

THE PILGRIMS AT VANITY FAIR



When I saw in my dream, that when they were got out of the wilderness they presently saw a town before them, and the name of that town is *Vanity*, and at the town there is a fair kept, called *Vanity Fair* It is kept all the year long. It beareth the name of *Vanity Fair*, because the town where it is kept, is lighter than *vanity*; and also, because all that is there sold, or that come in thither, is *Vanity*. As is the saying of the wise, *All that cometh is vanity*.

Isa. 40. 17.
Eccles. 1.
Ch. 2. 11,
17.

2. This fair is no new erected business, but a thing of ancient standing. I will shew you the original of it.

The antiquity of this Fair.

3. Almost five thousand years ago, there were pilgrims walking to the Celestial City, as these two honest persons are; and *Beelzebub*, *Apollyon*, and *Legion*, with their companions, perceiving by the path that the pilgrims made, that their way to the city lay through this town of *Vanity*, they contrived here to set up a fair; a fair, wherein should be sold *all sorts of vanity*, and that it should last all the year long; therefore, at this fair, are all such merchandises sold, as houses, lands, trades, places, honors, preferments, titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts,

The merchandise of this Fair.

pleasures; and delights of all sorts, as whores, bawds, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold, pearls, precious stones, and what not?¹

4. And moreover, at this fair there is at all times to be seen jugglings, cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, knaves, and rogues, and that of every kind.

5. Here are to be seen too, and that for nothing, thefts, murders, adulteries, false-swareers, and that of a blood-red color.

*Behold Vanity Fair! the pilgrims there
Are chained, and stoned beside:
Even so it was our Lords passed here,
And on Mount Calvary dyed.*

6. And as in other fairs of less moment, there are the several rows and streets under their proper names, where such and such wares are vended; so here likewise, you have the proper places, rows, streets, (namely countries and king-

¹ The pursuits of the world, which knows not God, may be referred to two general heads, mischief and vanity. "Some are hatching cockatrice eggs; others weaving spiders' webs." Isa. 59. 5

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*The streets of
this Fair.*

doms) where the wares of this fair are soonest to be found. Here is the *Britain* row, the *French* row, the *Italian* row, the *Spanish* row, the *German* row, where several sorts of vanities are to be sold. But as in other fairs, some one commodity is as the chief of all the fair, so the ware of *Rome* and her merchandise is greatly promoted in this fair; only our *English* nation, with some others, have taken a dislike thereat.

I Cor. 5. 10.
*Christ went
through this
Fair.*
Mat. 4. 3.
Luke 4. 5, 6, 7.

7. Now, as I said, the way to the Celestial City lies just through this town, where this lusty fair is kept;² and he that will go to the city, and yet not go through this town, must needs go out of the world. The Prince of Princes Himself, when

² Mr. Bunyan, under the allegorical description of Vanity Fair, represents the world in its bewitching snares, flattering smiles, beguiling baits, and threatening frowns. Its honors, riches, pleasures and vanities, are decked out in the most enchanting dress, to allure and captivate; Satan, the god of this world, is continually suggesting to us to cast in our lot, and take our fill of sensual pleasures.--The prince of this world made an attempt upon the Lord of glory, when he passed through the fair, but he found nothing in him. He has been making repeated trials since upon those who bear the Christian name, and has too frequently succeeded. But the true Christian Pilgrim is enabled to overcome by faith. The eleventh chapter of the Hebrews furnishes us with many illustrious examples of those who confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and were seeking after a better country, that is, a heavenly. True faith inspires the soul with undaunted courage against the Lord's enemies and ours, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

here, went through this town to His own country, and that upon a *Fair-day* too; yea, and as I think, it was *Beelzebub*, the chief lord of this fair, that invited Him to buy of his vanities; yea, would have made Him lord of the fair, would He but have done him reverence as he went through the town. Yea, because He was such a person of honor, *Beelzebub* had Him from street to street, and shewed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a little time, that he might, (if possible) allure that Blessed One, to cheapen and buy some of his vanities; but He had no mind to the merchandise, and therefore left the town, without laying out so much as one farthing upon these vanities. This fair, therefore, is an ancient thing, of long standing, and a very great fair.

