



FINDING FAITH: Small Group Bible Study inspired by the movie "The Pilgrim's Progress"

INTRODUCTION

The Pilgrim's Progress is a faithful animated adaptation of John Bunyan's 17th-century Christian allegory, chronicling the spiritual journey of Christian Pilgrim. Burdened by his sin, Christian flees his doomed home, the City of Destruction, toward the distant Celestial City (Heaven). His journey is a powerful depiction of the Christian life, filled with allegorical encounters that represent the struggles against sin, temptation, and doubt, and the ultimate reward of salvation found only through the Cross and perseverance in faith.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. FLEEING THE BURDEN OF SIN

Christian is portrayed as a man literally burdened by his sin, which only falls away when he reaches the Cross and Tomb of the King.

- Read Romans 7:24 and Romans 8:1-2. What does the heavy burden Christian carries symbolize about life before redemption? How does the moment his burden falls away at the Cross illustrate the spiritual reality of justification and the freedom found in Christ?



2. THE SNARES OF THE WORLD AND THE FLESH

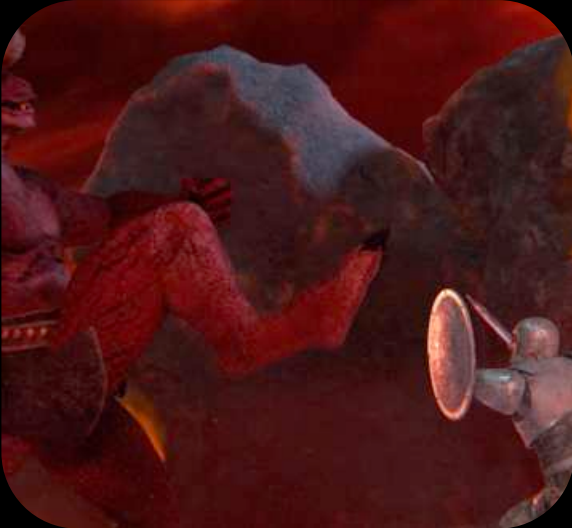
- Christian faces many temptations, including the Slough of Despond (doubt), the impossible rigidity of the Law of Moses (represented by the Worldly Wiseman), and the temptations of Vanity Fair (worldly pleasures and materialism).

- Read 1 John 2:15-16. How do the three main snares Christian faces (doubt, legalism, and lust of the eyes/flesh) demonstrate the varied ways the enemy attempts to derail a believer's progress? Which snare do you find most relatable to the modern Christian life?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

3. SPIRITUAL WARFARE AND PERSEVERANCE



- Christian must descend the Valley of Humiliation, where he engages in a physical battle with the demon Apollyon, and then passes through the terrifying Valley of the Shadow of Death.

- Read Ephesians 6:10-17. The Bible instructs us to put on the full armor of God because our struggle is against spiritual forces. What lessons does Christian's victory over Apollyon teach us about how believers are meant to engage in spiritual battles, and what role did his spiritual armor and sword (the Word of God) play in his defense?

4. THE FINAL PASSAGE: CROSSING THE RIVER OF DEATH

- Read 1 Corinthians 15:54-57. This passage celebrates the victory over death through Christ. Why do you think Bunyan chose to portray the final passage (death) as a terrifying river without a bridge?

- What does Hopeful's encouragement remind us about the power of hope and community in our final moments and the certainty of the promise on the other side?



REFLECTION & APPLICATION

Identify one "snare" or "valley" from Christian's journey that you are currently facing (e.g., Slough of Despond/doubt)

How can you use the spiritual armor and sword to gain victory, just as Christian did? Reflect on who the "Evangelist" or "Hopeful" figure is in your own life the one who encourages you to press toward the Celestial City.



PRAYER

Close the Bible study with a time of prayer, thanking God for sending the King (Jesus) to lift the heavy burden of sin at the cross.

Pray for courage and perseverance to face the spiritual battles in the Valley of Humiliation and to hold onto the hope of the Celestial City until the end of the journey.



CONCLUSION

The Pilgrim's Progress is a timeless allegory asserting that the Christian life is a journey of struggle, but it is one filled with divine help, the provision of the cross, and the certainty of the ultimate, glorious reward in the presence of the King.

