

**“The Pilgrims Progress”**  
**No Turning Back**  
**(Pages 3-5a)**

**Introduction:**

1. Last Week - We Started Looking At:
  - The Beginning Of The Pilgrims Progress:
    - Which Told Us Of A Man:
      - Who Was Fleeing From:
        - His City - And From:
      - The Wrath That Was To Come Upon Him:
        - Because Of His Great Burden:
          - Of Sin!
2. Tonight - We Will Be Exploring:
  - From The End Of Page 2:
    - To The First Part Of Page 5:
      - Where We Find That Same Man:
        - That Pilgrim:
          - Being Pursued By Two Characters With The Names Of:
            - Obstinate & Pliable!
3. In These Pages:
  - We Learn:
    - The Name Of The **City**:
      - From Which Our Pilgrim Is Fleeing:
        - *The City Of Destruction!*
          - Which Explains Even More Why He Needed To Flee!
  - We Also Learn:
    - The Name Of Our **Pilgrim**:
      - Which Is *Christian* - Even Though:
        - At This Point In The Story:
          - He Is Not A True Christian!
    - This Probably Aligns With:
      - The Testimony Of John Bunyan Himself:
        - Since - For Nearly A Year:
          - He Tried To Live Like A Christian, Talk Like A Christian, And Act Like A Christian, And Even Believe Like A Christian!
      - Yet - In Truth - He Was **Not**:
        - A Christian - That Burden Of Sin:
          - Was Still On His Back!
        - He Was A Professor Of The Faith:
          - But Not Yet A True Possessor Of The Faith!
    - In John Bunyan’s Own Words:
      - “I fell into some outward reformation, both in my words and life, and did set the commandments before me for my way to Heaven. Thus I continued about a year; all which time our neighbors did take me to be a very godly man, a new and religious man, though yet I knew not Christ, nor grace, or faith, nor hope!” (Grace Abounding)
        - But God Was Using Even This To Prepare Him For True Faith:
          - In Jesus Christ - Who Alone:
            - Could Release Him Of His Burden Of Sin!
  - Let’s Read These Pages Together!
4. In One Of His Notes In The Margins:
  - John Bunyan Wrote *This*:
    - About This Part Of His Story:
      - “*Christian And Obstinate Pull For Pliable’s Soul!*”
        - And - I Think That Word:
          - “*Pull*” - Is A Good Description:
            - Of What Is Taking Place Throughout This Part Of Our Pilgrim’s Journey!

\* First - I Think We Can See - As Christian Is Running Away From The City Of Destruction - Just As Fast As The Burden On His Back Will Permit:

1. ***The Pull Of The Old City – The City Of Destruction!***

- Because - As We Read First From Page 2:
  - “The Neighbors Also Came Out To See Him Run, And As He Ran Some Mocked, Others Threatened, And Some Cried After Him To Return; And Among Those That Did So, There Were Two That Were Resolved To Fetch Him Back By Force!”
    - We Need To Remember That This World:
      - Is No Friend To Those Who:
        - Are Seeking & Living For:
          - The World To Come!
    - This Was The Testimony Of Jeremiah:
      - In Jeremiah 20:10 - When He Sought To Live For The Lord & Preach His Word:
        - He Said - “All my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him!”
  - The World Wants Nothing More Than:
    - To See Those Who Are Pursuing After Heavenly Things Instead Of Earthly Things:
      - To Fail & To Fall!
        - As Bunyan Again Describes In The Margin - “They That Fly From The Wrath To Come Are A Gazing-Stock To The World!”
    - And - The Truth Is:
      - If We Are Not The Gazing-Stock & The Laughing-Stock Of The World:
        - Perhaps There’s Still More ***World*** In Us Than ***Heaven!***
  - But - The World Is Just Following After:
    - The Will & Wishes Of Its Master:
      - Who - In 1 Peter 5:8 - Is “As A Roaring Lion, Walk[ing] About, Seeking Whom He May Devour!”
        - So - We Must Not Be Surprised At The Attempts Of The World & The Devil - And Even Our Own Flesh:
          - To Pull Us Back!
  - And - There Were Two In Particular:
    - Who Were “Resolved To Fetch Him Back By Force!”
      - They Were Called:
        - Obstinate & Pliable!
    - And - With These Men:
      - Bunyan Wants To Show Us:
        - The Different Ways That People Respond When They Are Confronted With The Truth!
  - There Is A Lot Of Similarity - In These Men - To:
    - The Soils That Jesus Describes In His Parable Of The Sower!
      - Matthew 13:18-23 - “Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. / 19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth [it] not, then cometh the wicked [one], and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. / 20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; / 21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. / 22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. / 23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth [it]; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty!”
  - Three Out Of The Four Soils Are Represented Here In Our Story!
    - Obstinate Is The One - 13:19:
      - Who “Received Seed By The Way Side!”
        - Because His Heart Is Hard!
    - Pliable Is The One - 13:20-21:
      - Who “Received The Seed Into Stony Places!”
        - Because His Heart Was Shallow!

