

# LESSONS FROM CHURCH HISTORY



Week 13: Lessons from the Puritans

# LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

## JOHN OWEN (1616-83)



- Owen grew up in a Puritan-minded family. His father was a pastor. He received his B.A. at Queen's College, Oxford in 1632 and his M.A. in 1635.
- He was a tutor and chaplain for some wealthy families near London until the Civil War heated up in 1642.
- At this time, Owen was sinking into deep depression. He went to hear Edmund Calamy preach but heard a country parson instead. He felt truly born again that day.
- Owen became the pastor of a small parish church in Fordham, Essex on July 16, 1643.



- He married Mary Rooke in 1644. They had 11 children and all of them died as a child except one.

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## JOHN OWEN

(1616-83)

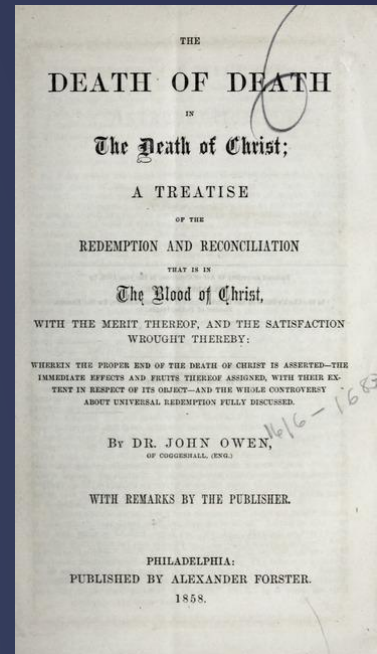


- In 1646, Owen pastored a parish church in Coggeshall with up to 2000 attenders.
- At this time he started embracing congregationalism.
- In 1646, he was invited to speak to Parliament. His speech immersed him in politics for the next 14 years.

- In 1647, he published his most famous book *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*.



- Owen preached again in Parliament the day after the execution of Charles I. Soon after, he became a chaplain for Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector of England (1653-58).



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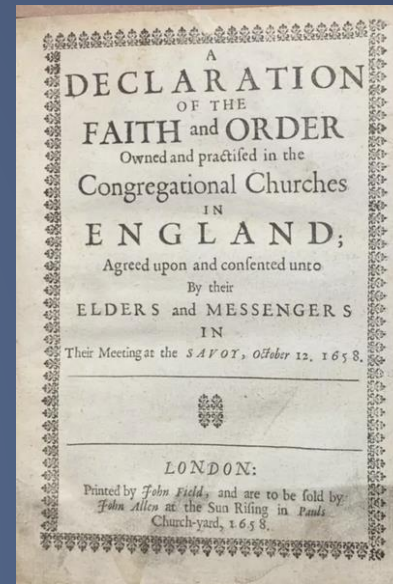
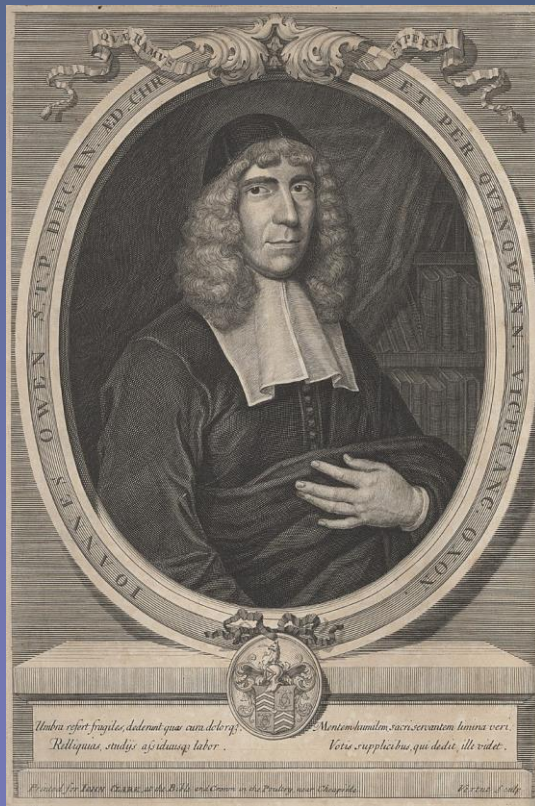
## JOHN OWEN

(1616-83)



- In 1651, Owen was appointed dean of Christ Church College at Oxford and later vice-chancellor (president) of the university till 1660 when Charles II took the throne.

