**PILGRIM’S PROGRESS** – Preview information

(copyright 2010 by Gwendolyn J. Kandt)

++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++

PILGRIM’S PROGRESS – Director Notes

**Set and blocking**: This script lends itself to a very simple set. In our production, we moved the following props on and off for certain scenes:

* A gate (we used a decorated wedding arch—opening and closing the door was mimed) for the Wicket Gate (act 1, scene 4) and the Pearly Gate (act 2, scene 5).
* A bench for when Christian falls asleep (act 1, scene 5)
* A large cross (act 1, scene 4)
* A large sheet of sheer black material that two actors held in front of Christian as he walked through the Valley of the Shadow of Death (act 1, scene 7)
* Three very long swaths of blue fabric stretched across the stage and fluttered to create the river (act 2, scene 5)

If room permits, a small platform to one side of the stage is a good place for the scenes at the Palace Beautiful, the Delectable Mountains, and the prison in Doubting Castle. The sanctuary we performed in had a large pulpit area stage left that served this purpose.

Whenever possible, when characters were walking and talking at the same time, we had them pantomime walking while facing the audience during their conversations.

The scene divisions are for rehearsal use; each act flows straight through with no indication of scene divisions. Set pieces and props are brought on by actors during narrator lines or musical interludes, while the actors on stage continue in character.

**Costumes:** Our production was very simple. All of our actors wore matching blue t-shirts and jeans except for Christian (who wore a dirty tan t-shirt at the beginning and was dressed in a white t-shirt by the Shining Ones) and Faithful and Hopeful (who also wore white t-shirts). (Cargo pants are also helpful for Christian, as he needs pockets for the many things he has to carry.) Each character added another costume piece or prop to indicate their character. For example, Help stuck a big “H” on his chest, Knowledge wore a cowboy hat, and Despair carried a club that he frequently scratched his head with. This costuming method works particularly well if you have actors playing more than one role.

**Narrators:** It is possible to cast one or two actors as narrators, but the flow of the production is more interesting if you use random actors to say the various narrator lines. We would generally assign each narrator line to the last actor to leave the stage; he/she would remove his/her character’s costume piece, drop the character’s personality, and say the narrator lines at the side of the stage before exiting.

**Casting:** The script includes about 40 characters, plus extras in the opening and closing scenes, at Vanity Fair, as lions, and as cowboys. But because so few characters interact on stage together, every actor (other than Christian) can play more than one part. In our production, we had 17 actors.

Many of the characters can be flexible as far as gender is concerned as well. Christian was a female in our production, as were “Faith” and “Hope”.

If your numbers are limited, there are characters who can be eliminated (Formalist can have Hypocrisy’s lines ; Timorous can have Mistrust’s; the three Shining Ones can be reduced to one, although you’d have to adjust some lines--I doubt the Charlie’s Angels pose will work with one angel).

**Musical interludes:** We added short clips (the choruses) of popular music between some scenes, all along the theme of roads and traveling.

* “Ease on Down the Road” – from “The Wiz”
* “Walking on Sunshine” – Katrina and the Waves
* “On the Road Again” – Willie Nelson
* “Somewhere Down the Road” – Amy Grant
* “Keep Walking” – Veggie Tales
* “Life is a Highway” – Rascal Flatts

All songs were easy to find online. Feel free to substitute songs of your preference. ☺

+++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++

. . .

Act 1, Scene 2

Narrator: So Christian began to walk toward the light. But his departure didn’t go unnoticed.

Obstinate: (*running in)* Christian!

Pliable: (*running in)* Christian, wait!

Christian: Obstinate? Pliable? What are you doing here? Are you coming with me to the Celestial City?

Obstinate: Going with you? You pea-brain (*whacks him on the back of the head)* – of course not! And you’re not either! We’re here to take you back home, where you belong.

Christian: But I want to be in the Celestial City with the King! It’s a wonderful place, and everyone is happy there!

Pliable: Really? Everyone?

Obstinate: Baloney!!

Pliable: Oh . . yeah . . baloney.

Obstinate: Where’d you get a dumb idea like that?

Christian: Well, it’s written here in my book.

Pliable: (*looks at book curiously*) Oh!

