The background of the book cover is a painting. On the left, a tall, white church steeple with a cross on top rises against a sky with soft, white clouds. The steeple has several levels with arched windows. In the foreground and to the right, there is a dense crowd of people, depicted in a stylized, almost abstract manner with dark, swirling patterns and some yellow highlights, suggesting a large gathering or a church service.

Andrew Fuller

CENTER *for* BAPTIST STUDIES

THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Essays Presented at The
Andrew Fuller Center for
Baptist Studies Of

**BAPTISTS,
EVANGELICALS,
AND PURITANS**

The Southern Baptist Theological
Seminary

BY ROGER D. DUKE

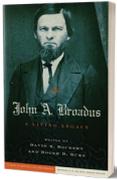
About the Author

Dr. Roger D. Duke is an author, theologian, educator, itinerant preacher, published scholar, and professor at several institutions of higher learning including: Union University, Baptist College of Health Sciences, Liberty University, Memphis Theological Seminary, and Columbia Evangelical Seminary.

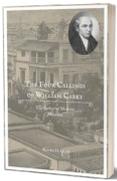
He earned his D.Min from The University of the South (Sewanee) School of Theology, performed post-graduate Ph.D studies at the University of Memphis, completed his M.A. at Harding University, and attained a M.Div at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

www.DrRogerDDuke.com

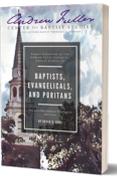
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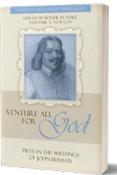
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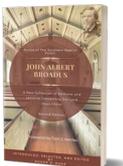
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“John Bunyan: Confessions of One Who Was Persecuted”

A Paper

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Of the

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By

Roger D. Duke

Baptist College of Health Sciences

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Introduction

In his introduction to *Tortured for Christ*¹ Tom White ponders one great misunderstanding of the contemporary Evangelical Church:

Many today believe that a martyr is simply someone who dies for his faith. Unfortunately, by this definition we have lost the true significance and depth of martyrdom. St. Augustine once stated, “The *cause*, not the *suffering*, makes a genuine martyr.”^{2 3}

¹ Richard Wurmbrand is the author of *Tortured for Christ* and Founder of “The Voice of the Martyrs.”

² Richard Wurmbrand, *Tortured for Christ*, with a foreword by Tom White (Bartlesville, OK., Living Sacrifice Book Company, 1967, 1998), 8.

³ St. Augustine’s quote can also be found at <http://thinkexist.com/quotation/not-the-punishment-but-the-cause-makes-the-martyr/363027.html>

Also,

In his play *Murder in the Cathedral*, T. S. Eliot describes a martyr as one “who has become an *instrument* of God, who has *lost* his will in the will of God. The martyr no longer desires anything for himself, not even the glory of martyrdom.”^{4 5}

The Evangelical Church has been asleep far too long concerning suffering, persecution, and martyrdom. What Roman Catholic Archbishop Fulton Sheen observed forty years ago can stand as an indictment against the People of God:

[People] . . . never dwell on eternity because time is so pleasant. When suffering strikes, they become divorced from their pleasant surroundings and are left naked in their own souls. They then see that they were not really affable and genial, but irritable and impatient. When the sun of outer prosperity

⁴ Richard Wurmbrand, *Tortured for Christ*, with a foreword by Tom White (Bartlesville, OK., Living Sacrifice Book Company, 1967, 1998), 8.

⁵ T.S. Eliot’s quote can also be found at <http://www.goodreads.com/quotes/774011-a-martyr-is-he-who-has-become-the-instrument-of>

sank, they had no inner light to guide their darkened souls. It is, therefore, not what happens to us that matters; it is how we react to it.⁶

His appraisal is correct; for Western Christendom in general—particularly those of the Evangelical tradition.

Pain and suffering are common to all, “But for the Christian, they are to be expected as a consequence of following Jesus.”⁷ We will all have that overwhelming feeling of dread that can accompany trials, persecution, or suffering. “But the lifting of our heads and the courage of faith is tied to God’s character and promise.”⁸ We know that God is “near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit” (Ps. 34:18).⁹ The devoted follower of Christ can find solace in I Peter 5:7 by, “Casting all . . . [their] care on Him for He careth for [them]. . . !”