- 13:21 - “Yet Hath He Not Root In Himself, But Dureth For A While!”
  - Which We Will See Soon Enough!
- But Christian Is The One - 13:23:
  - Who “Received Into The Good Ground!”
    - Because His Heart Was Softened By The Lord - Through His Word & Through His Spirit!
- And So - With Their Hearts In View - We See First:
  - The Pull Of Obstinate!
    - To Be Obstinate Means:
      - That You Are Proud & Stubborn & Hardened:
        - Especially In What Is Wrong!
      - And - There Are Many In This World:
        - Who Are Obstinate:
          - And Try To Prevent Christians From Pursuing Christ!
      - And - Those Who Are Obstinate:
        - Are Frequently Like This Man! He Was:
          - An Insulted Man!
            - Insulted By God, His Word, And His Followers!
              - Obstinate Didn’t Like To Be Told:
                - That He Might “Sink Lower Than The Grave, Into A Place That Burns With Fire And Brimstone!”
              - Obstinate Didn’t Like To Be Told:
                - That His Own Sins Will Take Him There!
              - And So - He Also Became:
                - An Insolent Man!
                  - He Continued To Mock & Threaten Christian!
                    - He Mocked His Book - God’s Book:
                      - The Bible - “Away With Your Book!”
                    - He Mocked His Beliefs:
                      - Calling Him A “Crazed-Headed Coxcomb” & A “Fool” & A “Brain-Sick Fellow!”
                  - Also - He Was:
                    - An Intolerant Man!
                      - It Was His Way Or No Way!
                        - He Said - “Be Ruled By Me, And Go Back!” / “Go Back, Go Back, And Be Wise!”
                      - And Yet - He Proved Himself To Also Be:
                        - An Ignorant Man!
                          - He Even Tries To Quote A Verse:
                            - From Proverbs 26:15 - Which Says - “The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason!”
                          - But - He Misunderstood God’s Word:
                            - And Misused It & Misapplied It:
                              - Much Like The Devil Did In His Temptation Of Jesus In The Wilderness! (Matthew 4)
        - This Is The Character Of Much Of The World Today!
          - Do You See It?
            - Insulted / Insolent / Intolerant / Ignorant:
              - Of All Things That Pertain To:
                - God And His Word!
        - But - Even Christians Can Still Have This Worldly Attitude:
          - In Their Heart! Can’t We!
          - In Isaiah 48:4 - The Lord Says This:
            - About His Own People - Who Had Forsaken His Way - “Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass!”
        - We Can Be Obstinate:
          - When Our Convictions Are Not Based On The Word Of God:
            - But Are Based On The World’s Philosophies:
              - Or Even On Our Own Will!

- Alexander Whyte:
  - “The mulish, obstinate, and proud man never says, I don't know. He never asks anything to be explained to him. He never admits that he has got any new light. He never admits having spoken or acted wrongly. He never takes back what he has said. He was never heard to say, You are right in that line of action, and I have all along been wrong.”
  - (Whyte)
- Is There Any Of This In You Tonight?
  - If So - It Is A Sign:
    - That We Have Let The Pull Of The World:
      - Draw Us Too Far Back:
        - To Our Old City!
  - But Then - We Also See:
- The Pull Of Pliable!
  - To Be Pliable Means:
    - That You Are Easily Bent & Shaped:
      - By Anything & Anyone Around You!
        - In Matthew 13:21 - Jesus Describes This Person As Having - “No Root In Himself!”
    - This Means That:
      - All That You Are & All That You Do:
        - And Even All That You Believe:
          - Comes From *Without* Instead Of *Within*!
    - And This Is What Made Pliable:
  - A Credulous Man!
    - Which Means Gullible & Without Discernment!
      - Isn't This What We See In Pliable?
    - One Moment - He Is:
      - Chasing After Christian:
        - “Resolved To Fetch Him Back By Force!” - Probably Influenced By Obstinate!
    - The Next Moment - He Is:
      - The Companion Of Christian:
        - And Saying - “I Begin To Come To A Point; I Intend To Go Along With This Good Man!”
    - But - What Caused Him To Change His Mind?
      - It Was Because He Was Also:
  - A Curious Man!
    - He Was Charmed By What Christian Told Him:
      - About The End Of His Journey!
    - After Hearing All Of The Good Things:
      - About The Heavenly Path:
        - He Said - “This Is Very Pleasant” & “The Hearing Of This Is Enough To Ravish One's Heart!”
    - But - What Would Happen:
      - If & When He Would Face Some Of The More Difficult Things::
        - Along That Heavenly Path?
    - Also - This Man Was Pliable Because He Was:
  - A Civil Man!
    - He Didn't Want To Offend Or Upset Anyone!
      - At First - Obstinate!
      - Then - Christian!
      - He Tells Obstinate - “Do Not Revile!”
    - But - What Was The Real Reason For His Civility?
      - It Was All About Pleasing Men:
        - Instead Of God!
      - Yet - As Paul Wrote In Galatians 1:10 - “For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ!”
  - Sadly - I Think That There Might Be:
    - Too Much Of This Character Even In The Church Today!

