

Pilgrim's Progress

The Man Talkative

By [John Bunyan](#)

The Pilgrim's Progress from this world — to that which is to come, in the similitude of a dream

Retold for Children and Adapted to School Reading, by James Baldwin, 1913

Now I saw in my dream, that Christian had come safely out of the dark valley, and was singing on his way. And as he came to the brow of a hill, whom should he see before him but his old friend FAITHFUL?

"Ho! ho! soho!" he cried. "Wait and I will be your companion."

Faithful looked behind him — but walked on.

"Wait! wait till I come up with you," again called Christian.

But Faithful answered, "I must not tarry — for my errand is pressing."

Then Christian ran with what speed he could, and not only overtook Faithful, but passed by him. Then he looked back and laughed.

"You wouldn't wait, and so I am ahead of you."

But, as he was speaking, he *stumbled* and *fell*; and being worn with his journey he could not rise again, till Faithful came to help him.

Then the two went on very lovingly together, talking of things that had happened to them on their pilgrimage. Each told the other of all that he had seen, and of the *dangers* he had escaped; and both were much comforted and strengthened.

They had walked thus a long way, when, chancing to look up, they saw a stranger near them who was going in the same direction.

"Whither away, friend?" asked Faithful. "Are you going to the Celestial Land?"

"That is the very place to which I am going," answered the stranger.

"I am glad," said Faithful; "and we shall be pleased to have your company."

"Nothing will please me better," said the stranger. "I hope that we shall have much pleasant *talk* together."

"Come on, then, and let us spend our time discoursing about things that are interesting and profitable," said Faithful.

"With all my heart," answered the stranger, "for I am very fond of *talking*."

So he came up and walked between the two pilgrims; and as he walked he talked.

"How pleasant it is to talk!" he said. "How delightful to talk of the history and mystery of things! A man may learn many things by talking and listening to talk. Let us talk of things heavenly — or things earthly; of things past — or of things to come; of things foreign — or of things at home. We shall find all such discourse profitable."

And so he went on, chattering about this thing and that — but saying nothing that could improve the mind, or touch the heart. He talked and talked and talked; and his words rippled from his mouth so pleasantly that even Faithful was inclined to think that there was some meaning to his speech.

But Christian kept silent, and gradually fell a little way behind the others. He was busy with his own thoughts, and the empty words of the stranger were unpleasant to him.

By and by, as the stranger was delivering a long speech and listening to himself with great delight, Faithful loitered a little until Christian had overtaken him.

"What a fine companion we have!" he whispered. "He will make a good pilgrim."

Christian smiled. "He certainly has a *fair tongue*," he said.

"Do you know him?" asked Faithful.

"Know him! Yes, better than he knows himself!"

"Tell me, then, who is he?"

"I wonder that you don't know him. He is a fellow from our town, and his name is *TALKATIVE*. His father's name is *Say-well*, and his home is in *Prating Row*."

"Well, he seems to be a very pretty man," said Faithful.

"He is prettiest, *away* from home," said Christian. "The people who know him say that it is better to deal with a Turk, than with him. He is ugly to his family, ugly to his servants, ugly to all goodness at home. But he is always ready to *talk* — and he talks to please the company he is in."

"Since you know him so well," said Faithful, "I am led to believe that he is a great *sayer* — but no *doer*. I am already sick of his prattle and his company. But how shall we get rid of him?"

"Only ask him some question touching his own life and morals, and see whether he won't become sick of your company," answered Christian.

So Faithful quickened his steps, and soon caught up with Talkative.

"Come, what cheer? How are you now?" he asked.

"Very well, I thank you," said Talkative. "I thought we should have had a great deal of *talk* by this time."

"We will have it now," said Faithful; and so by skillful questions, he led the talkative man to say a great many things concerning the *duties* of life and the right way of *living*. Then he asked him plainly,

"Do you, *yourself*, live in this way? And do you *do* those things which you say all good and true men ought to do?"

Talkative hung his head, and was slow to answer. Then he said, "I see that you are ready to find fault with every man that you meet. I do not care to talk with such people; and so I will bid you good-by."

And with that, he leaped over the wall and walked away by himself across the field.

And Christian and Faithful went on together talking of the place to which they were bound, and rejoicing in the hope which filled their hearts.

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