Lesson 2  

Slough of Despand

Now I saw in my dream, that, just as they had ended this talk, they drew near to a very miry slough that was in the midst of the plain; and they, being heedless, did both fall suddenly into the bog. The name of the slough was Despond. Here, therefore, they wallowed for a time, being grievously bedaubed with the dirt; and Christian, because of the burden that was on his back, began to sink in the mire.

PLI. Then said Pliable, Ah! Neighbor Christian, where are you now?

CHR. Truly, said Christian, I do not know.

PLI. At that Pliable began to be offended, and angrily said to his fellow, Is this the happiness you have told me all this while of? If we have such ill speed at our first setting out, what may we expect betwixt this and our journey's end? May I get out again with my life, you shall possess the brave country alone for me. And with that he gave a desperate struggle or two, and got out of the mire on that side of the slough which was next to his own house: so away he went, and Christian saw him no more.

Wherefore Christian was left to tumble in the Slough of Despond alone; but still he endeavoured to struggle to that side of the slough that was still further from his own house, and next to the wicket-gate; the which he did, but could not get out, because of the burden that was upon his back. But I beheld in my dream, that a man came to him, whose name was Help, and asked him what he did there?

CHR. Sir, said Christian, I was bid go this way by a man called Evangelist, who directed me also to yonder gate, that I might escape the wrath to come. And as I was going thither, I fell in here.

HELP. But why did not you look for the steps?

CHR. Fear followed me so hard, that I fled the next way, and fell in.

The stepping-stones which led out of the Slough are the promises of God as given in the Scriptures. Make a list of ten great promises and use them to get out of the periods of despond.

'Slough' - A depression, mire or hollow, usually filled with deep mud; a stagnant swamp, marsh, bog, or Pond.

"Despond" - To become disheartened or discouraged; extreme depression

They are too inattentive to notice some safe steps that provide a way across the ooze, namely the reassuring promises of God (II Pet. 1:4).

[1] Guilt is a load and burden
HELP. Then said he, Give me thy hand; so he gave him his hand, and he drew him out, and set him upon sound ground, and bid him go on his way (Psa. 40:2). Then I stepped to him that plucked him out, and said, Sir, wherefore (since over this place is the way from the City of Destruction, to yonder gate) is it that this plat is not mended, that poor travellers might go thither with more security? And he said unto me, This miry slough is such a place as cannot be mended. It is the descent whither the scum and filth that attends conviction for sin, doth continually run, and therefore it is called the Slough of Despond: for still, as the sinner is awakened about his lost condition, there ariseth in his soul many fears, and doubts, and discouraging apprehensions, which all of them get together, and settle in this place. And this is the reason of the badness of this ground.

It is not the pleasure of the King that this place should remain so bad (Isa. 35:3,4); his labourers, also, have, by the directions of his Majesty’s surveyors, been, for above these 1,600 years, employed about this patch of ground, if, perhaps, it might have been mended; yea, and to my knowledge, said he, here have been swallowed up at least 20,000 cart-loads; yea, millions of wholesome instructions, that have, at all seasons, been brought from all places of the King’s dominions, and they that can tell, say, they are the best materials to make good ground of the place, if so be it might have been mended; but it is the Slough of Despond still; and so will be when they have done what they can.[2] True, there are, by the direction of the Lawgiver, certain good and substantial steps, placed even through the very midst of this slough; but at such time as this place doth much spew out its filth, as it doth against change of weather, these steps are hardly seen; or if they be, men, through the dizziness of their heads, step besides, and then they are bemired to purpose, notwithstanding the steps be there; but the ground is good, when they are once got in at the gate[3] (1 Sam. 12:23).

Now I saw in my dream, that, by this time, Pliable was got home to his house again; so that his neighbours came to visit him; and some of them called him wise man for coming back, and some called him fool for hazarding himself with Christian; others, again, did mock at his cowardliness, saying, “Surely, since you began to venture, I would not have been so base to have given out for a few difficulties.” So Pliables at sneaking among them.

But, at last, he got more confidence, and then they all turned their tales, and began to deride poor Christian behind his back. And thus much concerning Pliable.

Mr. Help could represent “Prevenient Grace” that comes before regeneration and conversion. I think we sometimes overlook it. We do not attach enough importance to the grace of God in its dealings with men before he actually brings them to himself.

