

## Encouragement Bulletin No. 144 For 2008

Hello fellow travellers into the New Year!!! Another year over – a new one begun!!!  
Are you pilgrims on the Highway of Hope? - then link arms with love and journey with Jesus as His precious foot soldiers!

During this New Year as we travel together, our feet may run on ahead! Maybe a stone in our shoe causing us to limp? We may make it into the first-aid tent for repairs – some of us may have to be carried – some of us may have to be rescued – but hey!!!! Link arms in love and journey with Jesus! Be a fellow pilgrim.

“Pilgrim” one who journeys, especially a long distance, to some sacred place as an act of devotion”  
(Macquarie Dictionary)

In the year 1676 in England, a poor tinker named John Bunyan was imprisoned in Bedford Gaol . He was 47 years old when he wrote *Pilgrim’s Progress*. He drew on the two main sources in his life. First, his knowledge of the Bible and secondly, his considerable knowledge of the world. His book is recognised by millions of readers as having a hidden meaning. An “allegory” of that “Dangerous Journey” which is, in fact, the journey of pilgrims travelling from this world to the next.

(The timeless story of *Pilgrim’s Progress* prepared for the BBC’s TV series was called *Dangerous Journey*).

Maybe the first two pilgrims in the Bible were the two disciples mentioned in Luke’s Gospel, on the road to Emmaus, which happened to be 7 miles from Jerusalem, and as they talked together Jesus came up and walked along with them.

The words of one of our well known hymns was written by John Bunyan & Percy Dearmer (music arranged from a traditional English melody and arranged by R. Vaughan Williams (Tune called *Monks Gate*) is

“He who would valiant be ‘gainst all disaster.  
Let him in constancy follow the Master.  
There’s no discouragement shall make him once relent;  
his first avowed intent – to be a pilgrim.”

The last verse says

“Since Lord, Thou dost defend us with Thy Spirit,  
We know we at the end shall life inherit.  
Then fancies flee away! I’ll fear not what men say,  
I’ll labour night and day – to be a pilgrim.

God will be our companion and friend until our travelling days are over and we reach our heart’s true home – heaven. Until that day let us link arms in love and shed the light of the love of Jesus on other travellers.

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

“How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!  
Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counsellor?  
Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?  
For from him and through him and to him are all things.  
To him be the glory forever. Amen.” Romans 11; 33 – 36.

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!!!