

Pilgrim's Progress - Part 2

by Alfred P. Gibbs

The Pilgrim's Progress is a story about salvation from sin's penalty, power, and presence, and the journey to the Celestial City represents a life of faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

Duration: 1:00:52

Scripture: Proverbs 14:12, Matthew 6:33, Romans 3:10-12, Romans 3:20, Romans 3:23, Romans 3:28, Ephesians 2:8-9

Topics: "Pilgrim's Progress"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells the story of a man named Graceless who is burdened by his sins and desperately seeks salvation. Graceless reads the Bible and realizes the gravity of his guilt and the impending judgment. He encounters a man named Evangelist who guides him towards salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The preacher emphasizes the importance of salvation from sin's penalty and power, highlighting the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and the need to love God and others according to God's commandments.

Transcript

Tonight, we begin the actual story of the Pilgrim's Progress. And we're going to follow the adventures of the Pilgrim from his leaving the City of Destruction until he reaches the Gate, at which he receives instructions as to how to get rid of the heavy burden of his sin. The Pilgrim's Progress has been classed as second only to the Bible for several reasons.

First, it tells us about the most important journey anyone will ever be asked to go on. Namely, a journey from this life into eternity. Every person listening to me now is traveling along the road of life every day that he lives, brings him nearer and nearer to the end of that journey.

And at death, he will go out into eternity. And the great question is, where will you be in that eternity that follows death? Either an eternity of joy, or an eternity of misery, such as weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth? Second, this story tells us about the most important thing in life, namely, salvation. First of all, from sin's penalty, through faith in the One who came from Heaven's glory and on the Cross of Calvary paid the penalty of our sins by shedding His precious blood and thus obtaining our eternal redemption.

And every soul who trusts in Him is at moments saved from the consequences or the penalty of his sins, which is eternal death. Then this story tells us about salvation from sin's power. The Lord Jesus is now

glorified at God's right hand and He ever lives to impart power to those who put their trust in Him.

And in that power, in that strength, they may live lives to the glory of that One who made them forever His at such infinite cost. Then it speaks of salvation from sin's presence at the coming of the Lord Jesus when with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God He will raise the dead and rapture the living to be with Him and like Him forever in that glorious celestial city. Thus this story is very, very important.

And then it tells us about the most important people we shall meet on this journey. Every person appearing in this story has a name that exactly describes his character. Thus a person named good will be a good person.

A person named bad will be a bad person. If you remember this, it will help you to understand the meaning of this palpable story of the pilgrim's progress. So as you go on from night to night, remember the Holy Word of God.

Here is the dreamer lying in his prison cell. A brazier of coals helps to keep that cell a little more habitable. And as he lies upon his bed of straw with a vest of books the Bible clasped fondly to his bosom he has a wonderful dream.

In this dream he sees a man starting out from his own home with a great burden upon his back. His clothes all in rags. A book in his hand.

His cry, what must I do to be saved? He follows the adventures of this man until he reaches a gate at which he receives instructions as to how to get rid of that dreadful burden. From that gate he goes on to the place where he sees a marvelous sight. And that burden rolls from his shoulders and he sees it no more forever.

He goes on from that place passing through two lions and enters into a beautiful castle. From that castle he emerges to engage in a great fight with a great enemy of his soul Apollyon or Satan. From thence together with a companion they enter the great city of Vanity.

And from that city go on their way and are caught by a great giant named Despair who puts them in his castle called Doubting Castle. Finding a way of escape from that castle they make their way onward, upward, homeward, heavenward until they reach a river called the River of Death. Through that river they pass.

Step out on the other side breathe that new air, celestial air and enter into that beautiful celestial city where they enjoy the presence of their Lord and their Savior forever. This in brief is the story of the pilgrim's progress with which we shall be concerned during the next few nights together. The story opens upon a man whose back is turned to his own home.

There is a great burden upon his back. He holds a book in his hand from which he reads. And as he reads he cries despairingly what must I do to be saved? His clothes are all in rags and he is indeed in a pitiable condition.

