

Pilgrim's Progress

Vanity Fair

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

Then I saw in my dream that, as Christian and Faithful journeyed onward, they came, by and by, to a large and famous town. The name of that town was *Vanity*; and a *fair* was held there all the year round.

The road to the Celestial City was through the *midst* of the town and the great fair; and so the two pilgrims must needs go that way.

As they walked, they saw the places, rows, and streets where all sorts of things were bought and sold. One street was called the *English Row*, another the *French Row*, another the *Italian Row*, another the *German Row*. Every country in the world had its own place, where its own peculiar kinds of goods were sold.

And as the pilgrims went quietly along, intent upon their own duty — they were beset by numbers of *hawkers* and *barkers* urging them to buy of their goods.

"What will you buy? What will you buy?" they cried; and they offered all sorts of *vanities* and *follies*.

The people who visited this fair and who spent most of their time there, were dressed in rich and gaudy apparel; and they seemed to have nothing to do but to *eat, drink, and be merry*. They moved hither and thither, from one street or row to another — laughing at this thing and that, and seeking always for something new.

And here at all times were seen cheats, fools, apes, knaves, and rogues of every kind; and here also were thieves, liars, and all sorts of wicked men.

"What will you buy? What will you buy?" cried the hawkers and barkers. And a crowd of idlers soon gathered around the pilgrims to see what they would do.

Then Faithful, turning, and looking at them gravely, answered, "*We buy the*

truth!"

At that answer there was a great commotion in the street. Some laughed, some mocked, and some picked up stones to throw at the pilgrims.

At length the whole fair was in a hubbub, and Christian and Faithful were so hemmed in by the multitude, that they could go neither forward nor backward.

Then some officers of the town took them in charge and led them to the hall of the chief magistrate, where they were accused of having made an *unlawful disturbance* in the fair.

"You seem to be strangers in this place," said the chief magistrate sternly. "Where do you come from, and what is your business?"

"We are pilgrims," answered Christian, "and we are on our way to our own country, which is the Celestial Land."

"What do you mean by coming thus to our fair and trying to overturn it by your disorder?" asked the magistrate.

"We were but going *peaceably* along the highway," answered Faithful, "and we would have said nothing had not so many followed us, asking us to buy of their wares. Even then we did nothing — but said that we would buy the truth."

This answer caused the magistrate to fall into a great rage. He called them liars and disturbers of the peace, and commanded them to be punished.

So the officers of the town took them and beat them, and besmeared them with mud, and put them in a *cage* — where all the people of the fair might come and jeer at them.

But Christian and Faithful bore their punishment meekly, and made no answer to those who reviled them. Their very faces showed the goodness of their hearts; and since it could not be proved that they had done any harm, there were several of the townsfolk who began to speak well of them.

This put the magistrate and the rest of those at the fair into greater rage than before; and they declared that the pilgrims should suffer death.

So they put chains upon them and made their feet fast in the stocks. And a time was set when they should be tried before the *judge* of that country, who acted in the name of the king.

The day at last came, and the two prisoners were brought into court. The name of the judge was *Sir HATE-GOOD*; and he sat upon the bench with a jury of

twelve picked men before him.

"You are charged," said he, "of being enemies to our town, the disturbers of our fair, and plotters against our king, who is the *great Beelzebub*. What have you to say in your defense?"

Then Faithful began to answer. "As for being an enemy," he said, "I set myself only against those who set themselves against the Almighty. As for disturbance, I have made none, for I am a man of peace. As for your king, Beelzebub — he is the enemy of our Lord, and I defy him."

Having said this, he sat down, and three witnesses were called. The names of these witnesses were *Envy*, *Superstition*, and *Pick-thank*; and they had been *hired* for this work.

"Do you know this prisoner at the bar?" asked the judge.

Then *ENVY* stepped forward and said, "My lord, I have known him a long time. He is one of the vilest men in our country. He has no regard for our king, our laws, or our customs. I have heard him say that all ought to be overthrown."

"What else have you to say?" asked the judge.

"Oh, I might say a thousand things about his vileness and his treason — but I will not weary the court. Perhaps I will say more after the other witnesses have spoken."

Then they called *SUPERSTITION* and bade him look at the prisoner.

"Do you know this man?" asked the judge!

"Well, I have no great acquaintance with him — nor do I wish to have," answered the witness. "But I know him to be a very *pestilent* fellow; and I have heard him speak ill of our *king* and our *religion*." And with this, he went on to accuse Faithful of many wicked deeds.

Finally, *PICK-THANK* was brought forward and asked to say what he knew about the prisoner.

"My lord, I have known him a very long time," he answered. "I have often heard him rail against our king, Beelzebub, and against the princes of our land. In fact, I have heard him rail against *you*, my lord. I have heard him call you a villain, and all sorts of other ugly names. I know him to be an enemy of our country and of our king."

The judge was now filled with anger towards Faithful; and he called upon the jury

to decide among themselves and give their verdict concerning the *vile* prisoner before them.

So the jury consulted together, and each one gave his own opinion of the matter:

"I see clearly that this man is a heretic!" said *Mr. BLINDMAN*, who was the foreman.

"Yes! yes!" said *Mr. MALICE*. "Away with him. I hate the very looks of him!"

"I never could endure him!" said *Mr. LOVE-LUST*.

"Nor I, for he was always talking against my ways!" said *Mr. LIVE-LOOSE*.

"Hang him, hang him!" said *Mr. HEADY*.

"He's a sorry scrub!" said *Mr. HIGH-MIND*.

"My heart rises against him!" said *Mr. ENMITY*.

"He is a rogue!" said *Mr. LIAR*.

"Hanging is too good for him!" said *Mr. CRUELTY*.

"Let us hasten to put him out of the way!" said *Mr. HATE-LIGHT*.

"Yes, let us forthwith sentence him to death!" said *Mr. IMPLACABLE*.

And so they did.

And the judge presently condemned him to be led from the place and put to the most cruel death that could be invented.

They therefore brought him out to do with him according to their law. They *scourged* him; they *beat* him with their fists; they *stoned* him with stones; and, last of all, they *burned* him to ashes at the stake!

Thus came Faithful to his *end*.

But, behold, there came a *chariot with horses*; and Faithful, being freed from the body — was taken up into it; and straightway he was carried up through the clouds, with sound of trumpet, the nearest way to the Celestial Gate.

As for Christian, he was remanded to prison to wait for his trial at another time. But He that overrules all things, so wrought it about, that he escaped from his foes and went on his way. And as he went, the name of his dear friend was ever

on his tongue—

"Sing, Faithful, sing, And let your name survive. For though they killed you,
You art yet alive."

This article is provided as a ministry of [Third Millennium Ministries](#) (Thirdmill).
If you have a question about this article, please [email](#) our *Theological Editor*.

Subscribe to *Biblical Perspectives Magazine*

BPM subscribers receive an email notification each time a new issue is published. Notifications include the title, author, and description of each article in the issue, as well as links directly to the articles. Like BPM itself, *subscriptions are free*. To subscribe to [BPM](#), please select this [link](#).