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AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF ETERNITY

Narrative and the Negative Casuistry of John Bunyan's *The Life and Death of Mr Badman*

John Bunyan's *The Life and Death of Mr Badman* presents by negative example the way of Christian holiness. Because absolute truth is difficult in this world to ascertain, Mr Attentive, one of the two interlocutors in the dialogue, discovers through Mr Wiseman's coaching the importance of paying close attention to the circumstances and motives that surround specific cases of conscience. The negative casuistry of *Mr Badman* teaches the reader to be sympathetic to the human condition, and to understand beyond all dispute that the way of holiness is impossible without the grace of God. By applying the widely-known techniques of seventeenth-century religious conduct-books to his account of the life and death of Mr Badman, Bunyan contributed significantly to the development of the novel.

By the time Bunyan came to write *Mr Badman*, he knew well the popular tradition of English conduct-books. His contribution to the genre, *Christian Behaviour* (1663), demonstrated a concern that the liberty of Christian faith and grace should not degenerate into antinomian error. Bunyan explained his purpose for writing another manual of devotion in *Christian Behaviour's* 'Epistle to the Reader', where he stressed that 'though we are justified, (Rom. 3.24, &c.) *freely by Grace* through Christ before God, yet we are justified before men (Jam. 2.18) by our works' (*Miscellaneous Works* 3:9).¹ Like such casuists as William Perkins, Richard Baxter, Jeremy Taylor, and Lewis Bayly, Bunyan believed that the life of holiness resulted from the work of grace within the individual. One of the guiding principles of seventeenth-century casuistry that was demonstrated throughout *Mr Badman* was aptly expressed in *The Barren Fig-tree* (1673), where Bunyan made the point that while good works could not in themselves redeem man, they were a vital evidence of salvation:

God doth therefore look for such fruit as is worthy of his *Name*, as is meet for *him*; as the Apostle saith, *We should walk worthy of God*; that is, so that we may shew in every place, that the presence of God is *with* us, his fear in us, and his Majesty and Authority upon *our actions*. Fruits meet for him, *such* a trusting of him with all my concerns, and *such* delight in the enjoyment of him, *that may demonstrate that his fear is in my heart*, that my Soul is wrapt up in his things, and that my Body, and Soul, and Estate, and all, are in truth, through his Grace, at his dispose, *fruit meet for him*. (MW 5:27)

Bunyan was concerned primarily with the lives believers led. He pleaded with the Christian reader in *Mr Badman* to live worthy of the Christian profession:

Christian, make thy Profession shine by a Conversation according to the Gospel: Or else thou wilt damnify Religion, bring scandal to thy Brethren and give offence to the Enemies; and 'twould be better that a Millstone was hanged about thy neck, and that thou, as so adorned, wast cast into the bottom of the Sea, than so to do.

Christian, a Profession according to the Gospel, is, in these dayes, a rare thing: seek then after it, put it on, and keep it without spot; and (as becomes thee) white, and clean, and thou shalt be a rare Christian. (Badman 10)

Through his work, Bunyan reserved the most scathing remarks for those hypocritical professors who did not practise what they preached. While Mr Badman was damned for his '*wicked life, and fearful death*' (*Badman* 16), the sins of the godly were far more insidious. Consequently, Bunyan took great pains to stress the importance of good works as the natural result of salvation. In *Mr Badman*, Bunyan celebrated the marvel of godly living when Wiseman prayed:

God give long life to them that are good, and especially to those of them that are capable of doing him service in the world. The Ornament and Beauty of this lower World, next to God and his Wonders, are the men that spangle and shine in godliness. (*Badman* 14)

The emphasis that Bunyan placed on the doctrine of sanctification was by no means uncommon in the seventeenth century. Perkins, Baxter and Taylor also worked to popularize that Calvinist doctrine, thus securing the regard of continental theologians for England's contribution to the doctrine of sanctification.

