**Table of Contents**

Chapter 1: The Slough of Despond, The Burden of Sin................................. p.4
Chapter 2: The Interpreter’s House, Burden Lost, Heaven Gained........... p.8
Chapter 3: The Hill of Difficulty, Lions on Chains................................... p.11
Chapter 4: The Fight with Apollyon, The Full Armor of God............... p.15
Chapter 5: The Valley of the Shadow, God with Us................................. p.19
Chapter 6: Vanity Fair, Faithful to the End............................................ p.24
Chapter 7: Doubting Castle, The Key of Promise.................................. p.29
Chapter 8: The Dark River, Finishing Well............................................ p.33
Chapter 9: Christiana’s Story, Story in Review...................................... p.37

**About this Guide**

This devotional guide is meant to accompany
Dangerous Journey: The Story of Pilgrim's Progress by Oliver Hunkin.
Published by Eerdman’s Books for Young Readers, 1985.
126 pages. For ages 9-up. A video version is also available at Amazon.com.
Pilgrim’s Progress, even the Dangerous Journey version, is a dense story. On the first real page of the book, I counted at least 14 words my kids didn’t know. But even if your kids are like mine, they will benefit immeasurably from reading it with you!

Two things that might help you and your kids enjoy this book. First, don’t be a slave to the text. Bunyan didn’t intend his book to be a dusty tomb. Instead, use it as a springboard to talk to your kids about what’s in your heart and theirs! Share your own story of faith, trials, and tribulations, and encourage them to share their own stories with you.

Second, when dealing with thick texts like this (or the Bible!), here’s a simple method for teaching kids to enjoy difficult books:

**READ**

Read a small section of the text.

**SUMMARIZE**

Tell your child in simple language what it means. In other words, give him the big picture of the passage.

**ASK**

And then ask him a question to help him engage.

I know it sounds simple, and it may take a little practice, but it has really worked for us. And now, enough dawdling...we’re off to the Celestial City! As Augustine would say, “Tolle lege!” Take up and read.

- Emily Whitten
Chapter Summary: The Burden of Sin

Let's begin with the title page: a man reading a Bible with a burden on his back. Christian actually doesn’t start his journey until a few pages in, and the text itself doesn’t give much to help kids get oriented, so I think this image is worth dwelling on first. In fact, the original Pilgrim’s Progress spends a lot more time drawing out Christian’s state prior to his journey, so I hope I’m in keeping with the spirit of the text.

Critical to this picture and the story, we see 1) Christian has read God’s Word, 2) he is now burdened by his sin, and 3) he’s worried because he is under God’s judgement. While there is more that can be mined (and I’ll go through some of it below), this will be my focus in the notes and the activities.

In the next chapter, I’ll focus more on “the journey” and teasing out how Christian is called to rid himself of the burden and find the Celestial City.

Devotional Application

When we read the Bible, it tells us of our sin. It also tells us that the punishment for sin, apart from Jesus, is death. But there is hope for Christian—and for us—because Jesus has already made the most dangerous journey, through death on a cross, to take away the burden of sin from His children.

Bible Verses

- **MEMORY VERSE For Chapters 1 & 2, Romans 3:23**: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”
- **Proverbs 1:7**: God and His Word teach us our true state: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.”
- **Romans 6:23**: The punishment for sin apart from Jesus is death: “For the wages of sin is death.”

Activities

- **Object Lesson for The Burden of Sin**: Find a heavy object in your home and let your children try to carry it on their backs. I chose a wooden chair turned upside down and helped my children try to walk with it propped on their backs. If they can hold the object themselves, give them some mission such as walking around the house or to their room and back five times. Then introduce the word “burden” and ask them, has sin
ever felt like this to you? Has it ever made you sad or upset when you told a lie or hurt someone else? That’s just how Christian felt—“burdened” and sad because he had broken God’s law.

- **Drawing Activity**: Draw Christian’s burden on a piece of paper. Then ask your child to draw pictures of his own sin inside the circle. He might draw lips for lying, a toy he has snatched or coveted lately, food he has complained about having to eat, or the word “No” for times he has not obeyed or talked back when asked to do something.

- **Make-a-Book**: I’ll include one coloring page per chapter, so that if you staple them together at the end, you’ll have your own Pilgrim’s Progress picture book. For younger kids, a book without text may be best. But if you want to include text, you could have your child type a short summary or Bible verse, print it out, and paste it over the bottom of the coloring page. See the final Activities section on p. 38.

**Reading Notes**

These are notes to help you explain tough words or concepts to your kids. As an overall approach, I try to explain them with kid-friendly definitions as well as a stories from my own life or by asking the kids to supply a story. How have I been obstinate? How have they been pliable? Ever not cleaned up their room to play a little longer? I really want kids to see the villains as encapsulating some part of every man’s character.

- **City of Destruction**: I explain destruction as “tearing up something.” My kids are only 5 and 4, so I think it’s the best I can do within their vocabulary. Bible reference: Sodom’s destruction and Lot’s escape, Genesis 19.

- **Evangelist**: “Someone who tells people about Jesus.” Bible reference: One good, short example is Philip in Acts 8, “Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ.”

- **Obstinate**: Someone who is wrong but won’t change his mind, no matter what. Pharaoh is a great example. See Exodus. Ever been obstinate? Ever found it hard to forgive someone, even though God had forgiven you? A great point for sharing about your own sin, parents.

- **Pliable**: Someone who just does what is easy. (easily bent or swayed.) See Peter when he denies Jesus in Mark 14:66. He just says whatever is easy at the moment, and regrets it later. Ask your kids if they have ever gone along with someone even though they knew it was wrong.

- **The Slough of Despond**: Bunyan doesn’t give a lot of info on this one, but one online dictionary says despond is discouragement. My kids don’t know that word, so I told them it’s a place of despair and giving up. That’s something we know A LOT about at my house. Have your kids ever laid out on the floor in despair of having to clean their room? Ask them about how they felt. My guess is the pictures of Christian kind of sum it up. Bible Reference: Peter after he betrayed Christ is another good example of this. Mark 14:66-72.
- **Mr. Worldly Wiseman**: My littlest one says it’s someone who knows what to do when he cuts his finger, but doesn’t know about God. (ha) Perhaps a little more pointedly, he’s someone who despises God’s Word and offers some other way to God. A great question here is to ask your kids how they can go to heaven. Anything other than Jesus’ blood and righteousness is the answer of Mr. Worldly Wiseman. Bible Reference: Simon the Sorcerer who tried to buy spiritual gifts from the apostles. *Acts 8: 18-19.*

- **Mr. Legality**: Someone who offers to help Christian get relief from sin with more/better laws. If a horse doesn’t have wings, would it help to give him an instruction manual on flying? Of course not. Likewise, we need something besides the law to be saved. *Luke 18:9-14.* Also, the mountain represents Sinai where Moses received the Law, but I didn’t bring that out to my kids at this point.