This short survey will consider some trials and personal confessions surrounding John Bunyan’s arrest, imprisonment, and persecution. He would truly be

⁶ George J. Marlin, Richard P. Rabatin, & John L. Swan, eds., *The Quotable Fulton Sheen: A Topical Compilation of the Wit, Wisdom, and Satire of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen* (New York: Image Books, Doubleday, 1989), 311.

⁷ Joe Thorn, “How Should I Feel?” *Tabletalk*, May 2015, 13.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

considered a martyr by the standards defined by Augustine and Eliot. When the sun of Bunyan's outer prosperity sank, he possessed a great inner light to guide his soul. His martyrdom is seen not in what happened to him—but how he reacted to it. For he truly testified to the Gospel of Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Part the First—Bunyan's Circumstantial Confessions

Bunyan: Arrested and Off To "Gaol"

After Bunyan had "made profession of the glorious Gospel of Christ a long time, and preached the same for about five year[s]" he "was apprehended at a Meeting of good People in the Countrey, (amongst whom, had they let [him] . . . alone . . . would have preached that day, but they took [him] . . . away from amongst them) and had [him] . . . before a Justice."¹⁰ This Justice was Francis Wingate; who, "after [Bunyan] . . . had offered security for [his] . . . appearing at the next Sessions yet [had him] committed . . . because [Bunyan's] Sureties would not consent to be bound that [he] . . . should preach no more to the people."¹¹ He had such a stalwart heart to preach the Gospel; even those who secured his bail were concerned if he was freed,

¹⁰ Monica Furlong, *The Trial of John Bunyan & The Persecution of the Puritans: Selections from the Writings of John Bunyan and Agnes Beaumont* (London: The Folio Society, 1978), 90-91.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

he would continue preaching. Then their bail deposit would be forfeited.

This first persecution began in November of 1660. Bunyan reflects that “I had . . . freely preached the blessed gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; and had also, through his blessed grace, some encouragement by his blessing thereupon.”¹² This would be, for Bunyan, the beginning of many external and internal conflicts. He accuses, “[T]hat old enemy of man’s salvation,” that is, “the devil . . . took his opportunity to inflame, the hearts of his vassals against me, insomuch that at the last, I was laid out for¹³ by the warrant of a justice, and was taken and committed to prison.”¹⁴

When the constable arrived to arrest Bunyan, he was deeply troubled in spirit as to what his response might be? “For when I was come to my friend’s house, there was whispering that that day I should be taken, for there was a warrant out to take me; which when my friend heard, he being somewhat timorous, questioned whether we had best have our meeting or not[?]”¹⁵ Bunyan responded

¹² John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, edited and introduction by W. R. Owens (New York: Penguin Books, 1978), 87.

¹³ There is a footnote in the Penguin Books account that says, “First published separately in 1765.”

¹⁴ Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*, 87

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 88.

rather adamantly that their Gospel meeting should convene: “No[!] by no means, I will not stir, neither will I have the meeting dismissed for this [cause].”¹⁶ He encouraged those gathered; “Come, be of good cheer, let us not be daunted, our cause is good, we need not be ashamed of it, to preach God’s Word, it is so good a work, that we shall be well rewarded, if we *suffer* for that or to this purpose” (italics added).¹⁷ Inward he thought, “[B]ut as for my friend, I think he was more afraid of [for] me than of himself.”¹⁸

Bunyan’s personal conviction to preach ran deep. He was also intensely concerned how his personal response to the warrant would affect the younger converts: “[W]hat will my weak and newly converted brethren think of it[?]”¹⁹ Would they think him “cowardly”²⁰ and that he “blasphemed the gospel”²¹ if he fearfully set aside this meeting and did not preach? Will they think, “I was not so strong in deed, as I was in word[?]”²² He pondered:

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

I somewhat seriously considered the matter, this came into my mind: that I had showed my self hearty and courageous in my preaching, and had blessed be grace, made it my business to encourage others; therefore thought I, if I should now run, and make escape, it will be of a very ill savour in the country.²³