William Perkins, the great Elizabethan theologian, 'who taught family and social duties and ministered to the individual conscience' (Bush 216), described the process of sanctification where the good works of faith were manifested more clearly and consistently within and through the life of the believer. The desire to resist sin, according to Perkins, was brought about by the Holy Spirit, resulting in the holy life:

Resistance is made by the desire of the Spirit, which worketh good motions and affections in the faithful and driveth forth the evil. The preservatives are, whereby men are strengthened in resisting: to account no sin light or small; to avoid all occasions of sin - to these rather agreeth the proverb used of the plague, *longe, tarde, cito*: that is aloof, slowly, quickly; to accustom thyself to subdue the lesser sins that at last thou mayest overcome the greater; to apply thyself to thy appointed calling and always to be busily occupied about something in the same; to oppose the law, the judgments of God, the last judgment, the glorious presence of God and suchlike against the rebellion and looseness of the flesh. (Perkins 241)

Perkins' clear writing style and sound theological scholarship enabled his practical teachings on vocations, domestic duties, and casuistry to penetrate popular Puritan culture, beginning the work Baxter, Taylor and Bayly, among others, were to continue. Thomas Fuller praises Perkins for making plain the mysteries of theology to laymen and clergy alike, saying that Perkins

brought the schools into the Pulpit, and unshelling their controversies out of their hard school terms, made thereof plain and wholesome meat for his people . . . An excellent Chirurgeon he was at joynting of a broken soul, and at stating of a doubtfull conscience. (Bush 312)

Perkins' influence was enormous, and the proliferation of English conduct-books throughout the seventeenth century was largely a result of his own theological concerns and forceful prose style.

By making attractive 'the puritan style of piety' (Breward 24), Perkins contributed significantly to the popular culture of seventeenth-century England. This Puritan piety involved

A profound sense of God's majesty and sovereignty over human life, a deep conviction about the rebellious pride and wilful ignorance of the human heart, a quest for assurance that one was in fact a child of God and not a limb of Satan, a careful examination of the nature of the mystical union between Christ and his elect, a concern for a life consonant with election and a pervasive sense of the shortness of human life accompanied by expectation of imminent judgment were the dominant features of the piety that Perkins so eloquently and forcefully commended to his contemporaries. (Breward 30)

The piety that Perkins and his followers advocated was practical and experiential; it was not bound by a codified set of rules and regulations, but was flexible, adapting to specific incidents and cases of conscience. Perkins operated under the principle that 'circumstances alter cases' (Starr 7). One could not make an ethical judgment based upon broad moral principles alone, but through the careful consideration of details had to look to the matter at hand, an apparent seventeenth-century version of modern 'situational ethics'. Casuistry, as a result, set believers free from the rigours of scrupulous legalism, emphasizing the experience of faith, not just the intellectual acquisition of it. For Perkins, 'divinity is a life to be lived; there is a God to be glorified, a hell to be shunned'. So men must know Christ, reiterated Perkins, 'not generally and confusedly, but by a lively, powerfull, and operative *knowledge*: for otherwise the devils themselves know Christ.' He preached a religion of experience, 'and indeed it is but a knowledge swimming in the braine, which doth not alter and dispose the affections and the whole man' (Sprunger 148). Consequently, Perkins' concerns were largely domestic, demonstrating the Puritan regard for marital relations, rearing of children, and managing of households.

Before Perkins, there was such a dearth of English conduct-books and the demand for them was so great that Anglican and Puritan clergymen were forced to use Catholic works. Like Perkins, Richard Baxter was concerned that there was still a need for English books of practical divinity. One of the reasons that he gave for writing *Christian Directory* (1673) was that 'the Younger and more unfurnished, and unexperienced sort of Ministers, might have a promptuary at hand, for Practical Resolutions and Directions on the subjects that they have need too deal in' (Baxter A_{3R}). He listed such writers as Sayrus, Frago, Perkins, Sanderson, Ames, Dickson, and Taylor, praising them for their forceful casuistical tractates, but asserting at the same time, the continued public demand for such works: 'And still men are calling for more, which I have attempted: Hoping that others will come after and do better than we all' (Baxter A_{3R}).

Baxter wanted to set the reader free from the strictures of generalized moral pronouncements, so that he could live in the freedom that came with true righteousness. Of the many cases of conscience that are found in the monumental *Christian Directory* (1673), one of the most surprising, given usual twentieth-century views of Puritanism, is found in the fourth part where Baxter asks, 'Is it lawful to lay Wagers upon Horse-races, Dogs, Hawks, Bear-baitings, or such Games as depend on the activity of Beast or Man?' (4: 129). Baxter's resolution of this moral dilemma was qualified and conditional; he did not dismiss betting utterly out of hand, arguing instead that one might lay wagers on an activity if

it be not an exercise which is it self unlawful, by cruelty to Beasts, or hazard

to the lives of men (as in Fencing, Running, Wrestling, &c. it may fall out if it be not cautelously done:) or by the expence of an undue proportion of time in them, which is the common malignity of such recreations. (4: 129)

In true casuistical fashion, Baxter took into account the circumstances which surrounded the ethical dilemma before he passed moral sentence, for he wanted his reader to be trained by his example in how to assess a case of conscience.