The more sinners are awakened to their sinfulness, the more the Slough overflows with immoral sludge and mire (Ps. 38:2-8; Rom. 7:7-13).

[2] nothing but despondency and despair in the fallen nature of sinful man

[3] Steps - solid ground when we enter into possession of Christ, who is the Rock
Now as Christian was walking solitarily by himself, he espied one afar off come crossing over the field to meet him; and their hap was to meet just as they were crossing the way of each other. The gentleman’s name that met him was Mr. Worldly-wiseman; he dwelt in the town of Carnal Policy, a very great town, and also hard by from whence Christian came. This man, then, meeting with Christian, and having some inkling of him, for Christian’s setting forth from the City of Destruction was much noised abroad, not only in the town where he dwelt, but, also, it began to be the town-talk in some other places. Master Worldly-wiseman, therefore, having some guess of him, by beholding his laborious going, by observing his sighs and groans, and the like, began thus to enter into some talk with Christian.

WORLD. How now, good fellow, whither away after this burdened manner?

CHR. A burdened manner, indeed, as ever, I think, poor creature had! And whereas you ask me, Whither away? I tell you, Sir, I am going to yonder wicket-gate before me; for there, as I am informed, I shall be put into a way to be rid of my heavy burden.

WORLD. Hast thou a wife and children?

CHR. Yes; but I am so laden with this burden, that I cannot take that pleasure in them as formerly; methinks I am as if I had none (1 Cor. 7:29).

WORLD. Wilt thou hearken unto me if I give thee counsel?

CHR. If it be good, I will; for I stand in need of good counsel.

WORLD. I would advise thee, then, that thou with all speed get thyself rid of thy burden: for thou wilt never be settled in thy mind till then; nor canst thou enjoy the benefits of the blessing which God hath bestowed upon thee till then.

CHR. That is that which I seek for, even to be rid of this heavy burden; but get it off myself, I cannot; nor is there any man in our country that can take it off my shoulders; therefore am I going this way, as I told you, that I may be rid of my burden.

WORLD. Who bid you go this way to be rid of thy burden?

CHR. A man that appeared to me to be a very great and honourable person; his name, as I remember, is Evangelist.

WORLD. I beshrew him for his counsel! there is not a more dangerous and trouble some way in the world than is that unto which he hath directed thee; and that thou shalt find, if thou wilt be ruled by his
counsel. Thou hast met with something, as I perceive already; for I see the dirt of the Slough of Despond is upon thee; but that slough is the beginning of the sorrows that do attend those that go on in that way.

Hear me, I am older than thou; thou art like to meet with, on the way which thou goest, wearisomeness, painfulness, hunger, perils, nakedness, sword, lions, dragons, darkness, and, in a word, death, and what not! These things are certainly true, having been confirmed by many testimonies. And why should a man so carelessly cast away himself, by giving heed to a stranger? all these things which you have mentioned; nay, methinks I care not what I meet with in the way, if so be I can also meet with deliverance.

CHR. Why, Sir, this burden upon my back is more terrible to me than are rom my burden.

WORLD. How camest thou by the burden at first?

CHR. By reading this book in my hand.

WORLD. I thought so; and it is happened unto thee as to other weak men, who, meddling with things too high for them, do suddenly fall into thy distractions; which distractions do not only unman men, as thine, I perceive, has done thee, but they run them upon desperate ventures, to obtain they know not what.

CHR. I know what I would obtain; it is ease for my heavy burden.

WORLD. But why wilt thou seek for ease this way, seeing so many dangers attend it? especially since, hadst thou but patience to hear me, I could direct thee to the obtaining of what thou desirest, without the dangers that thou in this way wilt run thyself into; yea, and the remedy is at hand. Besides, I will add, that, instead of those dangers, thou shalt meet with much safety, friendship, and content.

CHR. Pray, Sir, open this secret to me.

WORLD. Why, in yonder village—the village is named Morality—there dwells a gentleman whose name is Legality, a very judicious man, and a man of a very good name, that has skill to help men off with such burdens as thine are from their shoulders: yea, to my knowledge, he hath done a great deal of good this way; aye, and besides, he hath skill to cure those that are somewhat crazed in their wits with their burdens.[21] To him, as I said, thou mayest go, and be helped presently. His house is not quite a mile from this place, and if he should not be at home himself, be hath a pretty young man to his son, whose name is Civility, that can do it (to speak on) as well as the old gentleman himself; there, I say, thou mayest be eased of thy burden; and if thou art not minded to go back to thy former habitation, as, indeed, I would

Mr. Worldly Wiseman condemns Evangelist and the Bible.