- **The Wicket Gate**: a small door into the place Christian will find Christ and lose his burden. *Matthew 7: 13.* “Enter through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction...”
Chapter Summary: A Burden Lost, Heaven Gained

In this section, Christian comes into the Wicket Gate, is taught by the Interpreter (or the Holy Spirit) spiritual lessons, and he loses his burden at the Cross. He also begins his journey anew, this time without the weight of his sin. Through Christ, he gains both freedom from the burden of sin now, and a parchment—the promise of his citizenship in the Celestial City.

Devotional Application

In Christ, we find forgiveness for our sins. But like Christian, justification for us is only the beginning. Through the power of the cross, we also gain a new hope and a new destination. We’ll talk more about the Celestial City later. For now, help your kids revel in the great salvation God has accomplished for His people. Sinful, confused, ragged people like us, now made eternally beautiful and glorious in His sight! What great news!

Bible Verses

- MEMORY VERSE For Chapters 1 & 2, Romans 3:23: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”
- Matthew 11:28: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”
- Colossians 2:13-14: “And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.”

Activities

- Object Lesson, Treasure Hunt: Now that his burden has been removed, Christian can begin his journey to the Celestial City in earnest. (In the original, the previous emphasis had been on his journey to the wicket-gate.) In order to get kids excited about such a “dangerous journey”, why not have your own treasure hunt? Pick a favorite toy or candy—maybe include a piece of paper with this week’s memory verse on it—and hide it in your house. Then draw a rough treasure map for your little ones follow. If you’re really into it, you could pile up a bunch of pillows as a dangerous part they have to
climb. Or lay down a sheet, call it the Slough of Despond, make the kids crawl across it pretending it's muddy. Be as creative as you like, and just have fun!

- **Drawing Activity:** Using the map at the end of this guide, have your children draw a map of Christian's journey. You can pull it out during each reading time and let your kids follow along. Or for a simpler activity, print the map provided in black and white and have them color it. If you really want to be creative, draw the features yourself and label them with your own temptations.

- **Make-a-book:** Don't forget to color your book page for this chapter!

### Reading Notes

- **Simple:** I defined this to my kids as someone who just isn’t very smart. Dictionary.com says it’s “An ignorant, foolish, or gullible person.” Have you ever known anyone who couldn’t see the danger of sin? Couldn’t see that “it is appointed to men once to die, and after that the judgement.” Though I know we are but a vapor, I often spend my days thinking about really dumb stuff instead of constructive, godly things. For instance, what I should have said to get back at the guy who irritated me at the bank. How bout you and your kids?

- **Sloth:** Hmm. The easiest definition here has to be laziness. Need I expound on this one? When we lay in the floor and cry instead of cleaning up our room would qualify. (But maybe that’s just my family. My kids are pretty expressive.) Bible Reference: [Proverbs 6:6](#).

- **Presumption:** “Everything’s gonna be just fine.” This fellow assumes all will be well, when in reality he is in desperate danger. Most folks I talk to about the gospel seem to fall into this category. I’m afraid I often overlook the means of grace such as prayer and fasting because I presume too much as well. What do you and your kids think you can do without God’s help?

- **Goodwill:** Janie pointed out that in a later book, Goodwill is named as Christ. Bible Reference: [John 14:6](#). However, obviously our book doesn’t use that interpretation in the illustrations. No matter how you interpret him, though, as Isaac Watts wrote:

  Twas the same love that spread the feast  
  That sweetly drew us in;  
  Else we had still refused to taste,  
  And perished in our sin.

- **House of the Interpreter:** Here Christian is taught many spiritual lessons, and we may safely assume that the Interpreter is the Holy Spirit. I have often wondered why the Holy Spirit didn’t go with Christian to the cross, but as a general principle, it’s probably best not to push the allegory too far. Every metaphor breaks down at some point, and we needn’t try to find every jot and tittle of Biblical truth in Bunyan’s allegory. Bible Reference: [John 14:26](#).

- **The Wayside Cross and the Grave:** Christian’s sin falls off at the sight of the cross, and by Christ’s sacrifice, it is put to death forever in the grave.
Chapter Summary: Lions in Chains

Salvation is the beginning of the battle. In Chapter 3, Christian is now “free of his burden and light of foot,” yet suddenly two strangers appear to try him. And that’s only right, for Bunyan understood what C. H. Spurgeon so eloquently said, “Mark then, Christian, Jesus does not suffer so as to exclude your suffering. He bears a cross, not that you may escape it, but that you may endure it. Christ exempts you from sin, but not from sorrow. Remember that, and expect to suffer.” And so we follow Christian up the Hill of Difficulty, where he meets with new dangers. But in this chapter’s high point of danger—when Christian is faced with the lions ahead of the Palace Beautiful—he learns from the porter, “Fear not the lions. They are on long chains. If you keep strictly to the beam of light, in the center of the path, they cannot reach you.”

Devotional Application

Just as Christian quickly learned that his journey was fraught with new dangers, so we and our children ought to think of the Christian life as a dangerous journey. For Christ himself warns us, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.” However, just as Christian found the lions who threatened to devour him were held on chains, so we can rest in His providence for our lives. We will never suffer more than we can bear, and we will never suffer purposelessly. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.” (Rom. 8:28)

Questions:

- Have you ever felt like Christian? Have you ever felt like not following God because His way was just too hard?
- What does God tell us about our difficulties?