Because of the Protestant casuistical emphasis upon personal holiness and the individual experience of faith, Jeremy Taylor lamented in his preface to *Ductor Dubitantium* that English ministers and laymen were forced to depend upon Catholic behavioural guides:

for any publick provisions of books of Casuistical Theology, we were almost wholly unprovided, and, like the children of *Israel* in the days of *Saul* and *Jonathan*, we were forced to go down to the forges of the Philistims to sharpen every man his Share and his Coulter, his Axe and his Mattock. We had swords and Spears of our own, enough for defence, and more then enough for disputation: but in this more necessary part of the Conduct of Consciences we did receive our answers from abroad, till we found that our old needs were sometimes very ill supplied, and new necessities did every day arise. (Taylor i-ii)

Although this common complaint among Protestant casuists might in part be attributed to a religious and political reaction against 'Romanism', it was also a reaction against the very different emphases of Catholic casuistry. Writing of Lewis Bayly in *Anglican Devotion*, C. J. Stranks explained that while most Catholic devotional books were meant to stir up feelings of piety, Protestant ones were less affective and more rational in nature:

To the Romanist a book of devotion meant a treatise on his duties as a member of the Church, which would stimulate him to accept its teaching with firmer faith, supply him with approved devotions, kindle his affection and desire, and which frequently went on to encourage him to seek mystical experience. To the Protestant a devotional book meant a treatise on elementary theology, with careful teaching on the nature of prayer which would enable him to form his own petitions in his own words, and specimen devotions and meditations to guide him in doing so, together with directions for his public and private duties. (Stranks 35)

Owen C. Watkins wrote in *The Puritan Experience* that Puritans insisted 'that the Christian life could only begin with knowledge of the gospel and that later progress presupposed increased cognitive understanding at every stage' (105). Taylor too explained how casuistry trained the believer to discern good and evil:

it was necessary that Cases of Conscience should be written over anew, and established upon better principles, and proceed in more sober and satisfying methods: nothing being more requisite then that we should all *be instructed, and thoroughly prepared to every good work*; that we should *have a conscience void of offence both towards God and towards man*; that we should be able to *separate the vile from the precious*, and know what to chuse and what to avoid; that *we may have our Senses exercised to discern between good and*

evil, that we may not call good evil, or evil good. (Taylor vii)

For Taylor and the others, true casuistry did not set out to shackle believers within a code of laws and regulations, but sought to liberate them by demonstrating a methodology for discerning righteousness.

There was, nevertheless, a place for the emotions in the Protestantism articulated by Bunyan. While his faith was not mystical, it was not coldly rational either, with Christian's pilgrimage to God engaging the heart, soul, and the mind. Bunyan, in fact, maximized the emotional appeal of the sensational in *Mr Badman* to reach an audience that might not otherwise have read through the casuistical tomes of Baxter, Perkins, Taylor or Bayly. Bunyan was not as naïve about the entertaining value of sin as Mr Wiseman who was oblivious of the fact that Attentive or anyone else could find the sordid details of Badman's wickedness diverting. *Mr Badman* was undeniably affective, for Bunyan wanted his audience to go beyond mere knowledge of the Gospel; he wanted its reality to affect them emotionally and psychologically as well as intellectually, renewing them by the transformation of their hearts as well as their minds.

In *Mr Badman*, Attentive's moral code was initially rigorous and inflexible, operating on principle alone, without taking into account those special circumstances which alter cases. Part of the education that Attentive received from Wiseman was the understanding that conclusive moral judgments were very difficult to make. U. Milo Kaufmann responded to Thomas Adams' assertion that 'in good workes . . . vertues are discerned from vices not by their offices, but by their ends or intents' by writing: 'The difficulty with intents, of course, is that they are not readily accessible, and "end" in the sense of outcome rather than informing purpose is often no more practical a guide' (Kaufmann 181).²

In a case of conscience that was also found in Baxter's *The Catechizing of Families* (1683), Attentive was horrified that Badman's father would set his son up in business, knowing full well his son's moral laxness. Attentive protested,

Had I been his Father, I would have held him a little at staves-end, till I had had far better proof of his manners to be good; ffor I perceive that his Father did know what a naughty boy he had been, both by what he used to do at home, and because he changed a good Master for a bad, &c). (*Badman* 61-62)

His immediate reaction corresponded to Baxter's catechetical response to the question, 'Is it a duty to disinherit an incorrigible wicked Son; or to deny such filial maintenance and Portions?':