[4]Mr. Worldly-wiseman prefers morality to Christ the strait gate

Worldly Wiseman points Pilgrim to a village called Morality, to "a person Named Legality". In other words, away from the Wicket Gate, away from the narrow way that leadeth unto life, away from the Cross of Christ. Look to your works, and to your own efforts to observe the legal things of religion, and act as moral as you can, and God will have to save you for your goodness. This is the redemption of the Worldly Wise,
not wish thee, thou mayest send for thy wife and children to thee to this
village, where there are houses now stand empty, one of which thou
mayest have at reasonable rates; provision is there also cheap and good;
and that which will make thy life the more happy is, to be sure, there
thou shalt live by honest neighbours, in credit and good fashion.
Now was Christian somewhat at a stand; but presently he concluded, if
this be true, which this gentleman hath said, my wisest course is to take
his advice; and with that he thus further spoke.

CHR. Sir, which is my way to this honest man’s house?

WORLD. Do you see yonder hill?

CHR. Yes, very well.

WORLD. By that hill you must go, and the first house you come at is
his. So Christian turned out of his way, to go to Mr. Legality’s house for
help; but, behold, when he was got now hard by the hill, it seemed so
high, and also that side of it that was next the wayside, did hang so
much over, that Christian was afraid to venture further, lest the hill
should fall on his head; wherefore there he stood still, and Wotted not
what to do. Also his burden now seemed heavier to him, than while he
was in his way. There came also flashes of fire out of the hill, that made
Christian afraid that he should be burned (Exo. 19:16, 18). Here,
therefore, he sweat and did quake for fear (Heb. 12:21). And now he
began to be sorry that he had taken Mr. Worldly-wiseman’s counsel.
And with that he saw Evangelist coming to meet him; at the sight also
of whom he began to blush for shame. So Evangelist drew nearer and
nearer; and coming up to him, he looked upon him with a severe and
dreadful countenance, and thus began to reason with Christian.

EVAN. What dost thou here, Christian? said he: at which words
Christian knew not what to answer; wherefore at present he
stood speechless before him. Then said Evangelist further, Art not thou
the man that I found crying without the walls of the
City of Destruction?

CHR. Yes, dear Sir, I am the man.

EVAN. Did not I direct thee the way to the little wicket-gate?

CHR. Yes, dear Sir, said Christian.

EVAN. How is it, then, that thou art so quickly turned aside? for thou
art now out of the way.

Mount Sinai, through all the
years of the past, has been the
commanding metaphor for
conscience and the law of God.
Points one to Christ!
CHR. I met with a gentleman so soon as I had got over the Slough of Despond, who persuaded me that I might, in the village before me, find a man that could take off my burden.

EVAN. What was he?

CHR. He looked like a gentleman, and talked much to me, and got me at last to yield; so I came hither: but when I beheld this hill, and how it hangs over the way, I suddenly made a stand, lest it should fall on my head.

EVAN. What said that gentleman to you?

CHR. Why, he asked me whither I was going? And I told him.

EVAN. And what said he then?

CHR. He asked me if I had a family. And I told him. But, said I, I am so loaden with the burden that is on my back, that I cannot take pleasure in them as formerly.

EVAN. And what said he then?

CHR. He bid me with speed get rid of my burden; and I told him it was ease that I sought. And, said I, I am therefore going to yonder gate, to receive further direction how I may get to the place of deliverance. So he said that he would show me a better way, and short, not so attended with difficulties as the way, Sir, that you set me in; which way, said he, will direct you to a gentleman’s house that hath skill to take off these burdens: so I believed him, [5] and turned out of that way into this, if haply I might be soon eased of my burden. I But when I came to this place, and beheld things as they are, I stopped for fear (as I said) of danger: but I now know not what to do.