Who is this man? What is that city to which he has turned his back? What is that book from which he reads? What is that burden on his back? Why are his clothes all in rags? And why does he cry what must I do to be saved? Let us try to answer these questions one by one. First, his name is graceless. That is, one who is without the grace of God.

In other words, an unsaved person. He represents each person in this audience this evening who has never come as a poor lost sinner and put his faith and trust in the Lord Jesus. If you have never been born by the Holy Spirit through faith in Christ, remember your name in the sight of God is graceless or one who is without the grace of God.

And to be without the grace of God is to be without Christ, to be without spiritual life, to be without the Holy Spirit, to be without righteousness, to be without excuse, to be without escape from the judgment of God if one dies in that condition. Remember, if you are not saved, your name is graceless. What is that city to which he has turned his back? It is the city of destruction, a picture of this world in which we live, which one day is going to be destroyed with fire from heaven.

For the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his holy angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power. This world, for those who are living for it, is a city of destruction, doomed to be eternally banished from God's presence forever. What is that book he holds in his hand? It is the Holy Bible, the Word of God, living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, a book that discerns the thoughts and the intents of our heart.

Graceless lived for many years in the city of destruction without realizing what he really was until one day he began to read the Bible and as he read the Bible he discovered what God said about him. He read such verses as these, There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth.

There is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way. They are together become unprofitable.

There is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one. Now we know that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith unto them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God. And as Gracious read such words as these, he felt a burden coming upon his conscience.

And the more he read and the more he thought about God and thought about his own sinfulness, the greater that burden became. He tried in many ways to get rid of that burden, by his tears of repentance, by his good resolves to live a better life for the future, by attending church more regularly, by doing the best he could, but alas, alas, all his own attempts to remove that burden from his back were in vain. That burden is the burden of sin.

This is the burden that God sees upon the back of every unsaved person. The fact that you do not feel that burden on your conscience only proves that the God of this age has blinded your mind that you should believe and the light of the gospel should shine unto you. Supposing there was a dead boy lying here on the platform and I put a heavy weight on that dead boy, would he feel it? You reply, no.

Why not? Because he's dead. A dead person cannot feel a burden. Supposing there was a living boy on this platform and I put a heavy weight on him, would he feel it? Indeed he would.

Why? Because he's alive. The reason many people do not feel the burden of their sins is this, they are still dead in their trespasses and in their sins. And Satan has blinded their minds lest they should see their deep need of God's saving grace and trust the Lord Jesus as their Saviour.

Jesus said, come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden. Laden with what? Laden with sin, just as graceless is laden with sin. So you are viewed by God as being laden with your sins.

All those evil thoughts, evil words, evil deeds, and wrong attitudes you have adopted toward God are all gathered together like a great big heavy burden. And if a person dies with that burden on his back, he must go out into an eternity of blackness and darkness forever. His clothes are all in rags.

Clothes speak of one's own righteousness. And the Bible says we are all as an unclean thing and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. In the sight of God all our own goodness, if we are trusting in that for salvation, is like a bundle of filthy rags.

No wonder therefore, as Gracious read from that book and learned how holy and righteous God was, how just, how he must because of his holy character punish sin. He filled his heart and he cried despairingly, what must I do to be saved? In this condition he returned to his home and confided to his wife and to his children. Oh my dear wife and you my dear children, I have discovered from the word of God I am a lost and guilty and burdened sinner and if I die in my sins I shall be lost forever.

Oh what must I do to be saved? Can you help me? But his wife was one of those self-righteous people. Those people who believe they can be saved and go to heaven without trusting Christ as their savior. They can be saved on the basis of their own good works and she got quite impatient with her husband.

She said, Graceless, ever since you've been reading that book you've got these ridiculous ideas about being a lost and burdened and guilty sinner and having to meet God and be lost forever. I believe that this religion is turning your mind. Come now, you'd better go to bed.

I'll make you up some medicine and maybe after a good night's rest you'll feel better in the morning and forget all about these strange notions. And so she packed her husband off to bed but poor Graceless couldn't sleep that night. He was afraid to close his eyes in sleep lest like that rich man that Jesus spoke of in the sixteenth of Luke he might open his eyes in hell being in torment.

