

## **The Hill of Difficulty Pilgrim's Progress – 4**

### **Introduction:**

#### I. A Great Desire    2 Cor. 5:20

##### A. Sharing the Gospel

1. Simple – Blind to danger.    Mk. 5:16,17
2. Sloth – Blind to timeliness.    Ps. 95:6-11
3. Presumption – Blind to the need for God's mercy and grace.
4. Formalist – No evidence of Christianity.    Mt. 26:14-26
5. Hypocrisy – Trusting in their works not in Christ.    Mt. 6:12

##### B. Denying the Gospel

1. If one is without Christ, appearing to live as a Christian does not help.
2. Christian seeks to evangelize whomever is in his path, whether or not they seem to be likely candidates.
3. Christian does not blame himself when the individuals are not responsive.
4. Bunyan's teaching opposes those who say that all religious roads lead to God.

### **Application / Questions**

1. We must be careful that we do not treat non-Christians as enemies in the sense that we fail to engage them with the Gospel.
2. We must avoid antagonizing the people we are trying to reach through name calling and other similar tactics.
3. We must not sugarcoat the Gospel nor compromise it in any way in order to try to reach the lost.
4. How do culture and churches today make it easier for the lost to go to hell in peace?
5. Without the work of the Spirit in our lives we would be like these non-Christians.

6. How can covenant theology be corrupted to the point that it becomes a peaceful place for those illustrated here?

## II. A Great Danger

### A. Refreshment is often provided in the face of difficulties.

1. Elijah I Kings 19:4-8
2. Paul I Tim 1:15-17

### B. The Hill of Difficulty

1. Difficulty (spiritual battle) is a part of the Christian life.

Jn. 16:33  
Rom. 12:12; Lk. 21:17-19  
I Thes. 3:4, 5  
II Tim. 3:12

2. Withdrawal from the battle is a great temptation.

1. There are many ways to “go to sleep” in the places of rest God provides.
  - a. Using Sunday worship as our only spiritual food for the week.
  - b. Segmenting life into spiritual/secular
  - c. Sports, hobbies ruling our free time
  - d. Regular prayer time is not needed in times of peace.
  - e. Self-confidence supersedes godly dependence.

2. Loss of assurance can become apparent at crisis times.

3. Assurance rests in our obedience and the Spirit’s work.

I John 2:3

I John 2:18, 19

I John 3:24

I John 5:3, 4

4. Regaining assurance

1. Repentance of known sin. Ps. 51:11, 12

2. Returning to conscious daily dependence on God.

**Application:**

1. Increased love of God casts out fear. I John 5:18; I Tim 1:7-12

2. We must remember that dangers to the Christian are under God's control. They can harm us no more than God allows.