Bible Verses

- MEMORY VERSE for Chapters 3 & 4, Psalm 27:1: “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”
- Luke 9:23-24: “And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.”
- Matthew 10:29-31: “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.
Activities

- **Object Lesson, The Lord is My Light:** One of the most enjoyable morning devotionals we had when my kids were very young was when I took them into our closet, turned out the light, and shut the door. It was totally pitch black for the first time in their little lives. We were suffering through lots of anxiety at night about the dark, so this was pretty edgy stuff. Kinda like asking Christian to face down those lions. As we sat in the dark, my kids started to wiggle and laugh nervously and ask for the light. Then I told them that God had made light to show us something about himself. Light wasn’t just something God saw and said, I’m a little like that. No, God created light to express something about him. I told them that Jesus had said, “I am the light of the world,” and that He is our light. Then I turned on the bright lamp I had brought in with us and suddenly the closet filled not only with light, but with the sight of mommy and sister and beautiful colors. They gasped and whooped and clapped! Light!! I asked them questions about how they felt in the darkness, not being able to see anyone or anything. I think they felt very alone and uneasy about what might be around them. But they felt instinctively the relief and joy of light as they never had before when I turned on the lamp. For today’s object lesson, find the darkest room in your house and give this one a try. For folks with older kids, you might ratchet up the fun by pretending to be a bear or shark or something and “get” them in the darkness. But my guess is they’ll appreciate the light turning on just as much as my kids and I did.

- **Drawing Activity:** Ask your child to think of a situation where he has felt afraid. Where he has felt something was too difficult and that God might not take care of him. Then help him cut strips of paper, staple them in connecting loops to make a chain. (You can get instructions here.) Tell him to remember that just like God had put Christian’s lions on a chain, so all our difficulties and sorrows will never be more than we can bear with His help. God has them “on a chain” too.

- **Make-a-Book:** Don't forget to do this chapter's coloring page for your book!

Reading Notes

- **Formalist:** Q. Have you gone to church to show off your new clothes? Or maybe because you wanted other people to think you were good? A. A formalist is someone who does outward religious things for some other reason than love or obedience to God. And that isn’t pleasing to God at all. Bible Reference: Matthew 6:5.

- **Hypocrisy:** Q. Have you ever told on your brother for snatching a toy, and then snatched from him later on? A. When you say the right thing and do another, that’s hypocrisy. (Parents, this is a pretty easy one to share your own struggles with your kids. How often do we as parents not practice what we teach, whether in terms of patience or always being kind or never grumbling and complaining in our hearts?)

- **Slumber in the Pleasant Arbor:** Q. How often do we choose the easy, restful thing when we could do some work for God? Video games instead of writing a letter to
Grandmother? Reading a book when we could rake our home-bound neighbor’s leaves? Bible Reference: “A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a thief, and scarcity like an armed man.” Proverbs 24:33.

- **Timorous**: Definition: “full of apprehension; timid” or afraid of everything.
- **Mistrust**: Q. Have you ever felt the Lord couldn’t be trusted in something? Mistrust and Timorous make a great pair, since what makes us afraid to the point of disobedience is a lack of trust in the Lord.
- **Palace Beautiful**: Q. What is the most beautiful place you’ve ever been to? The fellowship, kindness, and help Christian receives here is a wonderful picture of the idea of beauty. While the characters here are mostly women and portrayed as physically beautiful, their beauty is also in their actions toward Christian and their saltiness or savoriness in terms of reflecting God’s own heart. I can’t help but think of our role as parents—especially moms—in creating a beautiful place for our families. How I pray that Christian mothers would be given grace to provide such beauty for their families, loving them and equipping them through Christ for the battles of the spirit to come.
- **Watchful**: He is able to help because he keeps his attention focused on the road taken by weary travelers. Are your eyes on the road? Do you see the struggles of people around you? Do you pray for wisdom in order to be able to help in time of need?
Chapter Summary: The Full Armor of God

In our chapter today, Christian is given encouragement and equipped for battle—including a helmet, breastplate, shield, and sword—by his friends in the House Beautiful. Not long after he sets out again on his journey, though, he is espied by the Foul Fiend Apollyon who is determined to subdue or kill him. In the battle, however, Christian manages to mortally wound Apollyon, and after Apollyon retreats, he is healed of his wounds.

Devotional Application

We have already covered how Christian was tripped up by his own fears (Slough of Despond) as well as temptations of the world (see Formalist and Hypocrisy, or Vanity Fair to come). But every Christian should be aware of the very real spiritual warfare that goes on around us everyday. If we would raise our children to be able to withstand the Apollyons of our world, then we must prepare them for spiritual warfare. Which Paul describes below as putting on the armor of God.

Bible Verses

- **MEMORY VERSE for Chapters 3 & 4, Psalm 27:1**: “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”
- **Ephesians 6:10-18**: “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”
- The other main Bible passage that illuminates this section of the book is Matthew 4:1-11. It’s too long to quote here, but I highly recommend reading it to your children.
Activities

- **Object Lesson/Craft, The Shield of Faith**: Create a shield. If you have cardboard or poster board on hand, you can create one that your child could actually play with. If not, you can use craft paper or even the back of wrapping paper to create a shield to decorate your child’s room. Here is a link to photo-based step-by-step instructions on how to create a shield out of cardboard. The instructions don’t say how to make a handle, but to do that, you can cut one small strip of cardboard (3” x 8”) and duct tape the ends of the strip to the back. (Or Google “kids' cardboard shield” for more options.) As for coloring or painting options, this site is really fun. Your child can virtually create a coat of arms, print it out, and either use it as a guide to decorate by, or depending on how large your shield is, color the prints, cut them out and use them as decorations on the shield.

- **Drawing Activity**: Have your child draw some of the armor Christian wears. It certainly doesn’t have to be fine art, and if they need help, you can actually help them copy the ones in Dangerous Journey. Just turn to p. 53 and using normal copy paper from your printer, place the copy paper over the sword or the shields and breastplates on the wall and draw the outlines. If your kid is really into drawing, you can show him this video on how to draw a shield. After they have drawn several pieces of armor, open your Bible to Ephesians 6: 10-17, and read them Paul’s description of the armor of God. Help them to label each piece of armor as Paul does—“shield of faith” or “breastplate of righteousness,” etc. Discuss the spiritual ideas entailed in each one. And when you’re done, of course, you can let them color each piece.

- **Make-a-book**: Don't forget to do your coloring page for this chapter!

Reading Notes

- **House Beautiful**: Most of this chapter revolves around Christian’s fight with Apollyon. We are told of his succor in House Beautiful, but most of the text is focused on his preparations for battle. I do think it’s worth mentioning that the women’s care for him is made joyful in that they share Christian’s love for the Lord of the hill. I don’t think my children are old enough yet to understand this kind of community, but I am praying for them in that regard—and I should pray more. It might be worth pointing out to them that although Christian has chosen a hard way, God has also marked out for him special beauties—including the friendship of very lovely people and wonderful sights of glory to come. Maybe you could tell your kids about a special time of rest and fellowship the Lord gave you in your walk?