He tossed from one side of his bed to the other crying, Day and night thy hand is heavy upon me. My moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Oh, what must I do to be saved? How can I go out into eternity in my present condition? For God is holy and righteous and just and must therefore banish me from his presence to weep and wail forever.

Oh, what must I do to be saved? Truly there is no trouble like soul trouble. Early in the morning long before the rest of the family was astir Graceless got out from his bed began to walk outside the city limits of the city of destruction reading his Bible and groaning and crying and praying Oh, what must I do to be saved? Presently as he read these words appeared It is appointed unto men once to die and after this the judgment. As Gracious read those words his heart paled within him he realized as never before how lost and guilty and helpless and hopeless and hell deserving he was and from his soul came that cry again and again What must I do to be saved?

At that moment a man named Evangelist was passing by and hearing the cry of Graceless he hurried in his direction and inquired Who are you? and why do you cry What must I do to be saved? Gracious answered My name is Graceless I'm a poor burdened sinner from the city of destruction the face of all evil I've learned from the word of God that I am a sinner and as such one day I must die and after death I must meet a holy God and I dare not contemplate death and eternity It fills my heart with dread and with terror

Oh, sir, can you tell me how a poor lost burdened sinner such as I may be saved?

Evangelist answered Yes, I can tell you I was once a poor lost and guilty sinner like you burdened with a load of sin All my prayers and tears and good works and religious rites and forms and ceremonies failed to remove that burden but I came to Jesus I believe He bore my sins and died for me and through faith in Him the burden of my heart rolled away and now it is my joy at the command of the Lord Jesus to point other souls to Him that they too may lose the burden of their guilt and then Evangelist gave to Graceless a piece of paper on which were written the words Flee from the wrath to come but Graceless inquired Whither can I flee?

Evangelist pointed in a certain direction and said Do you see that gate over yonder? Graceless shaded his eyes and replied No, I cannot see that gate Well, do you see that light? Yes, I see the light Well, continued Evangelist follow that light go in its direction that will bring you to the gate and at that gate you will receive instructions as to how to get rid of your load of guilt Now you will notice that Evangelist did not attempt to take the burden from Graceless shoulders No Evangelist no Christian can do that Evangelist of course illustrates any person saved by God's grace born again by God's Holy Spirit whose delight it is to point souls to Christ All Evangelist did was to point Graceless to one who could take away his burden That's all we can do is to point you to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world and who is able to say to the uttermost every poor guilty sinner who puts his faith and trust in Him That light illustrates the word of God Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path As we follow the light of God's word it will bring us to the gate which speaks of Christ who said I am the door by me if any man enter in he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture Now what did Graceless do when he heard those instructions?

Did he say well I'm not going to get excited about this I'll start off maybe sometime next week No indeed He realized behold now is the day of salvation Behold now is the accepted time He realized that tomorrow is unknown boast not thyself of tomorrow for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth The moment he heard that there was a way of salvation from the burden of his guilt and from the consequences of his sins he did what every burdened guilty sinner should do which I trust you will do tonight He began to flee from the city of destruction and as he began to run in the direction of that light all the people came out to see the fun My how they laughed at him Some tried to detain him by force Others sought by ridicule and threats to retain him Even his wife and family had no sympathy with him His wife said oh Graceless don't leave me for this journey It's just a wild goose chase No one knows whether he can be saved or not in this life Graceless replied I have learned my dear wife that I am a sinner in the sight of a holy God and if I die in my sins I shall be lost forever I must flee from the wrath to come Come with me for you too are a sinner She replied I am nothing of the kind and if you are determined to go on this journey you shall go alone neither I nor the children will go with you and though it almost broke Graceless heart to leave his wife and family behind he remembered that scripture If any man loved father or mother or wife or children more than me he is not worthy of me and so Graceless ran for his life This is what will happen when you begin to flee from the wrath to come Your friends and your enemies alike will do their very best to detain you to hold you still in their grasp The devil will do his utmost to blind you still further to the dreadful fact of your need of a saviour and of the wonderful saviour to be found in Christ but do what Graceless did turn your back upon the city of destruction and flee from the wrath to come In order to shut out the cries of his enemies and the pleadings of his friends Graceless put his fingers into his ears and as he ran he cried Life!

