

John Bunyan

Most of the Christians have come across the book called "The Pilgrim's Progress". John Bunyan was the author of this book. He was born in England in the month of November 1628. He took up the trade of tinker for his profession, which he had learned from his father. He lived a very sinful life in his youth hood. He spoke lies, cheated others and disrespected the elders. Since he had no peace in life, he joined the army by the age of 16. While in army, he was ordered to go to a war that was happening in his country's border. As he was preparing himself for the war, at the final moment, another person was appointed for that task. That person lost his life in the very first day of the battle. This incident made John Bunyan very intently think of his life. He very keenly thought upon why his life was saved in such a narrow twist.

At the age of 19 he was married to a Christ believing girl. She often used to share with John about Jesus. Just to please his wife, John Bunyan started to go to church and got rid of some bad habits. Once when he was going on the streets regarding his work, he stopped and noticed three women speaking to people about Jesus Christ. He heard the gospel through them and went home to read and learn more about the bible. As he continuously read the bible, he realized his sinfulness.

In those days, there was a rule in England that none other than pastors should preach the bible. Though John knew this, he rather chose to obey the commandment of God in the book of Mark 16:15 "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature". He started preaching the gospel.

Once he was invited in a village to preach the gospel. The police authorities who knew this came to the place and were waiting for the right time to lay hands over him. The moment came for his preaching. As soon as John started to preach, the police caught hold of him and handed him over to the judiciary. The judge said, "if you promise that you will never preach again, I will command your release". John did not come forward to accept the offer. At first he was imprisoned for 3 months. John Bunyan said, "If I be released today, by the power of God I will preach tomorrow". Such statements made the court extend his imprisonment for 12 years. The court also gave him a way out saying that he can be released any time during these 12 years if he will just promise them not to preach again.

Though it was tough for him to be away from his wife and four children, he went through all of this just because of the love he had for God. The prison was full of murderers and evil doers. John spoke to them of Christ and led them to righteousness. They all started to gather and pray in the prison. He never wasted his time in the prison. He was always praying, reading the bible and writing. It was in the prison that John Bunyan wrote 'The Pilgrim's Progress'.

He was released from the prison at the age of 43. He was given an invitation by the people to minister for them at the Bedford Baptist Church. Accepting their invitation, John Bunyan ministered in that church for 16 years. It was a day of dismal when John became wet in rain and grievously fell sick, never to be recovered. He died on the 13th of August, 1688 at the age of 59.

Pastor John Bunyan is no more with us, but the book 'The Pilgrim's progress' is still leading many to Christ. Only next to the Bible, this book has been translated into 130 languages and been read my many. Talents and abilities are not the primary criteria to be used by God. God expects surrenderance. Our God is an expert in excelling that which is simple. He makes the simple outshine and create history. He will use you to do great and mighty things which cannot be forgotten.