- Rather than breakdown Christian’s fight with Apollyon, I think the most revealing commentary I could arm you with is actually Matthew 4:1-11. For kids who are old enough, I highly recommend reading it to them before reading this chapter. Ask them what they find the same as or different from Christian’s fight with Apollyon. Here are a few things that might be worth pointing out to them:
1. First of all, Jesus counters every temptation of Satan with a Bible verse. As opposed to Christian’s real sword, God’s Word is Jesus’s sword for battle.

2. The first temptation both of Jesus and Christian is the offer of an easy way out. Jesus was hungry, and Satan told him to make himself bread to alleviate his hunger. Christian is told he may avoid a battle with Apollyon if he will just go back home. Ask your children if they have ever been tempted to take the easy way out? To disobey God so as to avoid some difficulty?

3. In the second temptation of Jesus, Satan twists a truth—that God would take care of His Son—into something sinful. In like manner, Apollyon tells Christian something true about himself—namely that Christian isn’t worthy of God’s love or His protection. Have you ever been tempted to give up when you saw your own weakness? Saw how your desire to do good things was mixed with vain-glory—or trying to make yourself look good? Even so, as Christian says, “Yet the King whom I serve is merciful and ready to forgive.” How does God’s mercy protect us against the accuser?

4. Christian’s final temptation is very much like Jesus’s. Apollyon declares he will reward Christian if he will only obey him. Have your children ever thought they could find reward or peace through sinful means? How about the last time they whined and complained to get out of doing something? But God will not be mocked. The wages of sin is death, as Christian declares, and any thought of obtaining life and happiness through them will be sorely disappointed.
Chapter Summary: God With Us

Today, following his fight with Apollyon and the healing his wounds, Christian enters the Valley of the Shadow. In a reference to the 23rd Psalm, he passes what appears to be the mouth of hell, assaulted by invisible spirits and traveling his most treacherous ground yet. His danger is physical, but it is no less mental and spiritual. In the midst of his troubles, he hears someone ahead reciting the 23rd Psalm, and he is encouraged to continue the journey, reminded that even among all this darkness, God is with him.

Devotional Application

Like Christian, even when there is no Apollyon upon us, the road we and our children walk is treacherous. We are buffeted by physical dangers—cancer, car crashes, broken limbs, thieves and robbers. Also like Christian, we are tried by fear, despair, and “base suggestions.” Yet as we walk through those difficulties, we are assured God is with us. After all, that is what Immanuel—one of Jesus’s names—actually means!

Bible Verses

- **MEMORY VERSE for Chapters 5 & 6, Job 29:3:** “When his lamp shone upon my head, and by his light I walked through darkness...”

- **Matthew 1:20-23:** “But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.’ All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ‘The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel’ (which means ‘God with us’).”

- **Psalm 23:** The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
  He makes me lie down in green pastures.
  He leads me beside still waters.
  He restores my soul.
  He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.
  Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
  I will fear no evil,
  for you are with me;
  your rod and your staff,
  they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

Activities

- **Object Lesson, Walking With God:** Set up an obstacle course using every day chairs and toys in one room. Include a rope or row of socks as an imaginary tight rope for the kids to walk. Blindfold one child at one end of the room, and you and the other children stand on the other. Give him the signal to go, and all of you attempt to shout directions to the blindfolded child to help him to the other side. Hopefully this will result in a bit of chaos, and if so, you can ask the blindfolded child to choose one person to direct him. If mere directions aren’t enough, the director may need to walk over and even take the hand of the blindfolded child, leading him to safety. To apply the lesson, just ask your kids if they ever feel like the blindfolded kid—maybe feeling alone and not sure what is the best way to go. If they don’t, you can assure them they will someday. But like Christian, we can trust God to take care of us because He can see everything we can’t—and He is always with us to guide us and encourage us in our journey.

- **Drawing Activity:** One of the things I have done with my kids in the past is, when they have a particular fear, I’ve asked them to imagine the fearful situation, but this time with Jesus standing with them. If you’re comfortable having them draw a picture of Jesus, you could ask them to draw themselves in a place they have been afraid (maybe the first day of school or first time in swim lessons), but also draw Jesus watching over them. For those who might prefer a less literal representation, you could have your child draw a sun to represent the light of heaven shining down into their dark places or the wind blowing to represent the presence of the Holy Spirit in those trials.

- **Make-a-book:** Time to color the page for your book!

Reading Notes

Our version skips a number of characters that Bunyan covers—folks such as Pope and Talkative. We also lose some of the richness of the symbolism such as that used for the Valley of the Shadow itself. I thought a few passages might be worth putting in here for you guys who aren’t able to read the original text yourself.
• **Bunyan’s Valley:** “I saw then in my dream, so far as this valley reached, there was on the right hand a very deep ditch; that ditch is it into which the blind have led the blind in all ages, and have both there miserably perished. [Ps. 69:14,15] Again, behold, on the left hand, there was a very dangerous quag, into which, if even a good man falls, he can find no bottom for his foot to stand on. Into that quag King David once did fall, and had no doubt therein been smothered, had not HE that is able plucked him out.”

• **The Mouth of Hell:** “About the midst of this valley, I perceived the mouth of hell to be, and it stood also hard by the wayside. Now, thought Christian, what shall I do? And ever and anon the flame and smoke would come out in such abundance, with sparks and hideous noises, (things that cared not for Christian’s sword, as did Apollyon before), that he was forced to put up his sword, and betake himself to another weapon called All-prayer. [Eph. 6:18] So he cried in my hearing, “O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul!” [Ps. 116:4] …Yet the fiends seemed to come nearer and nearer; but when they were come even almost at him, he cried out with a most vehement voice, “I will walk in the strength of the Lord God!” so they gave back, and came no further.”

• **Pope:** The makers of this book (and presumably first the video) chose to totally cut out the giant Pope. Bunyan actually gave very little info as to what Pope stood for, besides the name, and I don’t think I’ll add it for my children at this point. That said, I think Bunyan was right to perceive that many ancient religious traditions, whether Christian or non-Christian in name, often exalt man and his thoughts above God’s Word, and in so doing, they are very deadly. Here are his original comments, if you’re interested: “Now I saw in my dream, that at the end of this valley lay blood, bones, ashes, and mangled bodies of men, even of pilgrims that had gone this way formerly; and while I was musing what should be the reason, I espied a little before me a cave, where two giants, POPE and PAGAN, dwelt in old time; by whose power and tyranny the men whose bones, blood, and ashes, &c., lay there, were cruelly put to death. But by this place Christian went without much danger, whereat I somewhat wondered; but I have learnt since, that PAGAN has been dead many a day; and as for the other, though he be yet alive, he is, by reason of age, and also of the many shrewd brushes that he met with in his younger days, grown so crazy and stiff in his joints, that he can now do little more than sit in his cave’s mouth, grinning at pilgrims as they go by, and biting his nails because he cannot come at them.

