

Born to Be a Pilgrim

Pilgrim's Progress is one of the most important novels of both the Christian faith and the English language. In it, a pilgrim named Christian takes a long journey away from home and experiences the spiritual life as he meets characters like Vanity Fair and Evangelist and visits places like the Slough of Despond.

An interesting thing that a spiritual director once pointed out to me about this book, is that Christian's conversion is a brief passage that occurs near the beginning of the book. Considering that the book was written by a Baptist (yahoo!), you might expect that Christian's conversion story would be a big deal that occurred at the end of the book, a harbinger of arrival and accomplishment; but that is not the case.

Similarly in our own lives, conversion is not usually the be all and end all of Christian experience. The aim of this series is to delve into some post-conversion realities of Christian experience, such as spiritual practice and community. We do so through the metaphor of pilgrimage, exploring these four questions as follows.

- In Session One, The Long Road, we ask where am I going? This lesson helps students project and imagine what their spiritual life may look like long-term.
- In Session Two, The Different Paths, we ask what path will I take? This is as a way of analyzing the different yet valid ways of pursuing God.
- In Session Three, The Right Tools, we ask what will I take with me? This lesson helps students to identify the many tools of Christian spiritual discipline and spiritual growth.
- Finally, in Session Four, The Best Companions, we ask with whom shall I walk? This lesson explores our opinions and biblical teaching about friendship, by way of reminding us of the good gift of human friendship as well as the lasting provision of God's companionship on the road of life. I hope that you enjoy the journey!