He comforted with a “few words of counsel and encouragement . . . the people, declaring to them, . . . see we was prevented of our opportunity to speak and hear the Word of God, and was like to suffer for the same.”²⁴ His hope for “them [was] that they should not be discouraged.”²⁵ For, says he, “we might have been apprehended as thieves or murderers, or for other wickedness”²⁶ rather than hearing God’s Word. “[B]ut blessed be God it was not so, but we suffer as Christians for well doing.”²⁷ Bunyan confessed resolve: “I follow[ed] my

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 89.

calling . . . [even though] it was against the law.”²⁸ He was seized and it would continue to cost him much!

But he was not caught unawares:

Before I came to prison I saw what was coming, and had especially two considerations warm upon my heart; the first was, how to be able to endure should my imprisonment be long and tedious; the second was how to be able to encounter death should that be my portion.²⁹

Bunyan: Cobb the Court Clerk

Bunyan, after his arrest, had lain in prison some twelve days.³⁰ He had no idea what might become of him or his dear family. Consider a short account of, “The substance of [the] . . . discourse . . . between the clerk of the peace and . . . [Bunyan]; when . . . [the Officer] came to admonish . . . [him], according to the tenor of that law, by which . . . [he] was in prison[:]”³¹

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ John Bunyan, GA, p. 97; quoted in Barrie White, “John Bunyan and the Context of Persecution 1660-1668,” in *John Bunyan and His England 1628-1688*, eds. Anne Laurence, W. R. Owens, and Stuart Sim (London: The Hambledon Press, 1990), 58.

³⁰ Ibid., 99.

³¹ Ibid.

Cobb: “Neighbor Bunyan, how do you do?”³²

Bunyan: “I thank you sir . . . very well, blessed be the Lord.”³³

Cobb: “I am sent to you by the justices to tell you that they do intend to prosecute the law against you, if you submit not.”³⁴

Bunyan: “My end in meeting with others is simply to do as much good as I can . . . not to disturb the peace of the nation. . . . I . . . willingly manifest my loyalty to my Prince, both by word and deed.”³⁵

Cobb:

I would have you consider this matter seriously and submit yourself; you may have your liberty to exhort your neighbor in private discourse.³⁶ . . . It

³² *Ibid.*, 100.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ In “private discourse” here is meant the personal conversations with whomever Bunyan would seek to speak one-on-one and in public.

is your private meetings³⁷ that the law is against.”³⁸
“The law . . . doth expressly forbid your private meetings; therefore, they are not to be tolerated.”³⁹

Bunyan:

I . . . [will] not entertain so much uncharitableness of that parliament . . . or

of the Queen herself, as to think they did by the law intend the oppressing of any of God’s ordinances, of the interrupting any in the way of God; but men may, in the wresting of it, turn it against the way of God; but take the law in itself, and it only fighteth against those that drive at mischief in their hearts and meetings, making religion only their cloak, colour, or pretense; for so are the words of the statute.⁴⁰

³⁷ By “private meetings” Cobb means a secret or unlawful religious meeting, typically of people with nonconformist views. This was taken from <https://www.google.com/#q=define+conventicles> Retrieved May 11, 2015.

³⁸ Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*, 100.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*

Cobb: “Very good; . . . the King, seeing that pretenses are usual in, and among people, as to make religions their pretense only; therefore he, and the law before him, doth forbid such private meetings, and tolerates only public, you may meet in public.”⁴¹

Bunyan:

[I]f at any time I myself, should do any act in my conversation as doth not become a man and Christian, let me bear the punishment.”⁴² “. . . I do not meet in private because I am afraid to have meetings in public. I bless the Lord that my heart is at the point, that if any man can lay anything to my charge, either in doctrine or practice, in this particular, that can be proved error or heresy, I am willing to disown it, even in the very market-place. But if it be truth, then to stand to it to the last drop of my blood. And sir . . . you ought to commend me for so doing.”⁴³

Cobb: “But goodman Bunyan . . . methinks you need not stand so strictly upon this one thing, as to have meetings of such public assemblies. Cannot you submit . .