*Christ
bought
nothing in
this Fair.*

8. Now these pilgrims, as I said, must needs go through this fair. Well, so they did; but behold, even as they entered into the fair, all the people in the fair were moved, and the town itself, as it were, in a hubbub about them; and that for several reasons: For,

*The pil-
grims
enter the
Fair.*

*The Fair
in a hub-
bub about
them.*

9. **First**, The pilgrims were clothed with such kind of raiment as was diverse from the raiment of any that traded in that fair. The people, therefore, of the fair made a great gazing upon them; some said they were fools; some they were belam's; and some they are outlandish men.³

*The first
cause of
the hub-
bub.*

³ Three things the world cannot bear in a Christian. 1. His garment; that is, his pro-

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*The second
cause of the
hubbub.*

10. **Secondly,** And as they wondered at their apparel, so they did likewise at their speech; for few could understand what they said. They naturally spoke the language of Canaan; but they that kept the fair were the men of this world. So that from one end of the fair to the other, they seemed barbarians each to the other.

*Third cause
of the hub-
bub.*

11. **Thirdly,** But that which did not a little amuse the merchandisers, was, that these Pilgrims set very light by all their wares. They cared not so much as to look upon them; and if they called upon them to buy, they would put their fingers in their ears, and cry, *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity*, and look upwards, signifying, that their trade and traffic was in heaven.

*Fourth cause
of the hub-
bub.*

Prov. 23.
23.

*They are
mocked.*

12. One chanced mockingly, beholding the carriages of the men, to say unto them, *What will ye buy?* But they looking gravely upon him, said, *We buy the Truth*. At that, there was an occasion taken to despise the men the more; some mocking, some taunting, some speaking

fession of justification by the righteousness of Christ. 2. His language; what he can declare of the great things which God hath done for his soul; his sense of pardoning love, and communion with God in Christ. 3. His preciseness, as they call it, in refusing to conform to their vain and sinful practices. On these accounts believers (if consistent and upright in their profession) are a gazing stock, and a laughing stock: must expect at the best, trials of cruel mockings, and sometimes are exposed to stripes, imprisonment, and death.

reproachfully, and somecalling upon others to smite them. At last things came to a hubbub, and great stir in the fair, insomuch that all order was confounded. Now was word presently brought to the great one of the fair, who quickly came down and deputed some of his most trusty friends to take these men into examination, about whom the fair was almost overturned. So the men were brought to examination; and they that sat upon them, asked them, whence they came, whither they went, and what they did there in such an unusual garb? The men told them, that they were pilgrims and strangers in the world, and that they were going to their own country, which was the heavenly *Jerusalem*; and that they had given none occasion to the men of the town, nor yet to the merchandisers, thus to abuse them, and to let them on their journey, except it was for that, when one asked them what they would buy, they said, they would *buy the Truth*. But they that were appointed to examine them, did not believe them to be any other than bedlams and mad, or else such as came to put all things into a confusion in the fair. Therefore they took them and beat them, and besmeared them with dirt, and then put them into the cage, that they might be made a spectacle to all the men of the fair.⁴ There therefore they lay for some time, and were

*The Fair
in a hubbub.*

*They tell
who they
are, and
whence they
came.*

Heb. 11. 13,
14, 15, 16.

*They are
taken for
madmen.
[They are
not believed.
1st edit.]*

*They are put
in the cage.*

⁴ Cruelty and calumny are usually joined when the people of God suffer. The one gratifies the spirit of persecution; the other is designed to justify it.

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made the objects of any man's sport, or malice, or revenge; the great one of the fair laughing still at all that befell them: but, the men being patient, and not rendering railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing, and giving good words for bad, and kindness for injuries done; some men in the fair that were more observing, and less prejudiced than the rest, began to check and blame the baser sort for their continual abuses done by them to the men. They therefore in angry manner let fly at them again, counting them as bad as the men in the cage, and telling them that they seemed confederates, and should be made partakers of their misfortunes. The other replied, that for ought they could see, the men were quiet and sober, and intended nobody any harm; and that there were many that traded in their fair, that were more worthy to be put into the cage, yea, and pillory too, than were the men that they had abused. Thus, after divers words had passed on both sides, (the men behaving themselves all the while very wisely and soberly before them) they fell to some blows among themselves, and did harm one to another. Then were these two poor men brought before their examiners again, and there charged as being guilty of the late hubbub that had been in the fair. So they beat them pitifully, and hanged irons upon them, and led them in chains up and down the fair, for an example and a terror to others, lest any should further speak in their behalf, or join themselves unto them. But *Christian*

and *Faithful* behaved themselves yet more wisely, and received the ignominy and shame that was cast upon them, with so much meekness and patience, that it won to their side (though but few in comparison of the rest) several of the men in the fair.⁵ This put the other party yet into a greater rage, insomuch that they concluded the death of these two men. Wherefore they threatened that neither cage nor irons should serve their turn, but that they should die for the abuse they had done, and for deluding the men of the fair.