Life! Eternal Life! The one great consuming ambition with Graceless was to have eternal life Let this be your cry too Shut out from your mind all intruding thoughts and concentrate on the great business of striving to enter in at the straight gate for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth unto destruction and many there be which go in thereat but straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it Two men one named Obstinate and the other named Pliable came to the wife of Graceless and said Mrs.

Graceless don't you worry about that husband of yours we'll run after him and bring him back again I wish you would sob Mrs. Graceless he's been a good husband to me and a good father to his children it's only since he began to read that bible and talk with that man named Evangelist that he's got all these queer ideas of going on a journey oh I wish you'd follow him and convince him of his folly and bring him back again we'll soon do that said Mr.

Obstinate and so Obstinate and Pliable ran after Graceless very soon they caught up to him for Graceless couldn't run very fast on account of the great burden on his back when they caught up to him Graceless inquired what are you following me for we've come to take you back where you belong where's that why in the city of destruction oh no replied Graceless I don't belong there any longer I've turned my back on that city for over that city there hangs the wrath of God which abideth on all those who reject Christ as their saviour no no my fair companions fare you well I will not go with you to dwell I mean with Jesus Christ to dwell let me go as he turned to go Obstinate inquired what you're going to leave all your friends and all your comforts behind all your pleasures what are my

comforts what are my friends what are my pleasures retorted Graceless if they are enjoyed under the wrath of God which may fall at any moment that great cloud long delayed because of God's mercy may fall in unparalleled fury upon that city of destruction no no I must go on my way and besides added Graceless I'm going to a place where all is joy and bliss and peace where the streets are paved with gold where all the redeemed walk in light where the patriarchs and the angels are where Christ is the lord of that city where there's no more curse no more sin no more death no more pain no more sorrow no more parting I'm going to an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away preserved in heaven for me I must go on my way obstinate said the pliable come on let's leave

this fool to his folly I see we'll never persuade him to go with us but what Graceless had said about the beauties and the glories of heaven intrigued pliable and he stammered if you don't mind obstinate maybe I'll take a little walk with Graceless along the pathway what? stormed obstinate two fools instead of one be persuaded by me pliable let's go back home Graceless said pliable you come along with me for what I have you too shall have for the same lord over all is rich to all that call upon him and so obstinate as angry as he could be stormed back again to the city of destruction and Graceless and pliable went on their way as they walked along pliable inquired eagerly what did you say I would get if I came with you brother you shall walk on streets of gold real gold? real gold me? yes

you oh goody goody wouldn't it be lovely walking on streets of gold what else am I going to get brother you're going to wear a golden crown no yes real gold? real gold me? yes you oh my imagine me walking down the golden streets with a golden crown on my head what else am I going to get brother you're going to play on a golden harp no yes real gold? real gold me? yes you oh imagine won't that be grand walking down the golden streets with a golden crown on my head and playing on a golden harp what else am I going to get brother you're going to see all the patriarchs you're going to see all the holy angels you're going to see all the martyrs all the prophets and the apostles better still you're going to see the king in his

beauty and the lamb that is fairer than day where there is no

darkness no sadness no pain no crying no popping my exclaimed you may be homesick to get there quick come on let's run I'm sorry I can't run replied graciously I've got a great big heavy burden on my back do you notice any difference between these two men what is the main point of difference ah I hear you say one has a burden on his back the other has no burden what is sending graceless on his way the fact that he's a needy lost and guilty sinner and he wants to get saved what is sending pliable on his way the beauties and the glories of heaven he's not concerned about the matter of his sin in the sight of God he's not thinking about his lost and guilty state all he wants is a nice vacation in heaven at God's expense to play on the golden harp and wear a golden crown and walk on golden

streets while they were talking about the beauties and the glories of heaven and not looking too well to their feet they did not notice at this particular point there was a great big bog called the bog of despondency right in front of them now into that bog they both fell headlong and when pliable came out of that bog with his mouth full of mud he was in a rage he cried huh where are we now brother graceless graceless replied alas I do not know I had no idea of the existence of this bog and then pliable began to be sarcastic putting one of his feet out of the bog it made a noise like this pew pew and then he inquired I suppose this is one of the golden streets you told me I was going to walk on pulling some of the weeds out of his hair he said huh I suppose this is the golden crown you