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 101-102.

. notwithstanding do as much good as you can, in a neighbourly way, without having such meetings?”⁴⁴

Bunyan:

Truly sir . . . I do not desire to commend myself, but to think meanly of myself. . . . [T]he people of the Lord (by their own sayings) are edified thereby: besides, when I see that the Lord, through grace, hath in some measure blessed my labour, I dare not but exercise that gift which God hath given me, for the good of the people.⁴⁵

Cobb: “[D]o not think yourself so well enlightened, and that you have received a gift so far above others, but that you may hear other men preach.”⁴⁶

Bunyan:

I told you [before], I was as willing to be taught as to give instruction, and I looked upon it as my duty to do both. . . . I, [am] a man that is a teacher may learn also from another that teacheth. . . . [E]veryman that hath received a gift from God, he may dispense it, that others may be comforted; and

⁴⁴ Ibid., 102.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

when he hath done, he may hear, and learn, and be comforted of others.⁴⁷

Cobb: “But . . . what if you should forbear awhile, and sit still, till you see further how things will go?”⁴⁸

Bunyan: “Wickliffe saith, that he which leaveth off preaching and learning of the Word of God for fear of excommunication of men, he is already excommunicated of God, and shall in the Day of Judgment be counted as a traitor to Christ.”⁴⁹

Cobb: “You know . . . that the scripture saith, *the powers that are, are ordained of God.*”⁵⁰

Bunyan:

Sir . . . the law hath provided two ways of obeying: the one to do that which I in my conscience do believe that I am bound to do, actively; and where I cannot obey actively, there I am willing to lie down, and to suffer what they shall do unto me. At this . . . [Cobb] sat still and said no more; which when he had done, I did thank him for his civil and meek discoursing with me; and so we parted.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 102.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 104.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Bunyan: Wife Pleads His Cause

Consider Bunyan's account of "discourse[s] between my wife and the judges . . . [as] touching my deliverance at the assizes⁵² following: the which I took from her own mouth."⁵³

After he had received the judgment "of banishing, or hanging from them, and after the former admonition [by Cobb], touching the determination . . . I did not recant."⁵⁴ Bunyan understood that "at the coronation of kings, there is usually a releasement of divers prisoners, by virtue of his coronation; in which privilege also I should have had my share; but they took me for a convicted person, and therefore unless I sued out my pardon"⁵⁵ would not be released.

⁵² "Assizes" is defined as a court that formerly sat at intervals in each county of England and Wales to administer the civil and criminal law. In 1972 the civil jurisdiction of assizes was transferred to the High Court, and the criminal jurisdiction to the Crown Court. Retrieved from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/assize> Retrieved 12 May 2015.

⁵³ Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*, 104.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 105.

What is happening is clear. Why it happened is a bit unclear—especially from W. R. Owens’ edited version of *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*.⁵⁶ Georg Offor clarifies: “[N]umerous prisoners charged with crimes were liberated at the coronation of Charles II, [but] his case did not come within the proclamation, and he appeared to be doomed to hopeless imprisonment or to an untimely end.”⁵⁷ It was up to Bunyan to “sue” or petition the courts to be released. And, “Had he been willing to sue for a pardon—to have admitted he had wrongfully . . . [assembled a conventicle]—he would have received his freedom, but this he was unprepared to do.”⁵⁸

Bunyan reflects,
I could have no benefit thereby, notwithstanding,
yet forasmuch as the coronation proclamation did

⁵⁶ Penguin Classics Series, Penguin Books. John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, edited and introduction by W. R. Owens (New York: Penguin Books, 1978). Note: Owens is not offering any historical interpretation at this point only an account of what Bunyan said.

⁵⁷ Georg Offor, ed., *The Whole Works of John Bunyan*, Vol. 3, Part 1 (London: Blackie & Son Publishers, 1862), 4; Electronic version <https://books.google.com/books?id=2dU3AQAAMAAJ&pg=PA4&lpg=PA4&dq=why+was+john+bunyan+not+released+from+jail+in+1660>, Retrieved May 14, 2015.

