

# The Life and Death of Mr. Badman

## Study Guide

A Bible Study Based on John Bunyan's  
The Life and Death of Mr. Badman

By Alan Vermilye



The Life and Death of Mr. Badman Study Guide:  
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Version 1

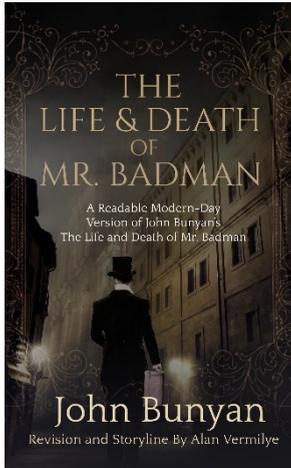
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# Required Book for Study

Do you have the right book for this study?



Although there are many versions of this Bunyan classic, *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman: A Modern-Day Revised Version of John Bunyan's The Life and Death of Mr. Badman* is the only book that is made specifically for this study.

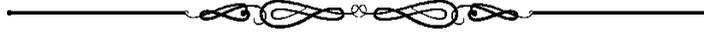
Each chapter and study question is designed to be used in conjunction with each other. Other books will feel drastically different and not match up with the study questions and format of this study.

Why is that? Well, Bunyan's original version of the book is not only very difficult to read but is written as one long dialogue between two men rather than divided into chapters with a storyline that this book and study utilize. Other more "readable" versions might include chapter headings but will not align with the sessions that correspond with this study. In addition, many leave out key text and do not keep with Bunyan's original intentions for the book.

If you are completing this study in a group setting, it would also be helpful if each participant had the same book to make class discussion time more beneficial.

Learn more about this book at [www.BrownChairBooks.com](http://www.BrownChairBooks.com).

# Course Notes and Study Format



*The Life and Death of Mr. Badman Study Guide* is divided into six weekly study sessions that correspond with the forty-five chapters of *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman: A Modern Revised Version of John Bunyan's The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*. This study guide can be used for individual study or for weekly small groups that gather to discuss each chapter.

## HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

For each weekly session, you will read the chapters indicated below and answer the questions in this study guide that correspond with those chapters. The book and study have been divided up to allow plenty of time to read each chapter and answer questions in a week's time. Many of the sections are very short and will not require much time, while others are a little longer.

As you read, make notes in your book, and underline or highlight sections that interest you. As you work through each session, make note of other questions or observations that you would like to share in your small group time.

- Session 1      Chapters 1–8
- Session 2      Chapters 9–16
- Session 3      Chapters 17–21
- Session 4      Chapters 22–30
- Session 5      Chapters 31–37
- Session 6      Chapters 38–45

## **GROUP FORMAT**

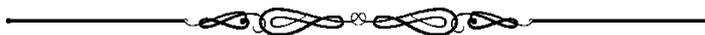
The study is ideal for Sunday school classes as well as midweek times at the church or in the homes of group members. Session length is variable, but ideally, you should allow at least 60–90 minutes per session. You will most likely not be able to get through all the questions in a single session, so pick and choose the questions you want to make sure you cover.

Pace yourself or your group, and do not rush the study. If you feel you need additional weeks for certain sections, be flexible and allow the learning process and class discussion to happen naturally. It's most helpful for learning purposes if each person has their own book and study guide and works through the questions prior to each class. However, couples might find it convenient to share a book.

## **ANSWER AND SCRIPTURE REFERENCE GUIDES**

The answers to each question as well as a Scripture Reference Guide can be found at [www.BrownChairBooks.com](http://www.BrownChairBooks.com). However, do not cheat yourself. Work through each session prior to viewing the answers. The Scripture Reference Guide is a handy tool that saves time in class that would be spent looking up Bible passages.

## Author Summary



John Bunyan was born in Elstow near Bedford, England, in 1628. His parents were poor, and his father was a metalworker, or “tinker,” who traveled around mending pots and pans; John followed in his father’s trade. He had no formal education but learned to read and write.

Although we have few details about his early life, in his autobiography, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, he tells us that he was not encouraged in matters of spirituality at home. He was rough, enjoyed dancing and playing tipcat, and was given to “cursing, swearing, lying and blaspheming the holy name of God.”

In 1644 Bunyan lost both his mother and sister Margaret. Later that same year, when an edict demanded 225 recruits from Bedford, he entered the Parliamentary Army as a private at the age of sixteen.

There are few details about his military service, which took place during the English Civil War. However, during one battle, a fellow soldier was killed when he requested to go forward in Bunyan’s place. This dramatic event led Bunyan to believe God had spared his life for some purpose. His military service exposed him to a variety of religious sects while indulging in all sorts of ungodly behavior.