told me I was going to wear and the golden harp I was going to play if I can get out of this bog alive you can have your heaven and your golden streets and your golden harps and your golden crowns and everything else I am going back home to the city of destruction where at any rate I wasn't plastered with mud like this and pliable gave a desperate struggle or two and climbed out to the side of the bog nearest to his own home and scuttled back where he belonged to the city of destruction pew pew when he got back my what pun they made of him oh they said so you decided to come back from the celestial city and how did you like the golden streets how did you like your golden crown how did you like your golden harp come pliable give us a tune on your harp of gold and they made him the butt of

their jokes but by and by bit by bit pliable returned to his old companions his old pursuits his old pleasures the old places of amusement and what do you think he called himself he called himself a backslider when all the while he had never been a frontslider alas there are many like this pliable began to sneak around until gradually bit by bit he was received back again into favor with the people of the city of destruction lots of girls and boys and men and women in meetings like this as they hear about the beauties and the glories of heaven have a desire to become pilgrims but they do not count the cost they do not count the cost companions his old pursuits his old pleasures the old places of amusement and what do you think he called himself he called himself a backslider when all the

while he had never been a frontslider alas there are many like this pliable began to sneak around until gradually bit by bit he was received back again into favor with the people of the city of destruction lots of girls and boys and men and women in meetings like this as they hear about the beauties and the glories of heaven have a desire to become pilgrims but they do not count the cost they do not admit that they are lost in their guilty state and in their own strength by their good results they determine they will turn over a better leaf and become a Christian they take the evangelist's hand in theirs they sign a card maybe they put up their hand for prayer and they imagine that this makes them Christians but alas when persecution arises when difficulties come then they go right back

where they truly belong back again to the world because they were never truly saved by God's grace never really born again by the Holy Spirit of God but graceless did he want to get out of the side of the bog nearest to his own home not he he wanted to get as far as he possibly could from the city of destruction but alas he could not get out of that bog in spite of all his efforts he sank again and again sometimes up to the neck sometimes up to the knees in spite of all his efforts he could not extricate himself from that bog of despondency now the bog of despondency as its name indicates illustrates those desponding fears and doubts that fill the heart of the convicted sinner and sink him into despondency and darkness and doubt and despair for instance the devil suggests to a poor sinner

you're too bad to be saved what does that do sinks him down into the bog of sorrow and doubt if the devil can't get him that way he'll say even if you do come to Christ he won't receive you that sinks the sinner further still into that bog of despondency if he can't get him with that doubt he will say and even if you do come to Christ and he does receive you by and by you'll give it all up and you'll be worse than you were before and all these doubts combined with the evil reasonings of a sinner's wicked heart of unbelief all tend to sink him into the bog and the mire of doubt and darkness and despair as Graceless struggled but in vain to get out of that bog presently he saw a man whose name was Help come down to the side of that bog Help inquired who are you what are you doing in that

bog of despondency Graceless replied my name is Graceless I'm a poor burdened sinner from the city of destruction I was sent on my way by Evangelist and while following the light which he said would lead me to the gate I together with a companion pliable by name fell into this grievous bog he has gone back again to the city of destruction but I do not want to go back there I want to get out of this bog but I cannot all my efforts are in vain could you assist me that is why I came replied Help give me your hand and Help reached out his hand and Graceless took Help's hand in his and with Help's assistance he was lifted out of that horrible pit and that miry clay now Help illustrates the promises of God whatever your difficulty or doubt may be as a convicted sinner there is a promise in the

word of God that meets your need and will deliver you from that particular doubt for instance if the devil is saying to you you are too bad to be saved here is a promise for you this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners do what Graceless did just as Graceless could not be helped out of that bog unless he had taken Help's hand in his so every convicted sinner must grasp with the simple hand of faith the promises of God and as he does so he will be lifted out of that particular doubt if the devil is saying to you if you come to Christ he won't receive you here is a promise for you Jesus said him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out take hold of that promise plead it and you'll be delivered from that particular

doubt if the devil is saying to you if you do come to Christ you won't be able to hold on and by and by you'll give it up and you'll be worse than you were before here is a promise for you Jesus himself said I give unto my sheep eternal life and they shall never perish neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand take that promise by faith and you will be delivered from that particular doubt whatever the difficulty is there is always a word from God which when grasped by the hand of faith when believed and received and acted upon will deliver you from that doubt and save you from the bog of despondency as gracious continued his journey following the light presently he saw a man coming toward him who looked very nice from a distance but not too good near at hand this man's name was Mr.