⁵⁸ Richard L. Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory: John Bunyan and English Dissent* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 2002) 142.

give liberty from the day the King was crowned, to that day twelvemonth to sue them out: therefore, though they would not let me out of prison, as they let out thousands, yet they could not meddle with me, as touching the execution of their sentence; because of the liberty offered for the suing out of pardons.⁵⁹

There are some practical legal issues here:⁶⁰ Obviously he did not fall under the coronation proclamation; although he may have thought it applied to him. Moreover, local justices were given wide latitude when deciding to ban religious meetings other than those of England's established church. "In May 1660 . . . Parliament ordered magistrates to prevent illegal assemblies, and in July [the] lords lieutenant throughout the kingdom received instructions to prevent dissidents from assembling."⁶¹ Bunyan was "tried under an [older] Elizabethan statute of 1593, which outlawed preaching at conventicles."⁶²

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Richard L. Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory: John Bunyan and English Dissent*, 131.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² The International John Bunyan Society, "Bunyan Chronology: 1661 Entry," Retrieved from

The indictment charge[d] that he was ‘devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear divine service’ and that he is ‘a common upholder of several unlawful meetings of conventicles to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom.’⁶³

According to Barrie White, “The persecution was given its cutting edge by the high degree of political unease and uncertainty within the restored government.”⁶⁴ Local “Magistrates, who were inclined, to suppress conventicles had ample power to do so, especially if they deemed such meetings a security threat.”⁶⁵ “This unease of the government . . .” was “. . . somewhat justified”⁶⁶ by the authorities. Because “one former Cromwellian politician or soldier plotter [could represent] a hundred Dissenters”⁶⁷ who remained unseen.

<http://johnbunyansociety.org/bunyan-chronology/> Retrieved May 21, 2015.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Barrie White, “John Bunyan and the Context of Persecution 1660-1668,” in *John Bunyan and His England 1628-1688*, eds. Anne Laurence, W. R. Owens, and Stuart Sim (London: The Hambledon Press, 1990), 57.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ White, “John Bunyan and the Context of Persecution 1660-1668,” 57, 58.

Because “Principle drove Bunyan”⁶⁸ so strongly, he languished in “gaol.” He did “not leave any possible means unattempted that might be lawful”⁶⁹ other than to sue. Then, “my wife,” he remembers, “present[ed] a petition to the judges three times, that I might be heard, and that they would impartially take my case into consideration.”⁷⁰

The first time she took his petition before Judge Hales. He indeed received her very mildly. The Justice informed her that he would do his best for her, “but he feared”⁷¹ would be very little. Bunyan’s wife was concerned his state would be forgotten, so “we did throw another petition into the coach of Judge Twisdon.”⁷² And “when he had seen it, snapped her up, and angrily told her, that I was a convicted person, and could not be released, unless . . . [I] would promise to preach no more.”⁷³

Bunyan continues, “Well . . . she yet again presented another [petition] to Judge Hales as he sat on

⁶⁷ White, “John Bunyan and the Context of Persecution 1660-1668,” 57, 58.

⁶⁸ Richard L. Greaves, *Glimpses of Glory: John Bunyan and English Dissent*, 131, 142.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

the bench.”⁷⁴ He seemed to be the only justice who cared for her plight and to give her a hearing. But, “Justice Chester . . . stepped up and said that [Bunyan] was convicted in the court, and that . . . [he] was a hot-spirited fellow (or words to that purpose) whereat he waived . . . [the petition] and did not meddle therewith.”⁷⁵ Although at this time, “my wife [was] being encouraged by the High Sheriff did not venture once more into their presence (as the poor widow did to the unjust judge [in Luke 18:6]).”⁷⁶ In her last attempt,

The place where she went to them was to the Swan Chamber, Where the two judges, and many justices and gentry of the country, was in company together. She then coming into the chamber with abashed face, and a trembling heart, began her errand to them in this manner.⁷⁷

Wife: “I make bold to come once again to your lordship to know what may be done with my husband.”⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

Justice Hales: “I told thee before I could do thee no good. . . . [U]nless there be something done to undo [his conviction].”⁷⁹

Wife: “[H]e is kept unlawfully in prison. . . . The indictment is . . . false. . . . They never asked him whether he was guilty or no; neither did he confess the indictment.”⁸⁰

Another justice who stood by spoke up:⁸¹ “[M]y lord, he was lawfully convicted.”⁸²

Wife: “It is false. . . . [H]e said only . . . that he had been at . . . meetings, both where there was preaching the Word, and prayer, and that they had God’s presence among them.”⁸³ She continues to argue vociferously! “[H]e was not convicted lawfully[!]”⁸⁴ According to her testimony he did not confess to the indictment.

