immediately He called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and left to follow Him.
Bunyan’s Image of a Pastor

• He despises the world.
• He is dead to its pleasures and joys.
• His chief aim is to glorify and exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, his atoning blood, justifying righteousness, and finished salvation.
• His greatest glory is to bring sinners to Christ.
• He longs to edify and build up the saints in Christ.
“What has God put in your power to do in his service? What you can do you must do, and find yourself at best an unprofitable servant...The harvest is plentiful, the laborers are few. Pray the Lord of the harvest and go forth in his name. He that has begun a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6).”