13. Then were they remanded to the cage again, until further order should be taken with them. So they put them in, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

14. Here also they called again to mind what they had heard from their faithful friend *Evangelist*, and were the more confirmed in their ways and sufferings, by what he told them would happen to them. They also now comforted each other, that whose lot it was to suffer, even he should have the best on't; therefore each man secretly wished that he might have that preferment. But committing themselves to the all-

⁵ Patient bearing of injuries is true Christian fortitude, and will always be more effectual to disarm our enemies, and to bring others to the knowledge of the truth than all arguments whatever. A time of outward trouble to the church is usually a season of grace. The exemplary conduct of those, who suffer for the truth, conciliates an attention to their principle.

Their behavior in the cage.

The men of the Fair do fall out among themselves about these two men.

They are made the authors of this disturbance.

They are led up and down the Fair in chains, for a terror to others

Some men of the Fair won over to them.

Their adversaries resolve to kill them.

They are again put into the cage, and after brought to trial.

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wise dispose of Him that ruleth all things, with much content they abode in the condition in which they were, until they should be otherwise disposed of.

15. Then a convenient time being appointed, they brought them forth to their trial, in order to their condemnation. When the time was come, they were brought before their enemies, and arraigned. The judge's name was *Lord Hate-good*: Their indictment was one and the same in substance though somewhat varying in form; the contents whereof was this:

*Their
indictment*

16. *That they were enemies to, and disturbers of their trade: that they had made commotions and divisions in the town, and had won a party to their own most dangerous opinions, in contempt of the law of their prince.*⁶

*Faithful's
answer for
himself*

17. Then *Faithful* began to answer, that he had only set himself against that, which had set itself against Him that is higher than the highest. And, said he, as for disturbance, I make none, being myself a man of peace: the parties that were

won to us, were won by beholding our truth and innocence, and they are only turned from the worse to the better. And as to the king you talk of, since he is *Beelzebub*, the enemy of our Lord, I defy him and all his angels.

18. Then proclamation was made, that they that had ought to say for their lord the king against the prisoner at the bar, should forthwith appear, and give in their evidence. So there came in three witnesses, to wit, *Envy*, *Superstition*, and *Pick-thank*. They were then asked, if they knew the prisoner at the bar; and what they had to say for their lord the king against him.

Envy begins.

19. Then stood forth *Envy*, and said to this effect: My Lord, I have known this man a long time, and will attest upon my oath before this honorable bench, that he is—

20. **Judge.** Hold—give him his oath.

21. So they swore him. Then he said, My lord, this man, notwithstanding his plausible name, is one of the vilest men in our country; he neither regardeth prince nor people, law nor custom, but doth all that he can to possess all men with certain of his disloyal notions, which he in the general calls *principles of faith and holiness*. And in particular, I heard him once myself affirm, *that Christianity and the customs of our town of Vanity, were diametrically opposite, and could not be recon-*

⁶ This has been a pretext made use of in all ages of the church for persecuting practices. These are the men that have turned the world upside down, was a charge laid against the first preachers of Christianity. The charge of faction, sedition, disturbers of society, and enemies to Christ, has been fastened on good men that are, abundant examples of which the history of the Church furnishes us with.

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ciled. By which saying, my lord, he doth, at once, not only condemn all our laudable doings, but us in the doing of them.

22. **Judge.** Then did the judge say to him, Hast thou any more to say?

23. **Envy.** My lord, I could say much more, only I would not be tedious to the court. Yet if need be, when the other gentlemen have given in their evidence, rather than any thing shall be wanting that will dispatch him, I will enlarge my testimony against him. So he was bid stand by.