Justice Chester responds, “But it is recorded . . . it is recorded. . . . [I]t must be of necessity true because it was recorded. [H]e endeavored to stop her mouth, having no

⁷⁹ Ibid., 106.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

other argument to convince her, but it its recorded, it is recorded.”⁸⁵

Bunyan recounts how she then took the case to Lord Barkwood of the House of Lords.⁸⁶ In turn, he took her petition to the House. They replied in concert, committing Bunyan’s case to the judges of the circuit court jurisdiction.⁸⁷ Completely humbled she now begs openly: “[N]ow I come to you to see if any thing may be done in this business, and you give neither releasement nor relief.”⁸⁸

Justice Chester: “[H]e is convicted, and it is recorded.”⁸⁹ “My lord . . . he is a pestilent fellow, there is not such a fellow in the country. . . .”⁹⁰

Justice Twisdon inquired: “[W]ill your husband leave preaching? If he will do so then send for him.”⁹¹

Wife: “My Lord . . . he dares not leave preaching, as long as he can speak.”⁹² She pleads all the more; “I have

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 107.

⁹¹ Ibid.

four small children that cannot help themselves, of which one is blind, [and they] have nothing to live upon, but the charity of good people.” She further tells how she and Bunyan had a child together “but . . . [the] child died.”⁹³

Because Bunyan did not answer to the indictment during the proceedings, the court took his response as a plea of guilt. Justice Hales, the one who responded to her kindly, gave her three options how she might secure his release: “[T]hou must either apply thyself to the King, or sue out his pardon, or get a writ of error.”⁹⁴

Finally, after an emotionally charged encounter between his wife and Justice Twisdon; she is left with a few choices from Justice Hales: “I am sorry, woman, that I can do thee no good; thou must do one of those three things aforesaid, namely; either to apply thyself to the King, or sue out his pardon, or get a writ of error; but a writ of error will be cheapest.”⁹⁵

Part the Second—Bunyan’s Written Confessions

Bunyan: Confession from *The Pilgrim’s Progress*

Any written confession of Bunyan’s persecution must necessarily include some scene from *The Pilgrim’s*

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 108.

Progress. In it he calls his reader's to remind, imagine, and experience his sufferings endured in the Bedford "Gaol." The most poignant account of tribulation, no doubt, is when Christian and Faithful pass through Vanity Fair, for "the way to [the] Celestial City goes right through the town where this lively fair is located."⁹⁶ The Fair represents the world and those who would "venture all for God"⁹⁷ will be tempted by her delights!

The "town was in a hubbub about . . . [the foreigners]"⁹⁸ when they arrived:

First—the pilgrims were dressed in a kind of clothing that was different from the clothes of any of those who traded at the Fair. . . .⁹⁹

Second—just as they wondered at their apparel, so likewise they wondered at their speech,

⁹⁶ John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress (in Modern English)*, updated & rev. by L. Edward Hazelbaker (Gainesville, Fla.: Bridge-Logos Publishers, 1998), 118.

⁹⁷ For further study the reader is invited to consider: Roger D. Duke and Phil Newton, *Venture All For God: Piety in the Writings of John Bunyan* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011).