As for helping you apply our passage to your kids’ minds, here are a couple of entry points:

• First, when Christian cries out in prayer to God, and cries aloud to scare away his tormenters, you could ask your children if they have ever done that—prayed out loud to God in their difficulties. Tell them that the old Puritans never prayed silently, but they spoke to God out loud just as any other friend who was in the room with them. And you can encourage them to try it sometime when they feel discouraged—to think out loud and plead to God with heart AND voice. Parents, this is especially useful for kids to see YOU do, as it shows them how you handle difficult situations and models not only real, heartfelt prayer, but also how God answers you in the real difficulties of daily life. (I certainly wish I did this more often and perhaps a little more reverently!)
- **Pagan:** A lot of folks use the word paganism to describe either polytheistic faiths or faiths outside the “Abrahamic” faiths—Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. Another definition is anyone who is an irreligious or hedonistic person. My best but totally uneducated guess is that, paired with Pope, for Bunyan these two giants cover any religion that seeks to give us relationship with God without Christ. (But I’d really appreciate some insight from those of you who might be more learned on this particular point!)

- **Faithful & Wanton:** While my kids won’t get most of this and we’ll just call Wanton a “bad lady”, it’s probably worth telling them that Faithful’s temptations and difficulties were different than Christian’s, just like ours will be different from everyone else’s. Maybe you could describe here some of your own struggles that are different from your spouse’s or a grandparent’s.

- **One of You Will Die:** Why would God allow one of them to die? (And why bother telling them beforehand?) While the next section describes the death of one of the travelers in a unique way that will help kids process the event, you might reassure them here that death isn’t the end. It’s simply taking the shortest road to heaven. Not joyful, of course, but not something to despair over. It certainly doesn’t mean God is abandoning one of them, for He will be with them through it all and bring them safely home no matter what.
Chapter Summary: Faithful to the End

As our narrator says, “Most fairs are merry places. But not this one—not for our travellers. For here one of them was destined to die.” What ought to have been a place of fun and beauty—with a British Row and Italian Row, etc., each representing the graces God had given to unique nations—was in fact a never-ending parade of lies and murder and conceit. From Christian’s and Faithful’s early attempts to slip by merchants unnoticed, through their arrest, prison time, and trial and finally Faithful’s death—the defining characteristic of this city is Vanity: vain rebellion against God and chasing after nothing. Yet however faithless the city of Vanity was toward God and His people, God was still faithful. And in this chapter, we are given a beautiful picture of how He kept Faithful even through death. He is also faithful to Christian, who escapes with the help of new friend, Hopeful, and together they pass unscathed by Demas and the hill of Lucre.

Devotional Application

We and our children may not face physical death because of our love of Christ. Some of us may. (A point worth meditating on.) But all of us are guaranteed to face the temptations of vanity. It is a city we all pass through. If we are to remain faithful to Christ in the face of such temptations, we must seek His help, and depend on Him. For He alone is the source of all beauty and glory, and He is eternally faithful to His children.

Bible Verses

- **MEMORY VERSE for Chapters 5 & 6, Job 29:3:** “When his lamp shone upon my head, and by his light I walked through darkness...”
- **Matthew 6:33:** “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness. And all these things shall be added unto you.”
- **Matthew 6: 19-21:** “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Activities

- **Object Lesson, Not For Sale:** First, set about ten or so worthless things from around your home on a table. Note: don’t just use things that are worthless in YOUR eyes. Use things that would be worthless in their eyes too. Here are a few ideas: several rolls of
toilet paper, a piece of paper that says “You’re Great!” in ugly writing, used construction paper, a kleenex, an empty CD case, an empty trash can, dirty socks, etc. Next, give your children each something they highly value. For younger kids, it may be a couple of cookies or a candy bar. For older ones, it may be a couple of dollars. Then ask them to come to the wonderful festival or fair you’ve made. Sit behind the table like a merchant and attempt to get the kids to trade their valuable thing for your worthless junk. Tell them all the wonderful virtues of your wares. “Wouldn’t you like to give me your candy bar? You can have this really awesome trash can. See how it smells? C’mon, you know you want a gently used trash can! It’s got something yellow in it, and yellow is your favorite color! Just give me your candy bar and you can have it!”

After you’ve all had enough fun, ask them to sit down (and maybe let them eat their candy or pocket their money), and explain the symbolism. “It’s pretty easy not to give away something you love for junk like this, isn’t it? But what if the great thing you had wasn’t a candy bar? What if it was Jesus and eternal life? And what if instead of selling things that were obviously stupid, I tried to sell you neat things like [insert stuff they like here] dresses or new cars or pirate ships or even candy bars? Would you be willing to trade your love for God to get those good things? What if someone told you that if you didn’t buy them, you would have to go to jail or be killed?”

You can summarize by saying when Christian and Faithful went into Vanity Fair, people wanted them to give up their faith to buy junk. And in the end, Faithful had to die because He wouldn’t give in. You could even talk about countries where that happens a lot. Pray and ask God to help His people not seek good things in a way that is sinful and not to give in even if it means we have to be hurt or killed.

• Drawing Activity: Have your child to draw something he would really, really like to have. Then ask him if someone offered it to him, and all he had to do was to give up eternal life and turn his back on Jesus, what would he say? Could he say no like Faithful? After getting him to ponder this, you can also remind him that God says in the next life, He will “freely give us all things.” We just have to be patient.

• Coloring Page/Make-a-Book: Time to color again!

Reading Notes

• Vanity: As we take up this chapter, Christian and Faithful press on to the city of Vanity. The writer of Ecclesiastes (presumably Solomon) gives us a pretty striking image for vanity: “a striving after wind.” What strikes me about this city is that in it good things, blessings such as sex and material goods and delights to the eye and tongue and ear, are here loved and worshiped apart from God, and therefore they are deadly.

