



CHAPTER X

Valiant-For-The-Truth



1. When they were gone from the Shepherds, they quickly came to the place where Christian met with one Turn-away, that dwelt in the town of Apostasy.

2. **GREAT-HEART** Wherefore of him Mr. Great-heart, their guide, did now put them in mind, saying, This is the place where Christian met with one Turn-away, who carried with him the character of his rebellion at his back. And this I have to say concerning this man; he would hearken to no counsel, but once falling, persuasion could not stop him. When he came to the place where the Cross and the Sepulchre were, he did meet with one that did bid him look there, but he gnashed with his teeth, and stamped, and said, he was resolved to go back to his own town. Before he came to the gate, he met with Evangelist, who offered to lay hands on him, to turn him into the way again. But this Turn-away resisted him, and having done much despite unto him, he got away over the wall, and so escaped his hand (Heb. 10:26-29).

3. Then they went on; and just at the place where Little-faith formerly was robbed, there stood a man with his sword drawn, and his face all bloody.

4. **GREAT-HEART** Then said Mr. Great-heart, What art thou?

5. **VALIANT-FOR-THE-TRUTH** The man made answer, saying, I am one whose name is Valiant-for-truth. I am a pilgrim, and am going to the Celestial City. Now, as I was in my way, there were three men did beset me, and propounded unto me these three things: 1. Whether I would become one of them. 2. Or go back from whence I came. 3. Or die upon the place.¹ To the first, I answered, I had been a true man a long season, and therefore it could

¹ From the names given to these opposers, they appear to represent certain wild enthusiasts who intrude themselves in the way of professors, to perplex their minds, and persuade them that, unless they adopt their reveries or superstitions, they cannot be saved. An ungovernable imagination, a mind incapable of sober reflection, and a dogmatizing spirit, characterize these enemies of the truth; they assault religious persons with specious reasonings, caviling objections, confident assertions, bitter reproaches, proud boastings, sarcastic censures, and rash judgments. They endeavour to draw them to their party, or drive them from attending to religion at all. But the Word of God, used with fervent, persevering prayer, will silence such dangerous assailants, and confirm others also-(Scott).

not be expected that I now should cast in my lot with thieves (Prov. 1:10-14). Then they demanded what I would say to the second. So I told them that the place from whence I came, had I not found incommodity there, I had not forsaken it at all; but finding it altogether unsuitable to me, and very unprofitable for me, I forsook it for this way. Then they asked me what I said to the third. And I told them, My life cost more dear far, than that I should lightly give it away. Besides, you have nothing to do thus to put things to my choice; wherefore, at your peril be it, if you meddle. Then these three, to wit, Wild-head, Inconsiderate, and Pragmatic, drew upon me, and I also drew upon them. So we fell to it, one against three, for the space of above three hours. They have left upon me, as you see, some of the marks of their valour, and have also carried away with them some of mine. They are but just now gone. I suppose they might, as the saying is, heard your horse dash, and so they betook them to flight.

6. **GREAT-HEART.** But here was great odds, three against one.

7. **VALIANT.** It is true; but little or more are nothing to him that has the truth on his side. "Though an host should encamp against me," said one, "my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident" (Psa. 27:3). Besides, saith he, I have read in some records, that one man has fought an army. And how many did Samson slay with the jaw-bone of an ass? ² (Judg. 15:15, 16).

² Truth will make a man valiant; and valour for truth will make a pilgrim fight with wild-headed, inconsiderate, and pragmatic opposers. The blood he loses in such a battle is his honour, the scars he gets are his glory-(Mason). He does not attempt to hide himself, or run from his and his Lord's

8. **GREAT-HEART.** Then said the guide, Why did you not cry out, that some might have come in for your succour?

9. **VALIANT.** So I did, to my King, who, I knew, could hear, and afford invisible help, and that was sufficient for me.

10. **GREAT-HEART.** Then said Great-heart to Mr. Valiant-for-truth, Thou hast worthily behaved thyself. Let me see thy sword. So he showed it him. When he had taken it in his hand, and looked thereon a while, he said, Ha! it is a right Jerusalem blade (Isa. 2:3).