⁹⁸ John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress (in Modern English)*, 117-130.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 120.

for few could understand what they said. They naturally spoke the language of Canaan. . . .¹⁰⁰

Third— . . . that which greatly amazed the merchandizers, these Pilgrims held all their wares . . . unimportant. They did not care so much as even to look at them, if they called upon them to buy, they would look upwards (signifying their trade and business was in Heaven) put their fingers in ears and cry, “Turn my eyes away from worthless things.”¹⁰¹

For his confession Faithful was, “First . . . whipped. . . , then they beat him, then they lanced his flesh with knives. After that, they stoned him with stones, then pricked him with their swords, and last of all, they burnt him to ashes at the stake. Thus came Faithful to his end.”¹⁰²

“Bunyan . . . begins writing *The Pilgrim’s Progress* in 1668 (but [it is] not published until 1678).”¹⁰³ He had

¹⁰⁰ Hazelbaker’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* revision, p. 128, footnote #9, “The language of the land of promise. The pilgrims spoke in spiritual and heavenly terms.”

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 128, footnote #11.

¹⁰² Hazelbaker’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* revision, 127.

¹⁰³ The International John Bunyan Society, “Bunyan Chronology: 1661 Entry,” Retrieved from <http://johnbunyansociety.org/bunyan-chronology/> Retrieved May 21, 2015.

much time between his arrest and prison stay to work out the details of his “dream.”¹⁰⁴ No doubt the “clothing” of Christian and Faithful is symbolic of the “righteousness of Christ.” The travelers also spoke the Heavenly language that would surely upset the good citizens of the Fair. They knew not the tongue, but had they understood it’s content, it would no doubt have inflamed them to a greater hatred of these pilgrims. The residents were “greatly amazed” the pilgrims held their wares in such contempt for “They did not care so much as even to look at them.” Vanity Fair’s indignation because of the pilgrim’s clothing, speech, and utter disregard for the things of this world; were all metaphors for Bunyan’s treatment by his English countrymen. It is easily seen that Vanity Fair becomes a capsulized confession of faith and persecution for Christian on his road to the “Celestial City.”¹⁰⁵

Bunyan: Confessions from *Advice to Sufferers*

¹⁰⁴ Hazelbaker, 3.

¹⁰⁵ Hazelbaker, 201.

Bunyan's work *Advice to Sufferers*¹⁰⁶ is an extended exposition of I Peter 4: 19.¹⁰⁷ In the "Preface,"¹⁰⁸ he "thought it convenient, since many at this day are exposed to sufferings, to give my advice [as] touching that to thee."¹⁰⁹ He advises: "[T]ake heed to thyself. . . . [K]eep thy soul diligently. . . .[[A]nd do] not suffer thyself to be entangled in those snares that God hath suffered¹¹⁰ to be

¹⁰⁶ The International John Bunyan Society, "Bunyan Chronology: 1684 Entry," states: "1684 Nathaniel Ponder publishes the authentic Second Part of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Also published are Bunyan's sermon-treatises *A Holy Life, The Beauty of Christianity; Seasonable Counsel; or, Advice to Sufferers*; and a poem, *A Caution to Stir Up Against Sin*. Suicide of the apostate John Child, at one time a member of the Bedford congregation."

¹⁰⁷ "Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful creator" (KJV).

¹⁰⁸ John Bunyan, *Advice To Sufferers* (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1853; reprint, Swengel, PA: Reiner Publications, 1976), 3 (page citations are to the reprint edition). Note: See the above citation for further historical data concerning the original publication of Bunyan's *Advice To Sufferers*.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹¹⁰ Here "suffered" means "to allow" or "to tolerate." See <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/suffer> Retrieved 29 May 2015.

laid in the world for some.”¹¹¹ ¹¹² The “Christian’s business”¹¹³ is: “to seek the good of all about him, according as his place, state and capacity in this world will admit; not meddling with other men’s matters, but ever following that which is good.”¹¹⁴ He demonstrates in the “Preface” with a few choice words, *what* God employs in the lives of believers for his glory and their good:

Persecution: “Faith and patience, in *persecution*, have that do to, that to sow and to perform, that cannot be done, shown, not performed, any where else but there.”¹¹⁵

Tribulation: “There is also a patience of hope; a rejoicing in hope, when we are in *tribulation*, that is over and above that which we have when we are at ease and quiet.”¹¹⁶

Sufferings: “Why . . . should we think that our innocent lives will exempt us from *sufferings*. . . . For

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² The reader may want to reread those sections of *Pilgrim’s Progress* cited above as reflective of Bunyan’s long view of his persecution and time in the Bedford “gaol.”