EVAN. Then, said Evangelist, stand still a little, that I may show thee the words of God. So he stood trembling. Then said Evangelist, “See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven” (Heb. 12:25). He said, moreover, “Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man drawback, My soul shall have no pleasure in him” (Heb. 10:38). He also did thus apply them: Thou art the man that art running into this misery; thou hast begun to reject the counsel of the Most High, and to draw back thy foot from the way of peace, even almost to the hazarding of thy perdition! Then Christian fell down at his foot as dead, crying, “Woe is me, for I am undone!”

[5] the belief of the truth lies at the fountain of the hope of eternal life
At the sight of which, Evangelist caught him by the right hand, saying, “All manner of sin and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto men” (Matt. 12:31; Mark 3:28); “Be not faithless, but believing” (John 20:27). Then did Christian again a little revive, and stood up trembling, as at first, before Evangelist.[25] Then Evangelist proceeded, saying, Give more earnest heed to the things that I shall tell thee of. I will now show thee who it was that deluded thee, and who it was also to whom he sent thee.—The man that met thee is one Worldly-wiseman, and rightly is he so called; partly, because he savoureth only the doctrine of this world (1John 4:5), (therefore he always goes to the town of Morality to church); and partly because he loveth that doctrine best, for it saveth him best from the cross (Gal. 6:12). And because he is of this carnal temper, therefore he seeketh to prevent my ways, though right. Now there are three things in this man’s counsel, that thou must utterly abhor.

1. His turning thee out of the way. 2. His labouring to render the cross odious to thee. And, 3. His setting thy feet in that way that leadeth unto the administration of death.

First, Thou must abhor his turning thee out of the way; yea, and thine own consenting thereto: because this is to reject the counsel of God for the sake of the counsel of a Worldly-wiseman. The Lord says, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate” (Luke 13:24), the gate to which I send thee; for “strait is the gate which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matt. 7:14). From this little wicket-gate, and from the way thereto, hath this wicked man turned thee, to the bringing of thee almost to destruction; hate, therefore, his turning thee out of the way, and abhor thyself for hearkening to him.

Secondly, Thou must abhor his laboring to render the cross odious unto thee; for thou art to prefer it “before the treasures in Egypt” (Heb. 11:25, 26). Besides, the King of glory hath told thee, that he that “will save his life shall lose it” (Mark 8:35; John 12:25; Matt. 10:39). And, “He that comes after Him, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:26). I say, therefore, for man to labour to persuade thee, that that shall be thy death, without which, THE TRUTH hath said, thou canst not have eternal life; this doctrine thou must abhor. Thirdly, Thou must hate his setting of thy feet in the way that leadeth to the ministration of death. And for this thou must consider to whom he sent thee, and also how unable that person was to deliver thee from thy burden. He to whom thou wast sent for ease, being by name Legality, is the son of the bond woman which now is, and is in bondage with her children (Gal. 4:21-27); and is, in a mystery, this mount Sinai, which thou hast feared will fall on thy head. Now, if she, with her children, are in bondage, how canst thou expect by them to be made free?
This Legality, therefore, is not able to set thee free from thy burden. No man was as yet ever rid of his burden by him; no, nor ever is like to be: ye cannot be justified by the works of the law; for by the deeds of the law no man living can be rid of his burden: therefore, Mr. Worldlywiseman is an alien, and Mr. Legality is a cheat; and for his son Civility, notwithstanding his simpering looks, he is but a hypocrite, and cannot help thee. Believe me, there is nothing in all this noise, that thou hast heard of these sottish men, but a design to beguile thee of thy salvation, by turning thee from the way in which I had set thee. After this, Evangelist called aloud to the heavens for confirmation of what he had said: and with that there came words and fire out of the mountain under which poor Christian stood, that made the hair of his flesh stand up. The words were thus pronounced: “As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them[6] (Gal. 3:10).

Now Christian looked for nothing but death, and began to cry out lamentably; even cursing the time in which he met with Mr. Worldlywiseman; still calling himself a thousand fools for hearkening to his counsel: he also was greatly ashamed to think that this gentleman’s arguments, flowing only from the flesh, should have the prevalency with him as to cause him to forsake the right way. This done, he applied himself again to Evangelist, in words and sense as follows:—

CHR. Sir, what think you? Is there hope? May I now go back, and go up to the wicket-gate? Shall I not be abandoned for this, and sent back from thence ashamed? I am sorry I have hearkened to this man’s counsel. But may my sin be forgiven?