11. **VALIANT.** It is so. Let a man have one of these blades, with a hand to wield it and skill to use it, and he may venture upon an angel with it. He need not fear its holding, if he can but tell how to lay on. Its edges will never blunt. It will cut flesh and bones, and soul and spirit, and all (Eph. 6:12-17; Heb. 4:12).

12. **GREAT-HEART.** But you fought a great while; I wonder you was not weary.

13. **VALIANT.** I fought till my sword did cleave to my hand; and when they were joined together, as if a sword grew out of my arm, and when the blood ran through my fingers, then I fought with most courage.³ (2 Sam. 23:10)

enemies. O that pilgrims, especially those that are young were better trained to this battle! In Bunyan's time, there were comparatively few of these cavaliers; now their name is Legion-(ED).

³ In this battle, this striving for the truth, three considerations strike the mind-(1). Reliance upon Divine aid, without which we can do nothing. (2). A right Jerusalem weapon, forged in the fire of love, well tempered with Bible truths. Such a sword will make even the angel of the bottomless pit flee, its edge will never blunt, and it will cut through everything opposed to it. (3). Decision of character, perseverance to the utmost; no trimming or meanly

14. . **GREAT-HEART.** Thou hast done well. Thou hast "resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Thou shalt abide by us, come in and go out with us, for we are thy companions.

15. Then they took him, and washed his wounds, and gave him of what they had to refresh him; and so they went on together. Now, as they went on, because Mr. Great-heart was delighted in him, for he loved one greatly that he found to be a man of his hands, and because there were with his company them that were feeble and weak, therefore he questioned with him about many things; as, first, what countryman he was?⁴

16. **VALIANT.** I am of Dark-land; for there I was born, and there my father and mother are still.

17. **GREAT-HEART.** Dark-land, said the guide; doth not that lie up on the same coast with the City of Destruction?

18. **VALIANT.** Yes, it doth. Now, that which caused me to come on pilgrimage was this; we had one Mr. Telltrue came into our parts, and he told it about what Christian had done, that went from the City of Destruction; namely, how he had forsaken his wife and children, and had betaken himself to a pilgrim's life. It was also confidently reported, how he had killed a serpent that did come out to resist him in his journey, and how he got through to whither he intended. It was also told, what welcome he had at all his Lord's

compounding for truth, but a determination, in the Lord's strength, to come off more than conquerors. It is blessed fighting when hand and heart are engaged, and the sword grows united to both-(ED).

⁴ The church of Christ has produced heroes of the first class in point of courage, which they have displayed in circumstances of great danger. Luther and Knox, and Latimer and Bunyan, were men of this stamp, each of whom might, with great propriety, have been named Valiant-for-the-truth-(Ivimey).

lodgings, especially when he came to the gates of the Celestial City; for there, said the man, he was received with sound of trumpet, by a company of Shining Ones. He told it also, how all the bells in the city did ring for joy at his reception, and what golden garments he was clothed with, with many other things that now I shall forbear to relate. In a word, that man so told the story of Christian and his travels, that my heart fell into a burning haste to be gone after him; nor could father or mother stay me! So I got from them, and am come thus far on my way.

19. **GREAT-HEART.** You came in at the gate, did you not?

20. **VALIANT.** Yes, yes; for the same man also told us that all would be nothing, if we did not begin to enter this way at the gate.⁵

21. **GREAT-HEART.** Look you, said the guide to Christiana, the pilgrimage of your husband, and what he has gotten thereby, is spread abroad far and near.

22. **VALIANT.** Why, is this Christian's wife?

23. **GREAT-HEART.** Yes, that it is; and these are also her four sons.

24. **VALIANT.** What! and going on pilgrimage too?

⁵ The reason why so many professors set out, and go on for a season, but fall away at last, is, because they do not enter into the pilgrim's path by Christ, who is the gate. They do not see themselves quite lost, ruined, hopeless, and wretched; their hearts are not broken for sin; therefore they do not begin by receiving Christ as the only Saviour of such miserable sinners. But they set out in nature's strength; and not receiving nor living upon Christ, they fall away. This is the reason of this inquiry, Did you come in at the gate? A question we ought to put to ourselves, and be satisfied about-(Mason).