24. Then they called *Superstition*, and bid him look upon the prisoner: They also asked, what he could say for their lord the king against him? Then they sware him; so he began:

25. **Super.** My lord, I have no great acquaintance with this man, nor do I desire to have further knowledge of him. However, this I know, that he is a very pestilent fellow, from some discourse that the other day I had with him in this town; for then talking with him, I heard him say, that our religion was naught, and such by which a man could by no means please God. Which saying of his, my lord, your lordship very well knows what necessarily thence will follow, to wit, *that we still do worship in vain, are yet in our sins, and finally shall be damned:* and this is that which I have to say.

Superstition follows.

26. Then was *Pickthank* sworn, and bid say what he knew in the behalf of their lord the king, against the prisoner at the bar.

27. **Pick.** My Lord and you gentlemen all; this fellow I have known of a long time, and have heard him speak things that ought not to be spoke for he hath railed on our noble prince *Beelzebub*, and hath spoke contemptibly of his honorable friends, whose names are, the lord *Old-Man*, the Lord *Carnal Delight*, the Lord *Luxurious*, the Lord *Desire of Vain-Glory*, my old Lord *Lechery*, Sir *Having Greedy*, with all the rest of our nobility: and he hath said moreover, that if all men were of his mind, if possible, there is not one of these noblemen should have any longer a being in this town. Besides, he hath not been afraid to rail on you, my lord, who are now appointed to be his judge, calling you an ungodly villain, with many other such like vilifying terms, with which he hath bespattered most of the gentry of our town.

Pickthank's testimony.

Sins are all lords and great ones.

28. When this *Pickthank* had told his tale, the judge directed his speech to the prisoner at the bar, saying, Thou renegade, heretic, and traitor, hast thou heard what these honest gentlemen have witnessed against thee?

29. **Faith.** May I speak a few words in my own defense?

30. **Judge.** Sirrah, sirrah, thou deservest to live no longer, but to be slain immediately upon the place; yet

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that all men may see our gentleness towards thee, let us see what thou hast to say.

Faithful's
defence of
himself

31. **Faith.** 1st I say then, in answer to what Mr. *Envy* hath spoken, I never said ought but this, that what rule, or laws, or custom, or people, were flat against the word of God, are diametrically opposite to Christianity. If I have said amiss in this, convince me of my error, and I am ready here before you to make my recantation.

Now, Faithful, play the man,
speak for thy God;
Fear not the wicked's malice,
nor their rod:
Speak boldly, man,
the truth is on thy side;
Die for it, and to life
in triumph ride.

32. 2nd. As to the second, to wit, Mr. *Superstition*, and his charge against me, I said only this, that in the worship of God there is required a divine faith; but there can be no divine faith without a divine revelation of the will of God. Therefore, whatever is thrust into the worship of God, that is not agreeable to divine revelation, cannot be done but by an human faith, which faith will not profit to eternal life.

33. 3rd. As to what Mr. *Pickthank* hath said, I say (avoiding terms, as that I am said to rail, and the like) that the prince of this town, with all the rabblement, his atten-

dants, by this gentleman named, are more fit for being in hell, than in this town and country; *and so the Lord have mercy upon me.*

34. Then the judge called to the jury, (who all this while stood by to hear and observe), Gentlemen of the jury, you see this man about whom so great an uproar hath been made in this town; you have also heard what these worthy gentlemen have witnessed against him; also you have heard his reply and confession: it lieth now in your breasts to hang him, or save his life; but yet I think meet to instruct you into our law.

The judge's
speech to the
jury.

35. There was an act made in the days of *Pharaoh* the great, servant to our prince, that lest those of a contrary religion should multiply, and grow too strong for him, their males should be thrown into the river. There was also an act made in the days of *Nebuchadnezzar* the great, another of his servants, that whoever would not fall down and worship his golden image, should be thrown into a fiery furnace. There was also an act made in the days of *Darius*, that whoso for some time called upon any god but him, should be cast into the lions den. Now the substance of these laws this rebel has broken, not only in thought (which is not to be borne) but also in word and deed; which must therefore needs be intolerable.⁷

Exod. 1.

Dan. 3.

Dan. 6.

⁷ When we come to make the Word of God the rule of our conduct, and not the ways and customs of the world, we must

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36. For that of *Pharaoh*, his law was made upon a supposition, to prevent mischief, no crime being yet apparent; but here is a crime apparent. For the second and third, you see he disputeth against our religion; and for the treason he hath confessed, he deserveth to die the death.