- Three important works were written during this time:
  - (1) *Of the Mortification of Sin in Believers* (1656);
  - (2) *Of Communion with God* (1657); and
  - (3) *Of Temptation: The Nature and Power of It* (1658).

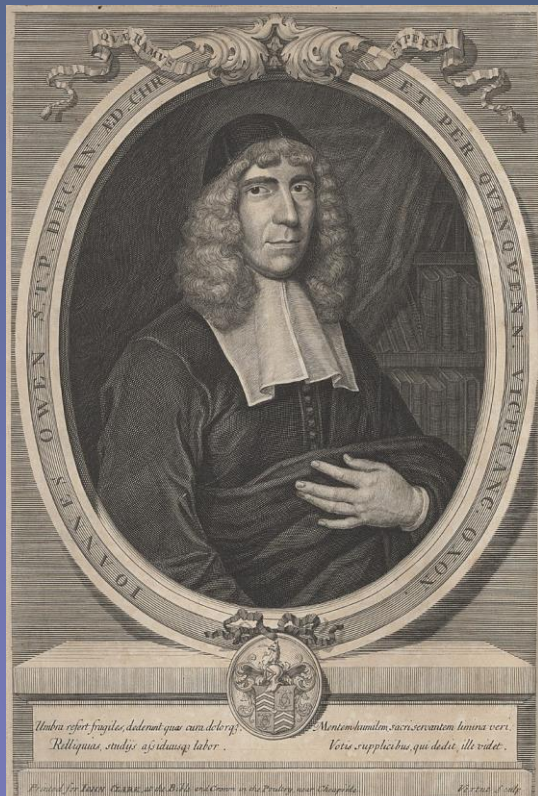


- In 1658, he joined 100 independent pastor-theologians (divines) who drafted the Savoy Declaration.
- In 1660, when Charles II took the throne, once again Puritan pastors experienced tremendous persecution.



# LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

## JOHN OWEN (1616-83)



- Charles II enacted 4 laws against the Puritans: (1) Corporation Act of 1661; (2) Act of Uniformity of 1662 which led to Great Ejection; (3) Conventicle Act later in 1662; and (4) Five Mile Act in 1665.



- After Owen was ejected from his position at Oxford University, he went back to his home village of Stadhamptom and pastored a small church there, later serving at a small church in London in violation of the Five Mile Act.



BANNER  
of TRUTH

‘WE MUST SEE THAT EVERY LUST AND OMISSION OF DUTY IS A BURDEN TO GOD. IF WE DO NOT SEEK TO OBEY IN EVERY AREA OF OUR LIVES, OUR SOUL BECOMES WEAK.’

- JOHN OWEN

- He ministered to believers during an outbreak of the plague in 1665 and the Great Fire of London in 1666.
- In his final years, he supported John Bunyan and fought for religious freedom in New England. He died in severe pain at age 67, suffering from asthma and gallstones.

# LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

## JOHN BUNYAN

(1628-88)



- John Bunyan was born near Bedford in south central England. Raised in a modest home, he was an average student at best. By age 9 or 10 he'd developed a reputation for his foul mouth.



- At age 16, his mother and sister both died. He joined the Parliamentary army and marched under Oliver Cromwell. This experience impacted him, including a brush with death...
- He married at age 21. He was a tinker, after his father. His wife was pious and read Christian books to him, but he was unconverted, angry, and careless about God. Their first daughter Mary was born in 1650 and they soon learned she was blind.



# LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

## JOHN BUNYAN (1628-88)



- John experienced increasing guilt for his sin but he would not yet give it up. God intensified the trouble in his soul and began to reel him in. In 1653 he was truly converted, in St. John's church in Bedford, pastored by John Gifford.
- Bunyan began to preach Christ out in the countryside, while diligently sitting under Gifford's teaching. His wife died in 1658, leaving him with their four children. Death continued to be all around him...John remarried a young woman named Elizabeth a year later.
- Charles II came to power in 1660 and in 1661 their church building was taken away, so Bunyan moved to a stable. Soon he was arrested, indicted, convicted, and sentenced to 3 months in prison...but it would last for the next 12 years.



