



Key Notes

John Bunyan's classic allegory of the Christian Life, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, follows the hero, Christian, on his treacherous journey from the City of Destruction to his heavenly destination, the Celestial City. Along the way, Christian and a companion approach "a very miry slough, that was in the midst of the plain, and they being heedless, did both fall suddenly into the bog. The name of the slough was Despond. Here, they wallowed for a time, being grievously bedaubed with dirt; and Christian, because of the burden that was on his back, began to sink in the mire."

His traveling companion manages to get out, but rather than giving Christian a hand up, he turns away from the path of life and flees home. Christian, then, is left struggling alone in the boggy, muddy hole until a man named Help - the Holy Spirit - kindly pulls him free from despondency's pit and sets him on solid ground.

Christian asks Help why this dangerous plot of land has not been "mended, that poor travelers might go" on heaven's journey "with more security?" And Help tellingly replies, "This miry slough is such a place as cannot be mended."

How true this is in real life! No matter how hard we try or how spiritually mature we are, miry sloughs are inevitable. Not because we have failed somehow, but because no one is immune to despondency; it is "such a place as cannot be mended" - only traveled through.

Pastor Mike