Supposing it to be in the Fathers power, it is a duty to leave them no more than will maintain their lives in temperance: For all men are Gods stewards and must be accountable for all that he doth trust them with: And they ought not to give it to be the fewel of Lust and Sin, when they have reason to believe that it will be so used: That were to give Gods Mercies to the Devil, to be turn'd against him. Nor are Parents bound to give those Children the *necessary maintenance* for their lives and health, or any thing at all, who by *obstinate rebellion utterly forfeit it*: Nature is not so strong a bond, but that some sin may dissolve it, and forfeit Life it self, and therefore forfeit fatherly maintenance. The rebellion and ingratitude of an *incorrigible Child* is far more hainous than a *Neighbours* injuries. And though *Moses Law* and its

rigors be ceased, the reason of it still remaineth, as directive to us. when thousands of good people want food, and we cannot give all, it's a sin to prefer an *incorrigible wicked Son* before them. (*Catechizing* 306)

Even though Attentive's application of the lesson in Baxter's catechism was generally appropriate, Wiseman chided Attentive for not taking into account the particular plight of these parents whose son refused their direction. They wished him well in spite of all the abuse that he heaped on them. Wiseman knew something of the emotional turmoil that Badman's parents were experiencing, and this knowledge compelled him to temper his judgment and caution the younger Attentive:

But alas, alas, you talk as if you never knew, or had at this present forgot what the bowels and compassions of a Father are. Why did you not serve your own son so? But 'tis evident enough, that we are better at giving good counsel to others, than we are at taking good counsel our selves. (*Badman* 62)

Because the way of Christian holiness is hard, Attentive needed to be slow to judge, taking the time to consider the exigencies of each situation. In the dialogue, however, Attentive settled the matter abruptly, concluding that Badman's father should have put his son out to some man who would be able to command Badman, keeping '*him pretty hard to some employ*' so that he would not have the time '*to do those wickednesses that could not be done without time to do them*' (*Badman* 38). When Attentive wrongly assumed that the service and worship of God might have been lacking in the home of Badman's Master, Wiseman set him right, asserting that the master '*was a very good man, a very devout person; one that frequented the best Soul-means, that set up the Worship of God in his Family, and also that walked himself thereafter*' (*Badman* 38)

According to Wiseman, Badman's master was a paragon of virtue; he was Bunyan's '*rare Christian*', who not only taught his family and those under his charge the precepts of the faith, but whose life was consonant with the Gospel. Badman's parents were just as devout, practising piety in the privacy of their own homes as well as in the open. Bunyan used Badman's wickedness as a foil to set in high relief the wonder of the godly, fruitful lives of his parents and master whose virtue in this world was confronted on every avenue by sin, demonstrating as well the very practical divinity of godly parents trying to cope with an obdurate son.

Casuistry educated the believer in the way of holiness through the presentation of cases of conscience, applying principles of behaviour to such diverse topics as lying, stealing, swearing, cursing, drunkenness, uncleanness (i.e., sexual sin), marriage - wife abuse and child rearing - and such mercantile issues as buying and selling, borrowing and lending, usury, contractual obligations, and 'breaking' (i.e., bankruptcy). By demonstrating to the reader how to apply broad moral principles to the specifics of daily life, casuistry attempted to make the holy life tangible. As the believer wisely chose righteousness over unrighteousness in the private areas of his life, graduating slowly to the public, his life would bear more completely the fruit of godliness, demonstrating God's faithfulness to those who trust Him.

Believing that unrepentant decisions are shaped by ignorance, casuists seek through the acquisition of knowledge of God in Scripture to draw believers towards holiness, emphasizing personal culpability. Lewis Bayly in *The Practice of Pietie* stressed man's personal responsibility for denying the lusts of the flesh:

When a carnal Christian hears, *that man hath not freewil unto good, hee looseth the reins* to his own corrupt will, as though it lay not in him to bridle, or to subdue it. *Implicitly* making God the Author of sin in suffering man to be run into this necessity. (Bayly 162)

Even though God had predestined man from before the beginning of time, he still had to choose responsibly to accept the calling that God had given him; if he did not, he would be judged as surely as Mr Badman. In a similar vein, Bunyan did not allow the damned the argument that their faith was sealed by the doctrine of reprobation. In *The Greatness of Soul* (1682-1683), he wrote that 'men go not to Hell by *providence* but by *sin*' (MW 9: 174).