worldly wise man and as he looked at graciously inquired in a very superior tone who are you walking in such a burdened and sighing manner gracious answered my name is graceless I'm a burdened sinner

from the city of destruction I'm on my way to the gate to receive instructions as to how to get rid of my burden I'm to follow the light Mr. worldly wise man inquired burden gate light what do you mean who sent you on your journey anyhow please sir a man named evangelist ah said Mr. worldly wise man with a scornful smile hmm so he deceived you too, what do you mean deceived me why don't you know that that man evangelist is nothing but a religious fanatic he has had no theological education all he does is to send people on a wild goose chase to a gate that doesn't exist and to follow a light

that will only blind you oh I wish you had met me before you had met him I would have given you some real advice advice based on a long experience in the wisdom of this world but alas alas I feel so sorry for you however did you get the idea you have a burden on your back gracious replied I got it from reading this book, the bible ah said Mr. worldly wise man, I thought so why don't you realize that book can only be understood by learned people like me, poor simpletons like you, reading that book get all sorts of queer ideas I'm afraid it's affected your mind and you don't exactly know what you're doing oh I feel would you like some real good advice advice based on a long experience in the wisdom of this world and he spoke with such assurance as though he knew what he was talking about

that poor gracious was taken in and said yes I would like some good advice well said Mr. worldly wise man think it all about what evangelist told you, don't try to read that bible anyhow, you can't understand it unless people like me interpret it to you think it all about that gate and that light you see way over yonder that hill called Mount Sinai yes sir, well make your way in that direction and when you get there you'll meet a friend of mine named Mr.

Lawyer he'll give you the right kind of instructions as to how to get rid of that burden, there now I'm sure you'll be very glad that you met me you have been greatly honored in listening to my expert advice and what do you think gracious did gracious followed the directions of Mr. worldly wise man turned his back to that light that he had been told to follow turned his feet from the narrow path to the path that led to Mount Sinai did he do the right thing or the wrong thing we'll learn what happens when a poor guilty sinner instead of going to the gate turns his feet in the direction of the law and the demands of the law represented by Mount Sinai presently when gracious came to Mount Sinai great mountain it seemed to be all on a smoke, from the top of that mountain, incapped with

clouds there came flashes of lightning, followed by terrifying peals of thunder and as gracious stood there a great earthquake shook that mountain and it seemed to him as though the whole mountain would fall on top of him, his burden increased tremendously and as he stood there terror stricken he heard the sound of a trumpet from the top of that mountain and these were the words he heard thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart with all thy soul with all thy strength and with all thy mind and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself as gracious heard those words his heart sank within him alas, alas he cried I have not loved God with all my heart and soul and mind and strength, I have not loved my neighbor as myself I have broken God's holy law oh what shall I do what shall I do

then came the sound of another trumpet which uttered these words of holy scripture cursed is everyone that does not do all the things that are written in the book of the law and when gracious heard that his heart paled within him out from that mountain there came a great flame and smoke poor gracious was hard put to avoid those flames that came licking at him as though eager to devour him alas, alas cried poor graceless I place myself under God's holy righteous law which demands what I cannot give, it demands perfection and I cannot give that perfection, oh what shall I do, what shall I do and he fell down upon his knees out came a great flame that almost devoured him and there lay poor graceless groaning

and crying and praying until presently he heard footsteps and looking up who should