• Vanity Fair: My kids didn’t get the word “fair”, but they understood “festival” instead. We talked a little about the French Row meaning from a row of stuff from France, etc. But most of my description went into telling them that these sellers were selling things that weren’t helpful or good. Or if they were good, people were using them in a vain or foolish way. I gave them the example that a vain woman might come buy a fancy new dress at this fair, and everyone would think she was really important and beautiful. But
what if to pay for the dress, she had left her children at home with no food? Everyone would think she was a great woman, but really she was cruel and unloving. She preferred the attention of being beautiful to caring for her children. Biblical Reference: Genesis 25: 29-34, when Esau sells his birthright for a bowl of soup. Esau exhibits in that passage a similar kind of fleshly indulgence at the expense of his character and his responsibility toward his family.

- **Knick-knacks of gold and silver, baubles, etc.** Q. What’s wrong with all these things? Does God not want us to have pretty things? A. Here’s a great place to introduce the “Seek ye first” Bible reference. God will give his people far more beautiful things than these. But He will do so in a way that is edifying and satisfying, and that brings us closer to Him.

- **Titles, honours, and preferments** Q. Would you trade a chocolate cookie (or $10) for a piece of paper that said you were a princess or a prince? A. Of course not, because a piece of paper doesn’t actually make you a princess. These people were deceived because they didn’t realize only GOD can give honors that mean anything. Only God’s opinion of us matters in the end. But these people didn’t care what God thought, and so they couldn’t ever truly be important people. They were chasing after wind.

- **Why aren’t you buying our merchandise?** Q. Why did people hate Christian and Faithful? What was different about them? A. At first, they didn’t like them because their clothes and the way they talked were different. But the thing that got them put in jail was that they wouldn’t buy their “vain” stuff. In saying no to the people, they were seen as judging them—saying they were wrong—and that made the people angry. Can you think of a time when that might happen today? Maybe a parent could tell about a time when he or she did buy vain stuff to keep from being thought uncool? (I can certainly think of many example—for instance, the time I paid over $70 for some jeans that wouldn’t fit!)

- **Placed in a Cage**: We live in a culture that doesn’t usually put people in jail for being a Christian. But that hasn’t always been the case, and it still happens in many other countries. Bible Reference: Acts 21, when Paul is placed in jail in Jerusalem. Could also talk about a current example of this—China, India, Iran….Here’s one conversation starter about China.

- **Envy, Superstition, and Pickthank**: These come in such rapid succession that I didn’t dare try to explain the symbolism behind them. I was interested enough to look up the definition of Pickthank: “One who strives to put another under obligation; an officious person; hence, a flatterer.” I actually preferred Noah Webster’s summary from 1811: “a whispering parasite.” But it’s not necessary to know that for your kids to get the drama here. The main thing is that these people didn’t like Christian and Faithful because they didn’t love God. Faithful’s response summarizes things quite well. He says, “…your Laws and your Religion are flat against the Word of God.”

- **Judge and Jury**: Most kids probably won’t get a lot of the courtroom stuff either. But so long as they know these are the men who decide what will happen to Faithful, that’s probably enough. My kids’ related the judge to mom or dad who ask them what they did wrong and then tell them whether they should have a punishment.
• **Death:** Death isn’t the end for Faithful, and my kids were really impressed that he got to take a short-cut home. Bible Reference: Stephen’s martyrdom in Acts 7. Q. How is God faithful to Faithful? How is God faithful in a different way to Christian and Hopeful? This part of the story is really my focus this chapter, so see above for more Bible References and devotional application.

• **City of Fair-Speech:** Similar to Vanity, Fair-Speech is a place of folks who “talk good” but have evil in their hearts. The focus here seems to be on money, since “it was a place where Money ruled, and where Religion went in silver slippers.” Q. Have you ever known anyone who said nice things at first but hurt you later on? Have you ever acted that way toward others? Bible Reference: Acts 19, in which the people in Ephesus whose fought Christianity because it took away their business.

• **Hill of Lucre (money):** Bunyan includes so many Scripture references here and for the previous page that I really don’t think I’ll even attempt to sum it up. Highly recommend reading that section of the original, though, if you’d like ideas to help your kids think through the temptations of money. You can find it at paragraphs {259} through {276} or so in the [free Project Gutenberg version](https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1317/1317-h/1317-h.htm).
Chapter Summary: The Key of Promise

After surviving Vanity Fair and the hill of Lucre, Christian and Hopeful “espied a stile which led into a meadow, and seemed to be a short-cut.” But of course, there are no short-cuts in a Christian’s path, and what first seemed a pleasant way soon turned into a terrible trial. They are pummeled by a thunderstorm and soon discovered by the Giant Despair to be trespassing on the grounds of his own Doubting Castle. They spend the next few days in the dungeon of the castle without food, drink, and barely any hope of escape. Yet for all the cruelty of the giant, Hopeful won’t let Christian give up, and “as so often happens in dreams, when things are desperate—Christian suddenly remembered. ‘I have in my pocket,’ he said, ‘an old key called Promise. It might just fit the lock.’”

Devotional Application

Doubting Castle and the Giant Despair represent the trouble we feel when we doubt God, when we forget His promises “never to leave us nor forsake us.” Yet however painful life becomes, we need not give into despair. We may escape with Hopeful’s simple but profound statement of belief from the original version, “I… believe, too, that this shall be for our good.”

Bible Verses

- MEMORY VERSE for Chapters 7 & 8, Jeremiah 29:11: “‘For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”
- Romans 8:28: “All things work together for good to those who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose.”

Activities

- Object Lesson, Key of Promise: Stand with your kids at your front door. Let them see you lock the door, and then ask them to close their eyes while you hide the key nearby. When you’re done, explain that there is a giant coming and you have to get into the house right away or he’ll take you all to his dungeon. Tell him he has five minutes or some short amount of time to find the KEY OF PROMISE and unlock the door for you or else! “Now on your mark, get set, go!” You can play it up saying, “Oh, no, I hear him coming! He’s getting closer! I think he’s really hungry….” If they can’t find the key or need help with the lock, you can of course jump in. When you’ve found the key and are safe again, explain that often when we feel afraid or sad it’s because we doubt God.
really loves us and will take care of us. Maybe tell them of a time when you felt that way. Then remind them that no matter what happens, no matter how we feel, God has promised to take care of us. His promise is the key that keeps us safe. And since He can’t tell a lie, we can trust Him and His word. Follow up with this week’s memory verse.

- **Craft/Food Activity:** When you’ve conquered your giant, here’s simple recipe for Giant Eyeballs that my kids love: take a Campfire-sized marshmallow, hollow out a small tunnel in the middle, and let them pour chocolate syrup into the hole. Then let them “eat up” their despair. Or if you prefer, you can draw a large key and have the children write the memory verse inside it; then color it.