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## JOHN BUNYAN (1628-88)



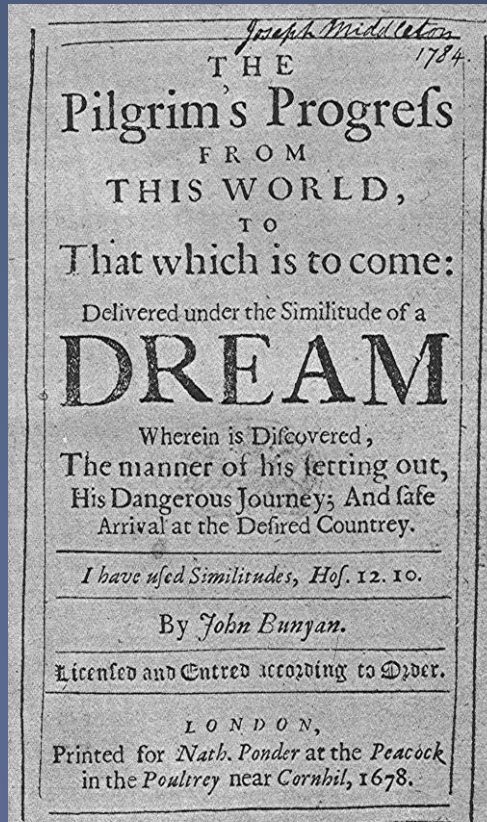
- While in prison, Bunyan made laces for boots and shoes to support his family. He had only a Bible, a concordance, and Foxe's Book of Martyrs, immersed in all three. His wife Elizabeth became highly respected for her persistent and brilliant efforts to secure his freedom from prison.
- In March of 1672, King Charles II issued a declaration of indulgence which suspended laws against nonconformists. Bunyan was freed and immediately pastored the Bedford Meeting church.



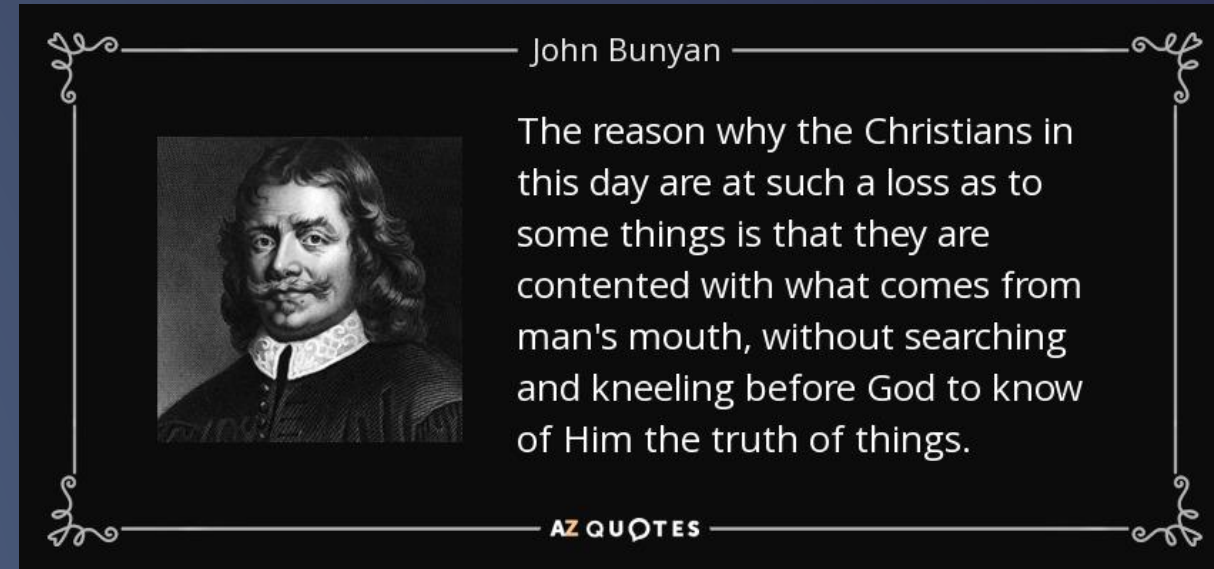


# LESSONS FROM THE PURITANS

## JOHN BUNYAN (1628-88)



- In 1676 Bunyan was forced to spend a second stint in prison, for six months. It was during this time he completed his work started earlier, titled *The Pilgrim's Progress*. It is published in 1678 and was immediately successful. It is known as the greatest allegory in the history of the world and remains the second most published book behind only the Bible.



- In 1688 he fell ill while traveling through a storm and died. His wife Elizabeth passed not long after in 1691.