Casuists sought to supply believers with a reliable standard so that they could accurately judge for themselves how trustworthy their ability to determine the holy way was at any given point in their pilgrimage. Bayly explained the importance of good works to faith:

To be rich in good works, is the surest foundation of our *assurance* to obtain *eternal life*. For good works are the true fruits of a true *faith*, which apprehendeth Christ, and his *obedience*, unto salvation. And no other faith *availeth in Christ, but that which worketh by love*; and (but in the *act of Justification*) that faith which *only justifieth* is never *only*, but *ever* accompanied with *good works*; as the Tree with his *fruits*, the *Sun* with his *light*, the *fire* with his *heat*, and *water* with his *moisture*. And the *faith* which doth not justify *her self* by good workes before *men*, is but a *dead faith*, which wil never justify a mans soul before God. But a justifying faith *purifieth the heart*, end [sic] sanctifieth the whole man throughout.

(Bayly 160-161)

The righteousness of the faithful demonstrated before the world the justice of God in condemning sin. Believers who lived holy lives exhibited the grace of God in transforming their rebellion into obedience. As well, the good works of faith, though not an absolute guarantee, mollified to some extent the deep anxiety and insecurity that came from not knowing for certain if one was of the elect.

Moral theologians could confidently claim that the good works of faith were indicators of one's election because true holiness was possible only with God's enabling power. On his own, man could effect only the façade of holiness. In *Christian Behaviour*, Bunyan admitted

There is flesh as well as spirit in the best of Saints: and as the Spirit of Grace will be always putting forth something that is good, so the flesh will be putting forth continually that which is evil. (MW 3: 17)

Sin's presence, permeating the nature of man, made Christian's pilgrimage in this world a warfare where battle-field victory was never certain and never ultimate. In *The Heavenly Footman* (1698), Bunyan illustrates the struggle of faith to live the holy life:

Because the *way is long*, (I speak Metaphorically) and there is many a dirty step, many a high Hill, much Work to do, a Wicked Heart, World and Devil to overcome. I say, there are many steps to be taken by those that intend to be Saved, by running or walking in the steps of that Faith of our Father

Abraham. Out of Egypt, thou must go thorow the Red Sea; thou must Run a long and tedious Journey, thorow the wast howling Wilderness, before thou come to the Land of Promise. (MW 5: 150)

In *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Part Two, Mr Honest described in human terms the theological ramifications of the struggle of faith in the lives of the pilgrims:

It happens to us, as it happeneth to Way-fairing men; sometimes our way is clean, sometimes foul; sometimes up-hill, sometimes down-hill; We are seldom at a Certainty. The Wind is not alwayes on our Backs, nor is every one a Friend that we meet with in the Way. We have met with some notable Rubs already; and what are yet behind we know not, but for the most part we find it true, that has been talked of of old, *A good Man must suffer Trouble. (2 PP 275)*

Because of the difficulty of pilgrimage, casuistry instils within its reader a sympathy for the believer who must take on the impossible. Holiness without grace is a whitewash, and sanctification is a process whereby the apparent is made real through the Holy Spirit.

As a conduct-book teaching by negative example, *Mr Badman* is a curious blending of extended exposition and intensely perceptive vignettes that illustrate cases of conscience, crucial to the moral edification and encouragement of the believer. In the beginning, Bunyan lamented the general wickedness throughout England. He deplored the badness of the times and the *ennui* that had debilitated the saints; the times were bad because men were bad, 'if men therefore would mend, so would the times' (*Badman* 13). Regardless of the criticism that James Forrest and Roger Sharrock level at *Mr Badman* for being 'narrowly subordinate to a remorseless moral lesson, with its concomitant repetitions and rhetorical emphases' (Forrest and Sharrock xii), *Mr Badman* was paradoxically optimistic. Living the holy life and preaching the gospel could effectively change this world for the better. In spite of prevailing wickedness, Bunyan saw evidence of God's dealings with the faithful. From the perspective of human experience, Bunyan's hope for the future was succoured. With the grace of God, believers had the potential for flourishing. There was even in *Mr Badman's* life the hope that he too would repent. The reader could not tell from the dialogue alone that *Badman* was damned to hell; his fate even in the exposition was not completely settled, for only God could tell ultimately where *Badman* was eternally bound. In spite of Stuart Sim's remark that *Mr Badman's* sins 'act as semiotic reminders to the elect in the audience that his personality has been reprobationally determined in advance' (Sim 78), one needs to keep in mind 'that Bunyan was not always such a high Calvinist in practice as he was in principle' (Green 13). In the search for signs, the reader should always be slow to judge. The dialogue between *Mr Wiseman* and *Mr Attentive* compelled the reader to look closely for the signs of salvation or damnation in *Badman's* life and even his death, while cautioning that death-bed experiences were no single indicator. Because most of the sins that *Wiseman* and *Attentive* enumerated were nothing out of the ordinary and concerned the banal affairs of everyday living, the reader might behold in the life of *Mr Badman* as in a mirror 'the steps that take hold of hell' (*Badman* 1), being drawn inexorably into a reflection on unholy living and the dire consequences of unholy dying.