he see coming down the mountain but evangelist evangelist had a stern look in his eye presently he put the question to graceless are you the man I saw outside the city of destruction yes sir answered graceless in a faint voice are you the man that I told to go to the gate yes sir are you the man I told to follow the light yes sir then what are you doing here did the light lead you to this place no sir then how did you come to be here and gracious replied I met a man named Mr. worldly wise man who told me sir that you were nothing but a religious fanatic that you didn't know what you were talking about that you had no theological training and that you only lived to send poor fools like me on a wild goose chase and I foolishly believed his words and I was led astray and now I find myself

under this dreadful mount Sinai the ten commandments pondering out their demands that I cannot meet and then pronouncing a curse upon me because I cannot fulfill all the commands that God has issued in his holy law oh sir I'm afraid this mountain will fall on me and kill me is there any hope for me evangelist answered sternly you deserve to die right now poor gracious almost passed out on the spot oh sir have mercy on me oh please please let me have another chance I've learned my lesson I've learned that by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God oh sir will you help me evangelist with a more kindly look in his eye more loving note in his voice gave to gracious his hand and said rise up and remember from now on pay no heed to anyone who seeks to turn your feet

from the path that leads to that gate to mount Sinai that man worldly wise man has never been born again by God's spirit he only has the wisdom of this world which is foolishness with God and when the world in its wisdom knew not God it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe for the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness but unto us which are saved it is the power of God that man worldly wise man is an enemy of the cross of Christ he has no time for Christ and him crucified and tries to lead sinners to a path when they shall be justified by their attempted obedience to the commandments that God has given in his holy law pay no heed to him for remember by grace are ye saved through faith not of works lest any man should boast and then he

gave instructions as to what to do return to the place from which you were turned aside pay no heed to anyone from this time on who seeks to turn your feet from that path that leads to the gate keep your eyes on that light and that light will bring you to that place where you'll receive instructions as to how to get rid of your burden of guilt and then evangelist pissed graceless and my how glad graceless was to escape with his life he learned the lesson that I hope each one here will learn and that is this that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be declared righteous when God gave the law he knew when he gave it that no one would ever keep that law then why did God give that law in order to show us how far short we have come of all his righteous demands all have sinned and come short

of the glory of God but alas many poor sinners try to save themselves by an attempt to keep the ten commandments but the more they seek to keep those ten commandments the more they realize that the law demands what they cannot possibly give and only condemns them brings them into the place of death here is Mr.

Lawyer doing his stuff look at these burdened sinners as they come to him one poor burdened sinner inquires oh Mr. Lawyer can you tell me how to get rid of my burden of sin and Mr. Lawyer replies oh yes do the best you can to all the people you can in all the ways you can as often as ever you can and who knows maybe one of these days you may turn up in heaven for the day of miracles is not yet over another

man comes to him oh Mr. Lawyer what must I do to get rid of the burden of my guilt and be fit to meet a holy God Mr.

Lawyer replies well try to keep the ten commandments all this advice of course is utterly in vain no one will ever be saved by keeping the ten commandments for in the first place each one of us has already broken many of those commandments and the breaking of even one of those commandments is the breaking of the whole law of God for God did not give ten laws but one law consisting of ten commandments and he that keepeth the whole law and offendeth in one point the same is guilty of all presently Christian came to the place from which he had been turned aside my how glad he was once more to see that kind light shining he followed the direction of that light and as he walked presently away ahead of him he saw a gate as he approached this gate he heard whizzing noises just like that he

didn't know what caused that noise he was to learn later on what it was but by now he came close to that gate above that gate he saw the words knock and it shall be opened unto you and so gracious knocked a voice inquired who is there gracious answered I'm a burdened sinner from the city of destruction I was sent from there by evangelist who told me sir you would give me instructions as to how to get rid of my burden of guilt may I come in and then a man named Goodwill came to the gate with a smile of welcome on his face holding out his hand he said welcome graceless in the name of the Lord Jesus him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out take my hand and as gracious took Goodwill's hand and was about to step across the threshold of that gate Goodwill jerked him in so forcefully