¹¹³ Bunyan, *Advice to Sufferers*, 3.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Bunyan, *Advice to Sufferers*, 4.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

verily, it is for our present and future good that our God doth send them upon us.”¹¹⁷

Experimental proof: “And though this may seem . . . strange; yet our day has given us such and *experimental proof* of the truth thereof, as has not been known for some ages past.”¹¹⁸

Profess: “[A]ffliction is better than sin, and if God sends the one to cleanse us from the other, let us thank him, and be also content to pay the messenger.”¹¹⁹

Bunyan assumes the role of rhetor. He wants “to persuade”¹²⁰ them “to lie down and take thy potion” for “it is of absolute necessity, that [it] is, for thy spiritual and internal health.”¹²¹ He argues from three rhetorical questions why his readers should submit to their tormentors:

[F]irst, It is better that thou receive judgment in this world, or that thou stay for it, [than] to be condemned with the ungodly in the next? Secondly, Is it better that thou shouldst, as to

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 6.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 6.

¹²¹ Ibid.

some acts of thy graces, be foreign, and a stranger, and consequently that thou shouldst *lose* that far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory that is prepared as the reward thereof? Or that thou shouldst *receive* it at the hand of God, when the day shall come that every man shall have praise of him for their doings? Thirdly, I say again, since chastisements are a sign of sonship, . . . is it not better that we bear those tokens and marks in our flesh that bespeak us to belong to Christ, that those that declare us to be none of his?”¹²²

Bunyan closes his “Preface” with a tone of irony. The persecution “what comes to thee from God by [the tormentors]”¹²³ is to be received “thankfully.”¹²⁴

If the messenger that brings it is glad that it is in his power to do thee hurt, and to afflict thee; if he skips for joy at thy calamity; be sorry for him, pity him, and pray to thy Father for him: he is ignorant and understandeth not the judgment of God; yea, he showeth by this his behavior, that though he as God’s ordinance serveth thee by afflicting thee; yet

¹²² Bunyan, *Advise To Sufferers*, 6-7.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

means he nothing less than to destroy thee, by which also he prognosticates before thee that he is working out his own damnation by doing thee good.¹²⁵

Bunyan: A Confession of True Martyrdom (Closing Inklusio)

IT IS NOT EVERY SUFFERING that makes a martyr, but suffering for the Word of God after a right manner; that is, not only for righteousness' sake; not only for truth, but out of love . . . [of the] truth; not only for God's Word, but according to it. . . in that holy, humble, meek manner, as the Word of God requires.

It is a rare thing to suffer rightly, and to have my spirit in suffering bent only against God's enemy, sin; sin in doctrine, sin in worship, sin in life, and sin in conversation.

The devil, nor men of the world, can kill your righteousness, or your love for righteousness except it comes by our own hand; neither can you be separated from it without an action of your own. Nor will he that does indeed suffer for the sake of it, or out of love he bears for it, be tempted to exchange it, for the good will of all the world.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 7.

I have often thought that the best of Christians are found in the worst of times. And I have thought again that one reason why we are no better is because God purges us no more. Noah and Lot—who were as holy as they in the time of afflictions? And yet, who were as idle as they in the time of prosperity?¹²⁶

Let us gird up our loins in these good times that we might indeed be prepared for the persecution that is surely to come!

¹²⁶ Jon J. Cardwell, editor and compiler, *Dying Sayings: John Bunyan* (Printed by Create Space in the United States of America: Vayahiy Press, 2011), 25-26.

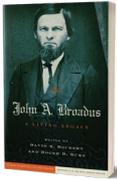
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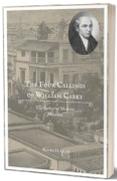
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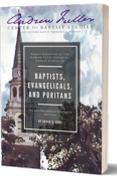
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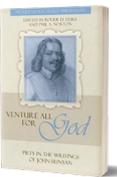
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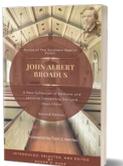
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