Evidence of the thematic influence of the conduct-book tradition upon *Mr*

Badman can be found in the dialogue that takes place between Mr Wiseman and Mr Attentive, enumerating 'in Particular' the sins of *Badman's* childhood and his wickedness as an adult. Wiseman began his account of Mr *Badman's* life, asserting 'that from a Child he was very bad' (*Badman* 17). Even though *Badman's* parents were godly and sought earnestly to bring him up in the way of faith, he steadfastly ignored the spiritual concerns of his parents.

In the account of *Badman's* lying (*Badman* 18-20), Bunyan emphasized in the margin, that 'A Lie knowingly told demonstrates that the heart is desperately hard' (*Badman* 18). Attentive asserted that *Badman* must have gone against the good education he undoubtedly received from his parents when he told such blatant lies, 'Yea, he must make his heart hard, and bold to doe it' (*Badman* 18). Neither Wiseman nor Attentive shared any sympathy with the idea that there could be varying gradations of falsehood as suggested by Augustine in *Against Lying* (McNeill 105). Bunyan, instead, declared through his interlocutors that 'a spirit of Lying is the Devils Brar' (*Badman* 18), and that a lie could not be in the heart 'before the person has committed a kind of spiritual adultery with the Devil' (*Badman* 18), and that a lie could not be in the heart 'before the person has committed a kind of spiritual adultery with the Devil' (*Badman* 19). Clearly then, in Bunyan's morality lying was not to be part of the Christian's deportment for it was one of the Devils' off-spring, bringing 'the soul to the very den of Devils, to wit, the dark dungeon of hell' (*Badman* 19). By telling lies, *Badman* exposed his lineage with the 'Father of lies', confirming his reprobation and the justice of God in sentencing him to eternal damnation. Both Wiseman and Attentive suggested that lying was only the beginning of further deceitfulness and sin. Resolute lying hardened the heart for 'a lyer is weded to the Devil himself' (*Badman* 19).

The conduct-book tradition also shaped Wiseman's description of *Badman's* stealing (20-24). Attentive stressed that even while *Badman* was a child, he could not but have known 'that to steal was to transgress the Law of God' (*Badman* 21). Wiseman affirmed that *Badman* knew perfectly what he was doing, clarifying the extent to which his father went to correct his son's wickedness. The unflagging efforts of *Badman's* parents were an example to all parents to love and discipline their children, regardless of how they reacted. Bunyan exhorted parents to continue in the good work of raising their children well, while encouraging children to listen to their parents and to respect them as God's instruments of righteousness.

Bunyan's views on corporal punishment seem to stand somewhere between Jeremy Taylor's and John Locke's. Taylor highlighted the authority of fathers to chastise their offending children. He seemed stricter than either Bunyan or Locke, even though he urged fathers to use gentleness and love in governing their children. Taylor traced the history of patriarchal rule, going so far as to say that in some parts of Christendom a man was 'permitted to kill his daughter if he sees her in unchast Embraces' (3: 365). For Taylor, children had little recourse against a dictatorial father. Locke, in contrast to Taylor, was far more moderate. Although Locke also sanctioned corporal punishment, he did so reluctantly:

For I would have a *Father seldom strike his Child*, but upon very urgent Necessity, and as the last Remedy: And then perhaps it will be fit to do it so, that the Child should not quickly forget it . . . *Beating* is the worst, and therefore the last Means to be used in the Correction of Children; and that only in Cases of Extremity, after all gentler unsuccessful: Which, if well

observed, there will be very seldom any need for Blows. (Locke 132)

Badman's parents treated their son well, rearing him within the norms of seventeenth-century family life. Their faith made them optimistic that he might convert, and they did all that they could to win him, rearing him in the faith and correcting him with love and gentleness.

