

OBSTINATE AND PLIABLE

Jer. 20. 10

*They that fly
from the
wrath to
come are a
gazing stock
to the world.*

Obstinate
and Pliable
follow him.

The neighbors also came out to see him run;¹ and as he ran some mocked, others threatened, and some cried after him to return. Now among those that did so, there were two that were resolved to fetch him back by force. The name of the one was *Obstinate*, and the name of the other *Pliable*.² Now by this time the man was got a good distance from them; but however, they were resolved to pursue him, which they did, and in a little time they overtook him. Then said the man, Neighbors, *Wherefore are you come?* They said, To persuade you to go back with us. But he said, That can by no means be: you dwell, said he, in the *City of Destruction*, (the place also where I was born) I see it to be so; and dying there, sooner or later, you will sink lower than the grave, into a place that burns with fire and brimstone: be content, good neighbors, and go along with me.

¹ When a man turns his back on the world, and is in good earnest resolved for everlasting life, his carnal friends and ungodly neighbors will pursue him with hue and cry; but death is at his heels, and he cannot stop short of the city of refuge.

² Men differ in disposition by nature; but all agree in ignorance.

2. **Obst.** What, said *Obstinate*, and leave our friends and our comforts behind us?³

3. **Chr.** Yes, said *Christian*, (for that was his name) because that all *which you shall forsake*, is not worthy to be compared with a little of that, that I am seeking to enjoy; and if you will go along with me, and hold it, you shall fare as I myself; for there where I go, is enough and to spare. Come away and prove my words.

4. **Obst.** What are the things you seek, since you leave all the world to find them?

5. **Chr.** I seek an *inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away*.⁴ And it is laid up in heaven, and safe there, to be bestowed, at the time appointed, on them that diligently seek it. Read it so, if you will, in my book.

³ While the love of this world rules in the heart, no examples or arguments will prevail with man to seek a better inheritance.

⁴ The reason why the promise of the eternal inheritance is sure to all the seed, is because it is secured to them by the promise and oath of JEHOVAH.

2 Cor. 4. 18.
Rom. 8. 18.

Luke 15. 17

1 Pet. 1. 4.

Heb. 11. 16

O B S T I N A T E A N D P L I A B L E

6. **Obst.** Tush, said *Obstinate*, away with your book; will you go back with us, or no?⁵

expressed therein, behold all is confirmed by the blood of Him that made it.

Heb. 9. 17,
18, 19, 20,
21.

Luke 9. 62

7. **Chr.** No, not I, said the other, because I have laid my hand to the plow.

12. **Pli.** Well, neighbor *Obstinate*, (said *Pliable*) I begin to come to a point, I intend to go along with this good man, and to cast in my lot with him: but, my good companion, do you know the way to this desired place?

Pliable contented to go with Christian.

8. **Obst.** Come then, neighbor *Pliable*, let us turn again, and go home without him: there is a company of these crazed-headed coxcombs, that when they take a fancy by the end, are wiser in their own eyes than seven men that can render a reason.

13. **Chr.** I am directed by a man whose name is *Evangelist*, to speed me to a little gate that is before us, where we shall receive instructions about the way.

9. **Pli.** Then said *Pliable*, Don't revile; if what the good *Christian* says, is true, the things he looks after are better than ours: my heart inclines to go with my neighbor.

14. **Pli.** Come then, good neighbor, let us be going. Then they went both together.

10. **Obst.** What! More fools still? Be ruled by me, and go back; who knows whither such a brain-sick fellow will lead you? Go back, go back and be wise.

15. **Obst.** And I will go back to my place, said *Obstinate*: I will be no companion of such misled fantastical fellows.

Obstinate goes railing back.

Christian and *Obstinate* pull for *Pliable's* soul.

11. **Chr.** Nay, but do thou come with me, neighbor *Pliable*; there are such things to be had which I spoke of, and many more glories besides; if you believe not me, read here in this book, and for the truth of what is

16. Now I saw in my dream, that when *Obstinate* was gone back, *Christian* and *Pliable* went talking over the plain; and thus they began their discourse.

Talk between Christian and Pliable.

17. **Chr.** Come, neighbor *Pliable*, how do you do? I am glad you are persuaded to go along with me. Had even *Obstinate* himself but felt what I have felt of the powers and terrors of what is yet unseen, he would not thus lightly have given us the back.