Obstinate: Christian, you numbskull! (*whacks him again)*  How many times do we have to tell you that that book is a pile of rubbish?

Pliable: Oh, yeah, right. Rubbish.

Obstinate: Now, are you coming back with us or not?

Christian: No, I’m not. I’m going to the Celestial City.

Obstinate: Fine – go on your wild goose chase. Come on, Pliable.

Pliable: W-w-wait a minute. What if his book is true?

Obstinate: True?!? Are you wacko? (*whacks him)*

Pliable: Yes. I mean, no. I mean, I think I may tag along with him, Obstinate.

Christian: Yes! That would be great if you came along!

Obstinate: You can NOT be serious! I never pegged you for such an idiot, Pliable! Well, fine. Do what you want. I’m happy to be rid of you both! Dork-heads! (*whacks Pliable again and leaves)*

Pliable: Y-you’re sure you know how to get to this Celestial City?

Christian: Absolutely! Evangelist showed me the way. Come on! *(they begin walking together*)

Pliable: So, this Celestial City . . what exactly is it like?

Christian: Oh, it’s a wonderful place! I read all about it here in my book. It’s the most beautiful place you’ll ever see. The King lives there, and His people never feel tired or unhappy. They wear shining clothes that can never wear out, and they never grow old.

Pliable: Wow! I don’t suppose they’ll let us in when we get there, though.

Christian: Oh, yes they will! Evangelist said so.

Pliable: Evangelist . . . that’s the guy with the big hair, right?

Christian: Yes.

Pliable: Yeah. Lots of hair gel happening there, huh?

Christian: Yes . . . anyway, the King wants everyone to be in the Celestial City with him.

Pliable: How long do you think it will take to get there?

Christian: Hmm . . . I’m not really sure.

Pliable: We might want to walk a little faster.

Christian: I wish I could, but this heavy burden is slowing me down.

Narrator: Suddenly, their feet began to sink deep into the grass. They had unknowingly walked right into the Slough of Despond. (*Pliable and Christian mime struggling into slough)*

Pliable: Whoa! Wait a minute! Where are we?

Christian: I don’t know – it’s some kind of slough.

Pliable: Some kind of goo?

Christian: No, a slough.

Pliable: What’s a slough?

Christian: It’s like a swamp, or . . . it’s this! What we’re in!

Pliable: Well, what are we doing in it? Let’s get out!

Christian: I’m trying – I’m trying. But the more I try, the deeper I sink!

Pliable: Look at the mess we’re in! And it’s all your fault! I wish I hadn’t come. *(he manages to crawl out)*

Christian: Wait! Pliable! Please, help me get out, too!

Pliable: Oh, no! I’m outa here! If this is the just the beginning of the journey, what else are we going to run into down the road? I’m going home! (*leaves)*

Christian: But wait! Please! (*Pliable is gone*) How am I going to get out?

Help: *(enters suddenly, with a big “H” on his chest*) Never fear! Help is here! (*superhero pose*) Take my hand, citizen*! (He pulls Christian onto solid ground)*

Christian: (*panting)* Oh, thank you! Thank you so much!

Help: All in a day’s work. Just promise me you’ll be more careful around sloughs in the future.

Christian: Oh, I will. I promise. I was so lucky that you came along when you did!

Help: Oh, no, citizen – that wasn’t luck. I received specific instructions from the King today to cross the plain at precisely this time. Apparently, he knew you would be needing my assistance.

Christian: Wow! The King sent you?

Help: Absolutely. He always keeps watch over his pilgrims and sends them . . Help! (*pose*) when they need it.

Christian: Really?

Help: Of course! You can proceed on your journey without any fear! Now, off to the Wicket-gate with you!

Christian: Thank you, Help! Thank you so much!

. . . . .

TERMS OF USE: Each script may be copied and distributed to your performers provided the copyright information remains intact.

Feel free to alter scripts to suit your performance needs.

Once purchased and downloaded, each drama may be performed without charge by any charitable or non-profit organization. They may also be recorded onto sound cassette, video, television, or film by charitable or non-profit organizations. For performances for profit (other than for charitable causes), written permission must be obtained from the copyright holder.

Please contact us when scripts are used and tell us how the performance went. We love to hear how God ministers through drama, and we love to get feedback about the creation of future scripts. Thanks!