- **Coloring/Make-a-book Project:** Getting close to the end of our book project! Don’t forget to color this week's coloring page.

**Reading Notes**

- **A Short-cut:** Ask your kids if they have ever tried to take a short cut that turned out badly? Maybe they didn’t study enough for a test, or maybe they didn’t save their money for something they needed. Or maybe like my brother, they stuffed every single pair of their underoos under the bed so as not to have put them in the dirty clothes. Then as you read the next few pages, point out to them that often what Christian thought—and what we think—would make life easier just makes it more difficult. Ooh, I just thought of a good one—lying to cover up sin. So often our kids (and maybe we?) think that lying will make it easier on them when they’ve done wrong, but really it just makes the problem worse.

- **Stile:** Dictionary.com says a stile is “a series of steps or rungs by means of which a person may pass over a wall or fence that remains a barrier to sheep or cattle.” Also a turnstile.

- **In the Wrong, p. 89:** So often when we are gloomy, we have brought some of the suffering on ourselves. Here Christian and Hopeful knew they were “in the wrong” and thus had to suffer the giant’s cruelty. That doesn’t mean we can’t be forgiven and escape our sadness. Christ is always sufficient for us no matter how much we have sinned, and He can always make us a way back to the right road.

- **Diffidence, p. 90:** Dictionary.com says diffidence is the state of “lacking confidence in one’s own ability, worth, or fitness; timid; shy.” Here the female giant doesn’t seem herself very diffident, just as the Giant Despair doesn’t seem very despairing. I think the symbolism here is that diffidence and despair are the twin pillars of doubt, and they shake Christian to the core with their terrors. Ask your children if they ever feel like they aren’t good enough to do something they’re called to do. Maybe it’s a soccer game they’re afraid they’ll lose, or going to a new class. While it’s good for God’s people to take stock of their own talents, ultimately He makes us fit for every good work. When we are railed upon by despair and feelings of inadequacy, we have to remember that God is able to use even our filthy rags to accomplish His purposes. We are good enough because His is good enough.
• **Skeletons, p. 94:** Doubt is a serious threat to the Christian life. Many will and have been undone by it. However, we can learn from Hopeful’s counsel. When you feel despairing, remember the times when God has sustained you before. Meditate on them, just as the Psalmists do in regard to the provision of God for Israel. Be aware that even if we withstand the Devil (Apollyon) and the temptations of the World (Vanity Fair), we may still find ourselves fighting our own flesh within. But we aren’t the only ones who suffer, and Hopeful’s advice is sound: “let us exercise a little more patience, and bear up as best we can, and keep on praying.”

• **Promise, p. 94:** How long would Christian have had to stay in the dungeon if he hadn’t found the key? If Christian was let out of his troubles by God’s key of promise, what is our key? Can your kids remember our Memory Verse today?

• **Light of the Sun, p. 97:** You can illumine the text a little more by reminding your kids that God is light, according to John. In His light, our doubts and fears lose their power over us. Maybe ask your kids if they have ever experienced that? Felt terrible about something, only to have God’s truth relieve their worries?
Chapter Summary: Finishing Well

From the clutches of Giant Despair, Christian and Hopeful escape into pleasant places of the Delectable Mountains. We see them refreshing themselves in a stream, quite unlike the dark river they will encounter at the end of the chapter. Soon they have their first glimpse of the Celestial City. And after run-ins with Ignorace, The Flatterer, and Atheist, they finally come to their new home. But “between them and the City Gate, flowed a deep, dark River.” They would have to pass through the River of Death to reach the other side. “A great darkness and horror fell upon him...But the troubles a man goes through in these waters are no sign that God has forsaken him.” And so despite their fears and misgivings, they reached the other shore, and “the Gates of Heaven opened to them, and they entered in.”

Devotional Application

We are all separated from God by the River of Death. But if we are His children, then death—however terrible or frightening—has lost its sting. For though it separates us for a while from loved ones left behind, it is the end of our toils and troubles, as well as the consummation of our eternal joy. And because Jesus has gone before us to open the gates and prepare a place, because He stands—the Lamb who was slain—at God’s right hand interceding for us, we can finish well and, like Christian, safely reach our new home.

Bible Verses

- **MEMORY VERSE for Chapters 7 & 8, Jeremiah 29:11:** “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.’”
- **Romans 8:38-39:** “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- **Isaiah 43:2:** “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;”
- **Revelations 21:4-7:** “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new!’ Then he said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.’ He said to me: ‘It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to
drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”

Activities

- **Object Lesson: Finishing Well:** For this project, you’ll need your favorite brownie or cookie mix and the ingredients to make them. Oh, and some hungry kids! Ideally you would use a recipe that the kids couldn’t eat raw—such as one with raw eggs. Let your kids pour the ingredients in the bowl. But don’t mix it up and don’t turn on the oven. Just tell them that’s good enough and stick the bowl in the cold oven. You can tell them you’re tired and you’ve done enough. My kids would have a fit about this time, so I would explain to them—they’re right, if we want brownies, we’ll have to finish the job, won’t we? When Christian and Hopeful went across the River of Death, they really didn’t enjoy it. It had been a long journey and they were tired. But they knew that Jesus had taken the sting out of death, that Jesus Himself had crossed the river of death first so that it couldn’t harm them, and they trusted God to help them to the finish line. Let the kids mix up the dough, slap it in the warm oven, and then eat some delicious cookies! They are just one small hint of the delights that await His children in the real Celestial City.
- **Craft/Activity:** Draw the Celestial City. Here’s a link to a [How To Draw a Castle Page](#), in case you need it.
- **Coloring Page/Make-a-Book Project:** Color this chapter’s coloring page!

Reading Notes

- **Delectable Mountains:** Dictionary.com says delectable means “delightful; highly pleasing; enjoyable.” It’s been a long, treacherous journey since Christian first glimpsed these mountains from House Beautiful. Here we see he and Hopeful catching another first glimpse: this time of the Celestial City itself, “They looked, and thought they saw what might have been a Golden Gate.” Bunyan describes it thusly: “they saw something like the gate, and also some of the glory of the place.” When have you felt or glimpsed the glory of heaven? When have you felt close to God? Who may have been your shepherds? **Bible Reference:** Interestingly enough, Bunyan’s full version spends most of this section warning the pilgrims rather than delighting them. [Proverbs 21:16](#). Yet God does grant them one last encouragement. I am put in mind of Christ’s last passover meal.
- **Ignorance:** Apparently our culture isn’t the first to claim everybody has their own truth. Bunyan puts words in Ignorance’s mouth that you could hear in any school yard or work place in our day: “be content to practice your religion and I will practice mine. I’m sure all will be well.” To which Christian quotes Proverbs 21:16 to Hopeful, “There is more hope [for] a fool than of him.” Ignorance didn’t care to know God’s Word, thus He would not find His pleasure. Do you know folks who follow their own traditions or feelings over God’s Word? When have you turned from God’s Word yourself? Biblical
I can think of two here—one is 1 Samuel 25:10, in which Nabal asks, “Who is David?” His ignorance (which seems quite willful) causes David great hardship, and eventually costs him his own life. Another classic example is Pilate, who in John 18:38 asks Jesus, “What is truth?”