In the long account on swearing and cursing (*Badman* 27-37), Bunyan exhibited some of the care with which casuists distinguished one sort of activity from another. At first, Wiseman and Attentive both pontificate loudly on the evils of swearing and cursing. Then, to ensure that the reader understood perfectly, Bunyan had Attentive ask what the difference was between the two. Wiseman said that while swearing '*Is a light and wicked calling of God, &c. to witness to our vain and foolish attesting of things*' (*Badman* 27), cursing '*is to sentence another or our self, for, or to evil: or to wish that some evil might happen to the person or thing under the Curse, unjustly*' (*Badman* 29). Wiseman argued that in all their permutations, the crucial distinction between swearing and cursing is that swearing 'hath immediately to do with the name of God' (*Badman* 29).

Describing how Badman's master tried to no avail to instil the principles of Christian morality into his wicked apprentice, Wiseman informed Attentive of the three young villains from whom Badman received instructions in drunkenness, purloining, and uncleanness (*Badman* 43). This account led naturally into a long discourse about why one should avoid the companionship of the wicked, with Badman demonstrating the worst possible consequences of such actions. Both Wiseman and Attentive concurred that it was a sign of God's judgment when one was given over to wicked companions.

Badman cut himself off from all reminders of the gospel, gave himself over to the lusts of the flesh, and became enslaved to sin. Badman's first companion was a frequenter of taverns and tippling-houses, giving Wiseman the opportunity to consider the evils that accompany drunkenness. First, drunkenness impoverishes a person; second, it weakens a person's health, making him susceptible to disease; third, it 'is a sin that is often times attended with abundance of other evils' (*Badman* 46); and fourth, as Wiseman said, 'By Drunkenness, Men do often times shorten their dayes; goe out of the Ale-house drunk, and break their Necks before they come home' (*Badman* 46). According to Wiseman's wry assessment, when Badman broke only his leg instead of his neck, he illustrated God's mercy toward him for he deserved much more (*Badman* 132). Wiseman and Attentive reflected upon the four evils of drunkenness, concluding with the point that drunkenness was to be avoided because it led to other sins.

Badman was also addicted to uncleanness. Both Wiseman and Attentive stressed how difficult it was for young men to escape the snare of '*such beastly queans, [who] shall, with words and carriages that are openly tempting, discover themselves unto them*' (*Badman* 49). In this sketch of the dangers of sexual sin, Wiseman told the story of the great man who had lived so long in that sin that he had almost lost his sight: 'So his Physicians were sent for, to whom he told his Disease; but they told him, that they could do him no good, unless he would forbear his Women. *Nay then, said he, farewell sweet Sight*' (*Badman* 50-51). Immediately following Wiseman's allusion to the great man who was prepared to hazard his sight for satisfaction, Attentive, not to be outdone, alluded to '*another that had his Nose eaten off*' (51), in possible reference to Sir William Davenant, the Restoration dramatist,

who lost his nose as a consequence of the pox.

Perhaps the most painful and unrelenting of the lessons that Bunyan taught in *Mr Badman* centred on the person of Mrs Badman and her unfortunate marriage. According to Wiseman, her grave error was in marrying Mr Badman without examining fully the circumstances and motives of his conversion and without seeking the counsel of those in her church. Both Wiseman and Attentive regrettably seemed to suggest that Mrs Badman somehow deserved the abuse her husband assaulted her with because of her error in judgment. Bunyan, as can be seen in his conduct-book, *Christian Behaviour*, published in 1663 - seventeen years before *Mr Badman* - did not advocate domestic violence, but mutual respect and sharing in the marriage relationship. While he undoubtedly argued for the subordination of wives to their husbands, he did attempt to define limits to the husband's domination. In what might be described in twentieth-century terms as 'the battered-wife syndrome', Mrs Badman, with one exception, endured her husband's abuse. She accepted his insults, blows, and whores, but refused to give up her faith, passively waiting for a salvation that came only in death. Bunyan recognized women's vulnerability in society, emphasizing the wickedness of the times in which young women got married and were destroyed by the men they loved.

An aspect of the conduct-book tradition found in *Mr Badman* which has received considerable attention is that dealing with Badman's business practices. Badman perfected the art of breaking (i.e. going bankrupt) to get money 'by hatfulls and pocketfulls' (*Badman* 87), learning to defraud his customers and bluff his creditors. He was fraudulent, using false weights and measures and sleight of hand to rob those whom he was supposed to serve. He was unafraid of charging twice, and required those who protested to show their receipts. As well, he was guilty of extortion, which Wiseman vaguely defined as 'a screwing from men more than by the Law of God or men is right' (*Badman* 108). Of course, all these measures could only provide a temporary reprieve for Badman because his appetite was insatiable, and his dissolute behaviour was the cause of his waste. He was motivated only by selfish profit-making, rapacious greed, and mercenary self-interest.

