

Pilgrim's Progress

The River of Dread

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 they went on together until they came in sight of the gate. I further saw that between them and the gate there was a *river* and there was *no bridge* to go over; and the river was very deep.

When the pilgrims came to this river, they were much disheartened; but the men who were with them said, "You *must* go through — or you cannot get to the gate."

Christian was greatly cast down by this answer, and began to wish that he might draw back and escape. But Hopeful took him by the hand and cheered him with comforting words. Then as they came to the water's edge, they asked the men how *deep* the river was.

"You will find it deeper or shallower — as you put your *trust* in the King," was the answer.

So they stepped in. Then Christian felt himself beginning to *sink*, and he cried out, "O Hopeful, my friend, I sink in deep waters! The billows go over my head; the waves cover me!"

But Hopeful answered, "Be of good cheer, my brother! My feet are on the bottom, and it is good."

Still Christian cried out in his despair, "I shall perish in this river! I shall never see the Celestial Land — the land of milk and honey!"

Hopeful, therefore, had much ado to keep his brother's head above water. Indeed, sometimes he would be quite gone down; and in a little while he would rise up again, half dead.

But all the time, Hopeful tried to cheer him. "Brother, I see the gate!" he said. "I

see the men standing by to welcome us!"

"It is *you* for whom they wait," answered Christian. "They wait for you, and not me. You have been Hopeful ever since I knew you."

"And so have you," answered Hopeful. "Remember how you have kept your face turned always toward the Celestial Land."

Then I saw in my dream, that Christian was silent for a time as though in deep thought. And Hopeful said, "Be of good cheer. We shall soon be on the other side. I see the *Prince* of the Celestial Land!"

"I see him, too!" cried Christian; "and he tells me: When you pass through the waters — I will be with you; and through the rivers — they shall not overflow you!"

Soon the water became shallower, and Christian found the bottom good ground to walk upon. So they went on, cheerfully and with hopeful hearts — and thus they got over.

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