- **Flatterer:** Flattery, according to Dictionary.com, is “excessive, insincere praise.” Not really sure why this guy is called Flattery, since he doesn’t praise them. But Bunyan does provide a good Bible Verse for his plot twist here: Proverbs 29:5, “A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet.” While I think Christians ought to be charitable in our opinions of others, we ought to be careful in puffing up others in their views of themselves—or in receiving such flattery to ourselves. I have found that the most helpful friends are those who will seek to tell me of my strengths and weaknesses, and who will pray for me in both. Especially since our “righteousness is as filthy rags,” Isaiah 64:6, or else we would not need Jesus.

- **Atheist, p. 105:** Supposedly there aren’t that many professional atheists among us. But how many of us live our lives as if we must get all our happiness here? As if we had better hurry to “eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die”? How would your life be different if you really lived as if your citizenship was in heaven? As if God had already set aside your inheritance, and it was to be the whole world? (Boy, this one hurts as I write it…)

- **The Enchanted Ground, p. 106:** “A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and your poverty will come on you like a thief.” Proverbs 24:33-34; I suppose this can mean literal sleep, like the disciples who slept during Christ’s agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. But more than that, I think it warns us against not being vigilant against in our walk with the Lord: “So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8.

- **Celestial City:** My kids and I often talk about what we think heaven will be like. When they really enjoy something, I remind them that it is just a small picture of what God has in store for them in eternity. Q. What do your kids think heaven will be like? Bible Reference: Revelation 21:1-4, “Then I saw ‘a new heaven and a new earth,’ for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”
Chapter Summary: Story in Review

In this chapter, we follow Christian's wife, Christiana, and her children and neighbor, Mercy, on their journey to The Celestial City. In Bunyan's original writings, this was a separate novel from Christian's story. Although we don't go too deep into her tale, there are a few exciting moments such as their encounter with the hound of hell or their fight with the Giant Despair. In the end, she passes through the river of death to join her husband and her Lord.

Devotional Application

For our purposes, this chapter is very useful as a review of the rest of the book. Christiana encounters challenges that her husband faced before, and at times her party finishes the fights that he began. As she encounters each trial, ask your children if they remember what happened to Christian at that place. Flip back to the original illustration if you want, or look at the coloring pages they did, and remind them of the memory verses. (You can even play one of your favorite games from the study again.) Personally, I like to end with one last glance at the Celestial City.

Activities

Today, our final activity is to bind the book your children have been making! Here are two possible ways of binding it: 1) Punch holes in the pages, and tie with ribbon. Simple, classic, old-fashioned book fun, or 2) if you'd like to make this a family treasure, you can scan it into your computer, upload the pages to Lulu.com or Kodak.com, and have a hardback keepsake printed. As you read the chapter, you might want to have the coloring pages nearby to pull out when they are referenced.

Reading Notes

One quick point here—the review below is a little long, so you might want to only cover the ones you liked best.
• Ch. 1: The Burden of Sin. Flip back to the title page and ask your children to tell you what they remember about this page. Remind them of the Memory Verse for Chapters 1 and 2: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” (Eph. 3:23) Look again at p. 113. Do you see Christiana’s sorrow for her sin anywhere? What else is part of her sorrow?

• Ch. 2: A Burden Lost, Heaven Gained. On p. 113, Christiana starts her journey. Turn to p. 40 and try to remember why Christian started his journey. What happened to his burden? On p. 113 Christiana doesn’t have a burden, but she does get a special invitation from her husband’s Prince. Who is that Prince? How does she evidence her faith in Him?

• Ch. 3: Lions on Chains. At the House of the Interpreter on p. 118, Christiana and her group gain a guardian. God knew they would need help for the journey that Christian hadn’t. But in both cases, He gave them the help they needed. Turn to p. 49 and remember how God had the lions on chains. Then see if you can remember the Memory Verse for Chapters 3 & 4, Psalm 21:7—“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” What lions are you facing? Do you have any Mr. Great-hearts in your life?

• Ch. 4: The Full Armor of God. On page 118, Christiana and her crew pass the place where Christian fought Apollyon. Review p. 53 and 55, and discuss the armor of God. How many pieces of armor can you remember from Ephesians 6:10-18? What do they stand for? Talk again about how Jesus withstood the temptations of the Devil in the wilderness.

• Ch. 5: God with Us. On p. 118, they also pass the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Review p. 63-64, Psalm 23 and the Memory Verse for Chapters 5 & 6: “When his lamp shone upon my head, and by his light I walked through darkness....” (Job 29:3). When have you been encouraged by God’s presence in your troubles?

• Ch. 6: Faithful to the End. On p. 120, Vanity Fair doesn’t seem as vain anymore. They are happy to have Mr. Great-heart’s help. Review p. 71. Why didn’t the people of Vanity Fair like Christian and Faithful? Do you think you could be faithful to God, even if someone threatened to kill you or put you in jail? Where is our treasure? (See Matthew 6:33.)

• Ch. 7: The Key of Promise. I really love that on p. 122, even the children join in to slay the giant. See p. 96, and the Memory Verse for Chapters 7 & 8: “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29:11) Have you ever been to “Doubting Castle”? Do you ever think God won’t take care of you or those you love? Why is faith the key that unlocks the prison door?
Ch. 8: Finishing Well. On p. 126, Christiana crosses the river of death to join her Prince. Look up Isaiah 43:2, and pages 109 and 111. We all must pass through the “river of death” to get to heaven. Do you think it will be worth it? What will be so wonderful about heaven? See Rev. 21:4-7. And finally, pray! Ask Him to open your heart as well as your children's hearts to His Word, and use them to encourage and build you both up. And maybe even thank Him for stories that encourage us to seek Him and His truth.