- Do You See It?
- Credulous, And Not Confident:
  - In The Truth Of God's Word!
- Curious, But Not Committed:
  - In The Things Of Christ!
- Civil, But Not Changed!
  - Conformed But Not Transformed!
    - No Root & Thus No Fruit!
- Is There Any Of This In You Tonight?
  - If So, It Too Is A Sign:
    - That We Have Let The Pull Of The World:
      - Keep Us Too Far Back:
        - In Our Old City!
- We Can Be Pliables:
  - If There Is No Root:
    - In God's House - His Church!
      - Coming & Going, Depending On The Weather Outside Or Inside!
- We Can Be Pliables:
  - If There Is No Root:
    - In God's Word!
      - Just Hearing It From Others, Without Taking The Book Into Our Own Hands & Hearts!
- We Can Be Pliables:
  - If There Is No Root:
    - In The Lord Jesus Christ - By Faith!
      - Because - James 1:8 - "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways!"
- Both Obstinate & Pliable:
  - Needed A Change Of Heart!
    - The Hard-Heart Of Obstinate:
      - Needed To Be Softened:
        - To The Things Of God! And:
    - The Stony-Heart Of Pliable:
      - Needed To Be Rooted:
        - In The Truth Of God!
    - And - We Still Need This Kind Of Change:
      - In Our Own Hearts, Don't We!
- But - Even Though These Two Men:
  - Obstinate & Pliable Came After Christian:
    - To Pull *Him* Back - Yet We Find:
      - That Christian Tries To Convince Obstinate & Pliable:
        - To Go *With Him!*
  - So - Even Though The Pilgrim:
    - Still Has His Burden On His Back:
      - He Himself Becomes An Unwitting Evangelist:
        - To Warn & To Win These Men Through God's Word!
  - Over & Over Again:
    - Our Pilgrim Appeals To:
      - The Book In His Hand!
    - To Obstinate He Said:
      - "Read It So, If You Will, In My Book!"
    - He Also Said:
      - "If You Believe Not Me, Read Here In This Book!"
    - And Then - To Pliable He Said:
      - "I Will Read Of Them In My Book!"
  - Christian Never Gets Over God's Book!
    - And We Must Not Either!
      - Because, It Will Always Be For Us, As Psalm 119:105 Tells Us - "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path!"

- Because - It Is The Word Of God:
- That God Will Use To Increase In Our Hearts:

2. ***The Pull Of The New City – The Celestial City!***

- Did You Catch Just How Much:
  - Heaven - Christian Had:
    - In His Mind?
      - And - All From The Book In His Hand!
      - God's Book!
- He Spoke Of:
  - The Great Value Of Heaven!
    - He Was Seeking - From 1 Peter 1:4:
      - “An Inheritance Incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, and it is laid up in heaven, and safe there!”
- He Spoke Of:
  - The Great Venue Of Heaven!
    - In His Conversation With Pliable!
  - About Its Endlessness!
    - “An Endless Kingdom!” And:
    - “Everlasting Life!” So That:
    - “We May Inhabit That Kingdom Forever!”
  - About Its Glory!
    - “There Are Crowns Of Glory To Be Given To Us, And Garments That Will Make Us Shine Like The Sun In The Firmament Of Heaven!”
  - About Its Inhabitants!
    - “Seraphims, And Cherubims! - And Others!
  - And - As Pliable Said When He Heard These Things:
    - “The Hearing Of This Is Enough To Ravish / Enrapture One's Heart!”
    - But - Also:
- He Spoke Of:
  - The Great Volume Of Heaven!
    - As Christian Was Trying To Convince Obstinate:
      - To “Leave [His] Friends And [His] Comforts Behind [Him]!”
      - He Said:
        - “For There, Where I Go, Is Enough And To Spare!”
- What A Blessing & Comfort It Is:
  - To Weary Christian Pilgrims In The Wilderness Of This World:
    - To Hear About Heavenly Things!
      - And God Uses Them:
        - To Keep Pulling Us:
          - Away From:
            - The Old City!
          - And Toward:
            - The New!

**Conclusion:**

1. And - For Christian - The Pull Of The New City:
  - Was Far Stronger Than:
    - The Pull Of The Old!
  - And That Is Why:
    - When Obstinate Asked:
      - “Will You Go Back With Us, Or No?”
    - Christian Answered:
      - Alluding To Jesus' Words From Luke 9:62:
        - “I Have Laid My Hand To The Plough!”
2. What God Offered Christian:
  - Was Far Better & Greater:
    - Than What This World Offers!

- And So - There Was No Turning Back!
- I'm Sure - If The Words Had Been Written:
  - He Would Have Been Singing In His Heart:
    - I Am Resolved No Longer To Linger,  
Charmed By The World's Delight,  
Things That Are Higher, Things That Are Nobler,  
These Have Allured My Sight!
    - I Will Hasten To Him,  
Hasten So Glad And Free;  
Jesus, Greatest, Highest,  
I Will Come To Thee!
- 3. When You Feel:
  - The Pull & Tug Of The World:
    - Drawing You Back:
      - Remember Who Is Pulling **You**:
        - Toward Your Heavenly Home!
        - And - Do Not Turn Back!

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