EVAN. Then said Evangelist to him, Thy sin is very great, for by it thou hast committed two evils; thou hast forsaken the way that is good, to tread in forbidden paths; yet will the man at the gate receive thee, for he has good-will for men; only, said he, take heed that thou turn not aside again, “lest thou perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little” (Psa. 2:12). Then did Christian address himself to go back; and Evangelist, after he had kissed him, gave him one smile, and bid him Godspeed.

So he went on with haste, neither spake he to any man by the way; nor, if any asked him, would he vouchsafe them an answer. He went like one that was all the while treading on forbidden ground, and could by no means think himself safe, till again he was got into the way which he left, to follow Mr. Worldly-wiseman’s counsel. So, in process of time, Christian got up to the gate. Now, over the gate there was written, “Knock, and it shall be opened unto you” (Matt. 7:8).

[6] Legality is as great an enemy to the cross of Christ as licentiousness; for it keeps the soul from coming to, believing in, and trusting wholly in the blood of Christ for pardon, and the righteousness of Christ for justification!
He knocked, therefore, more than once or twice, saying—“May I now enter here? Will He within Open to sorry me, though I have been An undeserving rebel? Then shall I Not fail to sing His lasting praise on high.”

At last there came a grave person to the gate, named Good-will, who asked who was there? and whence he came? and what he would have?[7]

CHR. Here is a poor burdened sinner. I come from the City of Destruction, but am going to Mount Zion, that I may be delivered from the wrath to come. I would, therefore, Sir, since I am informed that by this gate is the way thither, know if you are willing to let me in!

GOOD-WILL. I am willing with all my heart, said he; and with that he opened the gate.[8] So when Christian was stepping in, the other gave him a pull.

Then said Christian, What means that? The other told him. A little distance from this gate, there is erected a strong castle, of which Beelzebub is the captain; from thence, both he and them that are with him shoot arrows at those that come up to this gate, if haply they may die before they can enter in.[9]

Then said Christian, I rejoice and tremble. So when he was got in, the man of the gate asked him who directed him thither?

CHR. Evangelist bid me come hither, and knock (as I did); and he said that you, Sir, would tell me what I must do.

GOOD-WILL. An open door is set before thee, and no man can shut it.

CHR. Now I begin to reap the benefits of my hazards.

GOOD-WILL. But how is it that you came alone? CHR. Because none of my neighbours saw their danger, as I saw mine.

GOOD-WILL. Did any of them know of your coming?

CHR. Yes; my wife and children saw me at the first, and called after me to turn again; also, some of my neighbours stood crying and calling after me to return; but I put my fingers in my ears, and so came on my way.

GOOD-WILL. But did none of them follow you, to persuade you to go back?

[7]This gate is wide enough for all the truly sincere lovers of Jesus Christ, but so strait that it will keep all others out.

[8] Here behold the love of Jesus, in freely and heartily receiving every poor sinner who comes unto Him; no matter how vile they have been, nor what sins they have committed

"Good-will helps Christian by giving him a pull. See Psalm 18: 16; Jeremiah .31 : 3; John 6 : 14; John 12 : 32.

[9] As sinners become more decided in applying to Christ as the means of grace, Satan had rather see someone die than become a follower of Christ.

Knock and it shall be opened unto you” (Mart. 7:7-8) presupposes the persistence of “asking” and “seeking” as well.
CHR. Yes, both Obstinate and Pliable; but when they saw that they could not prevail, Obstinate went railing back, but Pliable came with me a little way.

GOOD-WILL. But why did he not come through?

CHR. We, indeed, came both together, until we came at the Slough of Despond, into the which we also suddenly fell. And then was my neighbour, Pliable, discouraged, and would not adventure further. Wherefore getting out again on that side next to his own house, he told me I should possess the brave country alone for him; so he went his way, and I came mine—he after Obstinate, and I to this gate.

GOOD-WILL. Then said Good-will, Alas, poor man! is the celestial glory of so small esteem with him, that he counteth it not worth running the hazards of a few difficulties to obtain it?

CHR. Truly, said Christian, I have said the truth of Pliable, and if I should also say all the truth of myself, it will appear there is no betterment[30] betwixt him and myself. It is true, he went back to his own house, but I also turned aside to go in the way of death, being persuaded thereto by the carnal arguments[31] of one Mr. Worldly-wiseman.