By posing for his reader 'the problem of how a man may deal with the world of commerce without jeopardizing his religious beliefs' (Salzman 253), Bunyan used Mr Badman as a paradigm for how not to act. The impact of the conduct-book tradition in the obverse is clearly evident in *Mr Badman*. Bunyan's exposition was realistic and filled with common-sense. The holiness he advocated was balanced by a full awareness of the imperfection of the saints, their need for continuing moral and intellectual effort, and the grace of God to live the holy life. Bunyan's *Mr Badman* was a reflection upon reprobation and sanctification, based on Bunyan's experience as a mechanic preacher and a prisoner of the Lord. The dangers of not examining one's spiritual condition were amply demonstrated in Mr Badman who died 'As quietly as a Lamb' (157), and as full of false security as the spiritually blind.

Breaking the narrative of Badman's life into a series of discrete incidents which were linked by the dialogue between Wiseman and Attentive, Bunyan applied the parable of the good steward to the holy life. Just as Mr Badman was damned because he refused to be faithful in the little things, so Christian was rewarded for his precise attention to detail. The casuistical technique employed here was that of fragmenting the holy life into a series of immediate, attainable objectives, with

Christian choosing to be faithful in the trifles of daily life, and ideally advancing gradually to more significant ethical dilemmas. The idea of progress should not be viewed as a chronological progression, however, but as a 'dynamic stasis' where the imperfect saint was more surely 'grounded and settled' in the hope of the Gospel (Col. 1.23). Not only the actions themselves, but the intentions behind those actions were important, and as the motivations were sanctified by the Holy Spirit, the saint's behaviour would be made more and more Christlike (55). Mr Badman never embarked upon this process and consequently was damned.

Reflecting conduct-book convention, *Mr Badman* contributed to the genesis of the novel, as later established by Daniel Defoe in *Moll Flanders* and *Roxanna*. By practising the conduct-book habit of paying close attention to the circumstances and motives that shaped and activated individual actions and incidents, Bunyan participated in a process whereby narrative eventually moved from spiritual and psychological analysis, and from exposition and didacticism to *mimesis*, plot development, and characterization. Michael McKeon sees in the movement 'from metaphysics and theology to epistemology':

the process of coming to a knowledge of truth will be understood according to a tacitly assumed metaphor of visual sense perception, so that knowing something will consist in having it 'in mind', and knowing it well will require that we refine the capacity of our ideas for the accurate inner representation of external objects. (83)

A practical way of discerning truth in a morally ambiguous world is the goal of all casuistical divinity. Within its conventions, ordinary human lives and banal incidents take on pivotal significance when analyzed in the context of the doctrine of sanctification. Every person is celebrated and every event momentous - fit subjects for literature. Bunyan also advocated a sympathy for the human condition that was cognizant of man's nature and the forces with which he or she had to come to terms. He exploited the ordinary and the familiar, drawing attention to a broad range of subjects on which future fiction writers could draw. Moreover, the continual examination of actions and motives was just an extension of the self-consciousness urged by the spiritual autobiography, making ordinary human beings legitimate subjects for analysis. The conduct-book tradition moved spiritual autobiography in the direction of fiction by centring upon Watkins individual actions and incidents in human life, and making narrative the vehicle for describing the span of life against the backdrop of eternity.

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NOTES

- 1 Future references to *The Miscellaneous Works of John Bunyan* (1976-) will be cited in the text as *MW*.
- 2 Kaufmann's point that providence is the key to understanding *Mr Badman* does not contradict mine about the importance of conduct-books; his simply emphasizes another aspect of this remarkable work.

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Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England 1500-1720*, London/New York: Routledge, 1993, pp.x, 268. ISBN 0-425-01696-7.

Baptists, who have long cherished the concept of the priesthood of *all* believers, should be among the first to welcome the relatively recent emphases among historians on social and women's history. In this respect this latest book in Routledge's *Christianity and Society in the Modern World* series is of special interest. The focus of the author, who teaches at the University of Western Australia, is on the role of women in the entire gamut of English-speaking Christianity, from Catholics to Quakers. Yet she has two significant sections about the way Baptist women lived out their faith (pp.147-152 on 'Theories and practices of family relationships in Baptist and Independent churches'; pp.198-204 on female religious experience and spirituality in Particular and General Baptist churches between 1660 and 1720), as well as various other insights and reflections about female Baptist experience interwoven throughout the book.

Crawford's main thesis, amply demonstrated, is that religious experience 'was of central importance in the lives of women in England in the early modern period'