*The jury and
their names.*

37. Then went the jury out, whose names were Mr. *Blindman*, Mr. *No-good*, Mr. *Malice*, Mr. *Love-lust*, Mr. *Live-loose*, Mr. *Heady*, Mr. *High-mind*, Mr. *Enmity*, Mr. *Lyer*, Mr. *Cruelty*, Mr. *Hate-light*, and Mr. *Implacable*; who every one gave in his private verdict against him among themselves and afterwards unanimously concluded to bring him in guilty, before the judge. And first among themselves, Mr. *Blindman* the foreman said, I see clearly that this man is an heretic. Then said Mr. *No-good*, Away with such a fellow from the earth. Ay, said Mr. *Malice*, for I hate the very looks of him. Then said Mr. *Love-lust*, I could never endure him. Nor I, said Mr. *Live-loose*, for he would always be condemning my way. Hang him, hang him, said Mr. *Heady*. A sorry scrub, said Mr. *High-mind*. My heart riseth against him, said Mr. *Enmity*. He is a rogue, said Mr. *Liar*. Hanging is too good for him, said Mr. *Cruelty*. Lets dispatch him out of the way, said Mr. *Hate-light*. Then said Mr.

*Every one's
private verdict.*

expect to feel the weight of opposition from those who live directly contrary to the gospel, and fashion their religion after the smooth easy way of the times.

Implacable, Might I have all the world given me, I could not be reconciled to him therefore let us forthwith bring him in guilty of death. And so they did; therefore he was presently condemned to be had from the place where he was, to the place from whence he came, and there to be put to the most cruel death that could be invented.

*They conclude to
bring him in
guilty of
death.*

Brave Faithful!
Bravely done in word and deed.
Judge, witnesses,
and jury have, instead
Of over coming thee,
but shown their rage,
When they are dead,
thou'lt live, from age to age.

38. They therefore brought him out to do with him according to their law; and first they scourged him, then they buffeted 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.⁸

*The cruel
death of
Faithful.*

39. Now I saw, that there stood behind the multitude a chariot and a

⁸ We are not now, blessed be God, called to suffer unto death; but if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he must suffer persecution, and be content to bear what the malice of the enemy shall be permitted to accomplish against us. Suffering is the way to glory. If we would reign with Christ, we must be content to suffer with him shame, reproach, or, if called to it, death itself.

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*Chariot and
horses take
away Faith-
ful.*

*Christian still
a prisoner.
[early edits.
'is still
alive.']*

couple of horses waiting for *Faithful* who (so soon as his adversaries had dispatched him) was taken up into it, and straightway was carried up through the clouds with sound of trumpet, the nearest way to the Celestial Gate. But as for *Christian* he had some respite, and was remanded back to prison; so he there remained for a space. But He that over-rules all things, having the power of their rage in his own hand, so wrought it about, that *Christian* for that time escaped them, and went his way.⁹ And as he went he sang, saying;

Well, Faithful,
 thou hast faithfully profest
Unto thy Lord,
 with Him thou shalt be blest;
When faithless ones,
 with all their vain delights,
Are crying out under
 their hellish plights:
Sing, Faithful, sing,
 and let thy name survive;
For tho' they killed thee,
 thou art yet alive.

*The song
that Chris-
tian made of
Faithful after
his death.*

*Christian has
another
companion.*

40. Now I saw in my dream, that *Christian* went not forth alone; for there was one whose name was *Hopeful*, (being made so by the beholding of *Christian* and *Faithful* in their words and behavior, in their sufferings at the fair) who joined

himself unto him, and entering into a brotherly covenant, told him, that he would be his companion.¹⁰ Thus one died to make testimony to the truth, and another rises out of his ashes to be a companion with *Christian* in his pilgrimage. This *Hopeful* also told *Christian*, that there were many more of the men in the fair that would take their time, and follow after. †

*There are
more of the
men of the Fair
will follow.*

NOTES:

⁹ A comfortable thought. It is the Lord's cause, and he is able to protect his servants, and make a way for their escape. He calls some to the honor of suffering, others he delivers from dangers equally apparent: and though their enemies fight and rage, they cannot prevail against them.

¹⁰ "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