25. **GREAT-HEART.** Yes, verily; they are following after.

26. **VALIANT.** It glads me at heart. Good man! how joyful will he be when he shall see them that would not go with him, yet to enter after him in at the gates into the City!

27. **GREAT-HEART.** Without doubt it will be a comfort to him; for, next to the joy of seeing himself there, it will be a joy to meet there his wife and children.

28. **VALIANT.** But, now you are upon that, pray let me hear your opinion about it. Some make a question, Whether we shall know one another when we are there.

29. **GREAT-HEART.** Do they think they shall know themselves then, or that they shall rejoice to see themselves in that bliss? and if they think they shall know and do these, why not know others, and rejoice in their welfare also?⁶ Again, since relations are our second self, though that state will be dissolved there; yet why may it not be rationally concluded, that we shall be more glad to see them there, than to see they are wanting?

⁶ Among many puzzling questions which agitate the Christian's mind, this is very generally a subject of inquiry. At the mount of transfiguration, the Apostles knew the glorified spirits of Moses and Elias. The rich man and Lazarus and Abraham knew each other. The most solemn inquiry is, to reconcile with the bliss of Heaven the discovery that some dear relative has been shut out. Shall we forget them? or will all our exquisite happiness centre in the glory of God? Bunyan has no doubt upon personal identity in Heaven- "Our friends that lived godly here Shall there be found again; The wife, the child, and father dear, With others of our train. Those God did use us to convert We there with joy shall meet. And jointly shall, with all our heart, In life each other greet." -(One Thing Needful, ver. 69, 71)-(ED).

30. **VALIANT.** Well, I perceive whereabouts you are as to this. Have you any more things to ask me about my beginning to come on pilgrimage?⁷

31. **GREAT-HEART,** Yes. Was your father and mother willing that you should become a pilgrim?

32. **VALIANT.** O no! They used all means imaginable to persuade me to stay at home.

33. **GREAT-HEART,** What could they say against it?

34. **VALIANT.** They said it was an idle life; and if I myself were not inclined to sloth and laziness, I would never countenance a pilgrim's condition.⁸

35. **GREAT-HEART.** And what did they say else?

36. **VALIANT.** Why, they told me that it was a dangerous way; yea, the most dangerous way in the world, said they, is that which the pilgrims go.

37. **GREAT-HEART.** Did they show wherein this way is so dangerous?

38. **VALIANT.** Yes; and that in many particulars.

39. **GREAT-HEART.** Name some of them.

⁷ A sound Christian is not afraid to be examined, and sifted to the bottom, for he can give reason of the hope that is in him. He knows why and wherefore he commenced his pilgrimage- (Mason).

⁸ This is a reproach cast upon religion in every age. Pharaoh said to Moses and the Israelites, "Ye are idle, ye are idle." Men by nature imagine, that time spent in reading the Bible and in prayer is wasted. It behooves all believers to avoid every appearance of evil; and, by exemplary diligence, frugality, and good management, to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men-(Scott).

40. **VALIANT.** They told me of the Slough of Despond, where Christian was well nigh smothered. They told me that there were archers standing ready in Beelzebub Castle, to shoot them that should knock at the wicket-gate for entrance. They told me also of the wood, and dark mountains; of the Hill Difficulty; of the lions; and also of the three giants, Bloody-man, Maul, and Slay-good. They said, moreover, that there was a foul fiend haunted the Valley of Humiliation, and that Christian was by him almost bereft of life. Besides, said they, you must go over the Valley of the Shadow of Death, where the hobgoblins are; where the light is darkness; where the way is full of snares, pits, traps, and gins. They told me also of Giant Despair, of Doubting Castle, and of the ruin that the Pilgrims met with there. Further they said I must go over the Enchanted Ground: which was dangerous. And that, after all this, I should find a river, over which I should find no bridge, and that that river did be betwixt me and the Celestial Country.

41. **GREAT-HEART.** And was this all?

42. **VALIANT.** No. They also told me that this way was full of deceivers,⁹ and of persons that laid in wait there to turn good men out of the path.