GOOD-WILL. Oh! did he light upon you? What! he would have had you a sought for ease at the hands of Mr. Legality. They are, both of them, a very cheat. But did you take his counsel?

CHR. Yes, as far as I durst; I went to find out Mr. Legality, until I thought that the mountain that stands by his house would have fallen upon my head; wherefore, there I was forced to stop.

GOOD-WILL. That mountain has been the death of many, and will be the death of many more; it is well you escaped being by it dashed in pieces

CHR. Why, truly, I do not know what had become of me there, had not Evangelist happily met me again, as I was musing in the midst of my dumps; but it was God’s mercy that he came to me again, for else I had never come hither. But now I am come, such a one as I am, more fit, indeed, for death, by that mountain, than thus to stand talking with my Lord; but, O! what a favour is this to me, that yet I am admitted entrance here!

As we continue through this study we will see the concept of persistence, striving, and laboring. Jesus said “those who endure to the end will be saved.”

‘sorc run that ye may obtain’ (I Cor. 9:24-25).

‘Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life’ (I Tim. 6:12).

‘Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life’ (John 6:27).
GOOD-WILL. We make no objections against any, not with-standing all that they have done before they come hither. They are “in no wise cast out” (John 6:37); and therefore, good Christian, come a little way with me, and I will teach thee about the way thou must go. Look before thee; dost thou see this narrow way? THAT is the way thou must go; it was cast up by the patriarchs, prophets, Christ, and His Apostles; and it is as straight as a rule can make it. This is the way thou must go.[32]

CHR. But, said Christian, are there no turnings nor windings, by which a stranger may lose his way?

GOOD-WILL. Yes, there are many ways butt down upon this, and they are crooked and wide. But thus thou mayest distinguish the right from the wrong, the right only being straight and narrow (Matt. 7:14).

Then I saw in my dream, that Christian asked him further if he could not help him off with his burden that was upon his back; for as yet he had not got rid thereof, nor could he by any means get it off without help. He told him, as to thy burden, be content to bear it, until thou comest to the place of deliverance; for there it will fall from thy back of itself.

Then Christian began to gird up his loins, and to address himself to his journey. So the other told him, That by that he was gone some distance from the gate, he would come at the house of the Interpreter; at whose door he should knock, and he would show him excellent things. Then Christian took his leave of his friend, and he again bid him God-speed
Our coach rattled out of the city, and at a short distance from its outskirts passed over a bridge of elegant construction, but somewhat too slight, as I imagined, to sustain any considerable weight. On both sides lay an extensive quagmire, which could not have been more disagreeable either to sight or smell, had all the kennels of the earth emptied their pollution there.

"This," remarked Mr. Smooth-it-away, "is the famous Slough of Despond—a disgrace to all the neighborhood; and the greater that it might so easily be converted into firm ground."

"I have understood," said I, "that efforts have been made for that purpose from time immemorial. Bunyan mentions that above twenty thousand cartloads of wholesome instructions had been thrown in here without effect."

"Very probably! And what effect could be anticipated from such unsubstantial stuff?" cried Mr. Smooth-it-away. "You observe this convenient bridge. We obtained a sufficient foundation for it by throwing into the slough some editions of books of morality, volumes of French philosophy and German rationalism; tracts, sermons, and essays of modern clergymen; extracts from Plato, Confucius, and various Hindoo sages together with a few ingenious commentaries upon texts of Scripture,—all of which by some scientific process, have been converted into a mass like granite. The whole bog might be filled up with similar matter."

"In Hawthorne's 'The Celestial Railroad,' which is a parody on religion, it is a clever touch of his to obliterate the wicket-gate as a narrow and inconvenient obstruction, and to build upon its site a railway station and ticket office.

However, he declines to guarantee that the tickets will be received at the Celestial City.

The difference between the sham religion of the Celestial Railroad and the real experience of grace of which Bunyan writes is that the former has no such thing as conviction and decision, while the latter is grounded upon a distinct act of choice.

Some malicious persons it is true deny the identity of this reputable character with the Evangelist of old times, and even pretend to bring competent evidence of an imposture. Without involving myself in a dispute I shall merely observe that, so far as my experience goes, the square pieces of pasteboard now delivered to passengers are much more convenient and useful along the road than the antique roll of parchment. Whether they will be as readily received at the gate of the Celestial City I decline giving an opinion.