⁵ If you dispute with worldly men in their own way, they will weary you with cavils and reasoning; but bring them close to the scripture and they will soon be silenced: neither Satan, nor those who are blinded by him, can withstand the force of God's word.

O B S T I N A T E A N D P L I A B L E

18. **Pli.** Come, neighbor *Christian*, since there are none but us two here, tell me now further, what the things are? And how to be enjoyed, whither we are going?

*God's things
unspeakable.*

19. **Chr.** I can better conceive of them with my mind than speak of them with my tongue: but yet since you are desirous to know I will read of them in my book.

20. **Pli.** And do you think that the words of your book are certainly true?⁶

Tit. 1. 2

21. **Chr.** Yes verily, for it was made by him that cannot lie.

22. **Pli.** Well said, what things are they?

Isa. 45. 17.
John 10. 27,
28, 29

23. **Chr.** There is an endless kingdom to be inhabited, and everlasting life to be given us, that we may inhabit that kingdom forever.

⁶ If the Scripture be indeed the word of God, it must be true; but how shall this be known? Learned men prove it by a train of learned arguments, to which the greater part of awakened souls are utter strangers (for the gospel is chiefly preached to the illiterate and poor) yet those have the surer and most satisfactory proof. Its authority and energy upon conscience; its correspondence to their state, wants, fears, hopes, and desires; the exact delineation they find in it of all that passes in their hearts, and the light it throws upon every thing in which they are concerned; satisfy them to a demonstration, that it is given by the inspiration of God.

24. **Pli.** Well said; and what else?

25. **Chr.** There are crowns of glory to be given us; and garments that will make us shine like the sun and the firmament of heaven.

2 Tim. 4. 8.
Rev. 22. 5
Mat. 13. 43.

26. **Pli.** This is very pleasant; and what else?⁷

27. **Chr.** There shall be no more crying, nor sorrow; for he that is owner of the place will wipe all tears from our eyes.

Isa. 15. 8.
Rev. 7. 16,
17.
ch. 21. 4.

28. **Pli.** And what company shall we have there?

29. **Chr.** There we shall be with seraphim's, and cherubim's; creatures that will dazzle your eyes to look on them. There also you shall meet with thousands, and ten thousands that have gone before us to that place; none of them are hurtful, but loving and holy, every one walking in the sight of God, and standing in his presence with acceptance for ever. In a word, there we shall see the elders with their golden crowns;

Isa. 6. 2.
1 Thes. 4.
16, 17.
Rev. 5. 11.

Rev. 4. 4.
Rev. 14. 1,
2, 3, 4, 5.
John 12. 25.

⁷ A representation of heaven as a kingdom &c. may make some transient impression upon a carnal heart, which can be delighted with the thought of crowns, rich robes, and a state from which all pain and sorrow are excluded. But such a one has no idea of the true happiness of heaven, a beholding the glory of Jesus and a conformity to him in holiness and love. A sinner unless renewed by divine grace would not be happy in heaven, if he were there; his heaven is upon earth.

O B S T I N A T E A N D P L I A B L E

there we shall see the holy virgins with their golden harps; there we shall see men, that by the world were cut in pieces, burnt in flames, eaten of beasts, drowned in the seas, for the love that they bare to the lord of the place; all well, and clothed with immortality, as with a garment.

2 Cor. 5. 2,
3, 5.

NOTES:

30. *Pli.* The hearing of this is enough to ravish one's heart; but are these things to be enjoyed? How shall we get to be sharers thereof?

31. *Chr.* The Lord, the governor of the country, hath recorded that in this book, the substance of which is, if we be truly willing to have it, he will bestow it upon us freely.

Isa. 55. 12.
John 7. 37.
John 6. 37.
Rev. 21. 6.
Rev. 22. 17.

32. *Pli.* Well, my good companion, glad am I to hear of these things: come on, let us mend our pace.

33. *Chr.* I cannot go so fast as I would, by reason of this burden that is on my back.⁸ †

⁸ The person whose afflictions are slightly touched, but not convinced of the evil of sin and wickedness of his own heart, may for a time make a flourishing profession, and seem more zealous than a real Christian who under the pressure of guilt and the terrors of an awakened conscience, moves slowly, but safely.
