

# How to Escape Doubting Castle

by Eli Brayley

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*To escape Doubting Castle, pilgrims must remember to hold onto the Promise given by Jesus Christ and stay on the narrow path.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:105, Matthew 7:13, 2 Corinthians 1:20, Philippians 3:13, Hebrews 6:18

**Topics:** "Faith And Doubt", "Persevering Through Trials"

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## Description

Eli Brayley preaches about the perilous journey of pilgrims towards the Celestial City, focusing on the dangers of Doubting Castle and the torment inflicted by Giant Despair. He emphasizes the importance of staying on the narrow and straight path, resisting the allure of the comfortable meadow that leads to captivity and despair. Through the key of Promise given by Jesus Christ at the cross, trapped pilgrims can escape the clutches of Doubting Castle and continue their journey towards the Great City, learning valuable lessons of diligence and perseverance along the way.

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## Transcript

(This is an expository of Bunyan's immortal tale)

In the land there stands Doubting Castle, hidden beyond the eyes of the traveling pilgrims. Living inside the castle is the infamous Giant Despair, who takes great delight in the torture and humiliation of all who may be journeying to Celestial City.

So long as the pilgrims remain on the narrow and straight path they haven't anything to fear of the giant and his castle. But the trouble is that the path coincides with a lush meadow, comfortable for the feet and appealing to the eyes. The harsh conditions of the narrow path make the meadow seem even more alluring. An unseasoned pilgrim might easily persuade himself to step into the meadow, convinced the two sods lead in the same direction.

As surely as can be, when the pilgrims enter the meadow there arises a terribly dense storm, full of thick clouds and torrential rain. This makes the vision impaired and in this condition the wandering pilgrims lose sight of the narrow path. In desperation they often run hastily in the direction thought correct, but this leads them farther and farther away from the path itself. In the gross darkness of the storm, the pilgrims most assuredly miss the warning stone left by experienced pilgrims before them.

And thus many a pilgrim stumble upon the Giant Despair, who enslaves and locks them up in Doubting Castle. Despair, who is by now well-advanced in the arts of torment, will press and crush and squeeze almost every ounce of life left in the downtrodden travelers. Hopes of the Great City grow dim. Many pilgrims die in the castle, many bones lie cold and warm in the dungeon of this wicked castle.

But thanks be to our Lord Jesus Christ, whom at the cross gave every person who came that way a key of great importance called Promise. So small is this key that the Giant Despair always overlooks it in his search of their belongings. Though he takes away their weapons and armor, staffs and boots, the Giant, in the purpose of God, misses this small item. And how important it is! As long as the pilgrim forgets he has this key, he is lost and will not escape. But, as many of those trapped in the dungeon remember, they take hold of the Key called Promise and unshackle their wrists and ankles. The events that follow lead them to the outer gate of the castle (for every door in Doubting Castle can be opened, save the outer gate without waking the giant). With a deep breathe the key is turned and the giant is roused. But if the pilgrim be swift and set his face as flint to escape, he can outrun the giant and in doing so cause the felon to collapse over his own two feet! Once the giant is fallen he cannot rise again.

Those who escape Doubting Castle know never to stray from the path again. Almost every pilgrim who has come close to death in the Castle will never return to that place, and their vigor and earnest to reach the Celestial City is strengthened a sure tenfold! Though deadly indeed, the Castle provokes the travelers to diligence.

So if ye be a pilgrim; walk the straight and rocky path

Stray not from the original, nay, give no thought to that!

For if you do you'll run the risk of shackles and of shame

In Doubting Castle, wretched thought, the place of plight and pain.

He who would valiant be then take heed of this stone

And wander not, but fix your eyes on Christ and Christ alone!

And if the path be weary, sore, then lift your head to heav'n

And shout out loud: "O blessed Lord, Your Life, for me, hath given!

I'll run the faster and jump the higher to reach Thou precious Head

I'll look not to the left nor right nor back, but straight ahead."

Come onward! Push forward! You pilgrims in the flight,

To higher plains we run for Him who made our sin stains white!

And when we stand in the city bright our eyes will scare behold

Our blessed Saviour, risen Master... Jesus Christ our Lord!

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/eli-brayley/how-to-escape-doubting-castle/>

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