43. **GREAT-HEART.** But how did they make that out?

⁹ Worldly people, in opposing the Gospel, descant upon the hypocrisy of religious persons; they pick up every vague report that they hear to their disadvantage, and narrowly watch for the halting of such as they are acquainted with; and then they form general conclusions from a few distorted and uncertain stories. Thus they endeavour to prove that there is no reality in religion. This is a frivolous sophistry, often employed after all other arguments have been silenced-(Scott).

44. **VALIANT.** They told me that Mr. Worldly-wiseman did there lie in wait to deceive. They also said, that there was Formality and Hypocrisy continually on the road. They said also that By-ends, Talkative, or Demas would go near to gather me up; that the Flatterer would catch me in his net; or that, with green-headed Ignorance, I would presume to go on to the gate, from whence he always was sent back to the hole that was in the side of the hill, and made to go the by-way to hell.

45. **GREAT-HEART** I promise you this was enough to discourage; but did they make an end here?

46. **VALIANT.** No; stay. They told me also of many that had tried that way of old, and that had gone a great way therein, to see if they could find something of the glory there, that so many had so much talked of from time to time; and how they came back again, and befooled themselves for setting a foot out of doors in that path, to the satisfaction of all the country. And they named several that did so; as Obstinate and Pliable, Mistrust and Timorous, Turn-away and old Atheist, with several more, who, they said, had some of them, gone far to see if they could find; but not one of them found so much advantage by going as amounted to the weight of a feather.¹⁰

¹⁰ If Judas the traitor, or Francis Spira the backslider, were alive, to whisper these men in the ear a little, and to tell them what it hath cost their souls for turning back, it would surely stick by them as long as they have a day to live in the world. Agrippa gave a fair step on a sudden; he stepped almost into the bosom of Christ in less than half an hour. "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." It was but almost, and so he had as good been not at all. He stepped fair, but stepped short. He was hot whilst he ran, but he was quickly out of breath. O this but ALMOST! I tell you, it lost his soul. What a doom they will have, who were almost

47. **GREAT-HEART.** Said they anything more to discourage you?

48. **VALIANT.** Yes. They told me of one Mr. Fearing who was a pilgrim; and how he found this way so solitary, that he never had comfortable hour therein. Also that Mr. Despondency had like to have been starved therein; yea, and also, which I had almost forgot, that Christian himself, about whom there has been such a noise, after all his ventures for a celestial crown, was certainly drowned in the Black River, and never went foot further, however it was smothered up.¹¹

49. **GREAT-HEART.** And did none of these things discourage you?

50. **VALIANT.** No; they seemed but as so many nothings to me.

51. **GREAT-HEART** How came that about?

52. **VALIANT.** Why, I still believed what Mr. Tell-true had said, and that carried me beyond them all.

53. **GREAT-HEART.** Then this was your victory, even your faith.

54. **VALIANT.** It was so. I believed, by the grace of God, and therefore came out, got into the way, fought all that set

themselves against me, and, by believing, am come to this place.¹²

55.

*Who would true valour see,
Let him come hither;
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather.
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent,
His first avow'd intent
To be a pilgrim.*

*Who so beset him round
With dismal stories,
Do but themselves confound.
His strength the more is;
No lion can him fright,
He'll with a giant fight;
But he will have a right
To be a pilgrim.*

*Hobgoblin nor foul fiend
Can daunt his spirit;
He knows he at the end
Shall life inherit.
Then fancies fly away,
He'll fear not what men say;
He'll labour night and day
To be a pilgrim.*

at Heaven's gate, but ran back again!-(Bunyan's Heavenly Footman).

¹¹ How natural is it for carnal men to give an evil report of the ways of the Lord; and to discourage those who are just setting out, by telling of the dangers and difficulties they shall meet with! But here is not one word of the pleasures, comforts, and joys, that are experienced in the ways of the Lord. No, they feel them not, they believe not one word about them; therefore they cannot speak of them-(Mason).

¹² Here we see that valiant soldiers of Christ ascribe all to faith. They set out with faith, and they hold on and hold out by believing. Thus they give all the glory to Christ, who is the object, author, and finisher of faith-(Mason).