that gracious inquired why did you jerk me like that you little knew your danger as you stood outside that gate danger what danger do you not know that the devil has built a castle within bow shot of this gate and whenever he sees a pilgrim about to escape from his clutches by crossing the threshold of this gate he sends his evil men to the top of that castle with their bows and arrows if perchance they might shoot at that person and prevent him from taking that step which will deliver him from the devil's arrows and then gracious remembered that whizzing noise he had heard and he thanked God for his escape from the devil's arrows let's think a moment of the devil's arrows one thing is perfectly certain the devil doesn't want any person here to be saved he doesn't want anyone here to come

to Christ who said I am the way the truth and the life no man cometh unto the father but by me who said I am the door or the gate by me if any man enter in he shall be saved the devil doesn't want anyone to be saved you can depend on that and whenever he sees a poor burdened sinner about to escape from his clutches he fires these arrows at him and many a soul almost persuaded to be saved was struck by one of the devil's arrows and was lost when he was almost saved there was a king named Agrippa who listened to the apostle Paul preaching to him and he said to the apostle Paul almost persuaded thou me to become a Christian but alas one of the devil's arrows struck him and he never took that step which would have delivered him from Satan's arrows you will see three arrows in this picture one

on the left one on the middle and one on the right the one on the left we shall call the arrow of laughter this is an arrow that the devil uses with great effect whenever he sees a boy or a girl about to take that step and put his faith and trust in Christ as a burdened sinner he says listen if you become a Christian you trust Christ as your savior your friends will all laugh at you you lose your popularity folks will make fun of you they'll ostracize you they won't want your company anymore you lose your place in society don't become a Christian they'll laugh at you is this true? yes indeed your worldly friends may laugh when they hear that you trusted Christ as your savior and confessed Christ as the lord of your life and that from henceforth you are through with the world let them

laugh thousands of people have been laughed into hell but not one as far as I know has ever been laughed out of that dreadful place the person who fears the laugh of a worldly companion more than the wrath of God revealed against sin is foolish indeed don't let the devil cheat you out of your soul with the arrow of laughter the next arrow is the arrow of pleasure the devil will say if you come to Christ if you receive him by faith as your savior and own him as the lord of your life you'll have no more fun no more pleasure you'll be sad and unhappy for the rest of your life praying and singing psalms all day long all the joy of life will be gone and you'll be miserable and unhappy for the rest of your existence on earth is that true? no it's not true it's a lie there is no pleasure

comparable to that pleasure that comes from knowing Christ in his presence there is fullness of joy at his right hand there are pleasures for ever more while the child of God does not obtain his pleasures from the world he gets the true pleasure, the lasting pleasure that comes from knowing Christ as his savior, God as his father the holy spirit as his indwelling comforter, the word of God as his infallible guide Christians as his heaven born, heaven bound heaven bent companions and the celestial city as his eternal home the third arrow is the most successful of his arrows oh yes says the devil it's quite true that your name is graceless that you're a burdened sinner that if you die in your sins you'll be lost forever it's quite true that God loves you, it's quite true that the lord Jesus

on Calvary's cross in infinite grace allowed God to put all your sins on him in order that he by his death might satisfy all the claims of divine justice it's quite true that if you come to Christ as you are a poor guilty lost sinner believe that he loves you and died for you and receive him by faith as your savior and own him as the lord of your life you'll be saved it's all true but there's plenty of time how old are you now? you reply I'm eight you better wait till you're nine how old are you?

I'm nine you better wait till you're ten how old are you? I'm ten you better wait till you're eleven how old are you? I'm eleven you better wait till you're twelve and so he gets people to put off the matter of their soul salvation to a more convenient season which very often never comes there are thousands of souls in hell who intended to be in heaven they intended to put their faith and trust in Christ and be saved by God's grace but alas alas they kept putting it off putting it off putting it off and suddenly death came in before they were ready ushered them into an eternity of blackness and darkness forever God has only one time he's prepared to save you and that is now the devil's clock is either too fast or too slow either he tells you there's plenty of time or he assures you it's too late but God's time is now behold now is the accepted time behold now is the day of salvation do what grace has did right now take your place as a lost and burdened and guilty helpless hopeless hell deserving sinner believe Christ on the cross died for your sins trust him by faith as your own personal saviour own him as the lord of your life take that step of faith and you will be delivered from the devil's arrows may he grant it for his namesake amen

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