Bunyan spent nearly three years in the army before returning home in 1647 to continue his trade as a metal worker. His father was now remarried and had more children, so Bunyan moved to a cottage in Elstow High Street.

His first marriage, in 1648, was to a girl who was poor like himself but came from a godly family. Her name is not known, but she owned two books, of which Bunyan said, “Her only portion was two volumes which her father had given her, ‘The Plain Man’s Pathway’ and ‘The Practice of Piety.’ In these I sometimes read, wherein I found some things pleasant to me.”

During his first five years of marriage, his wife would have a profound influence on his life as he began to attend church regularly and gave up his sinful life. He also began to pore over the Scriptures, leading him to his own thoughts about conviction that he would later write about in detail.

He joined a Baptist society at Bedford and by 1653 had become a lay preacher as a member of the congregation at Bedford. Over time, Bunyan’s popularity exploded, and great crowds in the thousands would come to hear him preach.

Bunyan and his wife’s first child, Mary, was born blind in 1650. They would have three more children: Elizabeth, Thomas, and John. But in 1658, ten years into their marriage, Bunyan’s wife died, leaving him with four small children under ten. A year later, in 1659, he got remarried to an eighteen-year-old young woman named Elizabeth.

However, their first year of marriage was interrupted when the religious tolerance that had allowed Bunyan to preach was curtailed when the monarchy was restored to power. In 1660 King Charles II came to the throne and ordered that all preachers that did not belong to the Church of England be imprisoned or banished.

Bunyan was no longer allowed to preach at the Anglican church where his congregation met. Still, he continued preaching in other places and later that year was warned that he would soon be arrested. He refused to escape and was arrested and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. He was threatened with more jail time, banishment from England, and possible execution if he did not agree to stop preaching.

Although he could have his freedom whenever he wanted it, Bunyan refused to renounce preaching, opting to stand firm and keep a clear conscience instead; he was imprisoned for a total of twelve years in the Bedford County Jail.

Bunyan's imprisonment brought great hardship to his family. Elizabeth, who was pregnant at the time of his arrest, would later give birth to a stillborn child. She continually made attempts to secure her husband's release while caring for Bunyan's four small children, one of whom was blind. She relied on the charity of fellow church members and on what little Bunyan could earn in prison making shoelaces.

On occasion, he was allowed out of prison, where he attended the Bedford meetings and even preached. His daughter Sarah was born during his imprisonment, and a son, Joseph, was born after his release.

While imprisoned, he became the pastor of a congregation of inmates and stayed busy writing religious tracts, sermons, and nine books, including *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, which was published in 1666. In 1671 King Charles II issued a declaration of religious indulgences that released thousands of non-conformists from prison, including Bunyan in 1672.

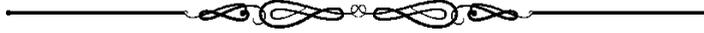
He immediately returned to preaching but three years later was put back in jail again for around six months. It was during this time that he began work on *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which was published after his release.

Bunyan was never jailed again but spent the last fifteen years of his life preaching all over England, including a visit to London every year to deliver sermons to large Baptist congregations.

In August 1688, on his way to London to preach, Bunyan went to Reading Berkshire on a ministerial visit to help resolve a quarrel between a father and son. As he returned to London on horseback, he was caught in a heavy rainstorm and fell ill with a violent fever, dying at the age of sixty.

He died at the house of his friend, John Strudwick, a grocer and Chandler on Snow Hill in Holborn. His grave lies in the cemetery at Bunhill Fields in London.

## Book Summary



John Bunyan's *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman* was first published in 1680 and was Bunyan's attempt to present by negative example the way to holiness. Having released *The Pilgrim's Progress* in 1678 about one man's faith journey to heaven, he thought it important to present the opposing view before publishing the sequel to *The Pilgrim's Progress* with Christiana in 1685.

Bunyan presents the story by diving into diverse topics such as lying, stealing, swearing, cursing, drunkenness, sexual sin, marriage, adultery, and raising children in addition to business issues like borrowing, fair trade, contractual obligations, and bankruptcy. He then moves on to issues of salvation and eternal life by exploring remorse, repentance, and, finally, death. His goal is to demonstrate to the reader, whether a believer or not, how to apply broad moral principles to the specifics of daily Christian life.

The story narrative surrounds the dialogue of two men, Wiseman (referred to as Wise in this book and study) and his neighbor and friend Attentive, discussing sin and redemption. The focus of their discussion narrows in on the life another man, Mr. Badman (referred to as Badman), who died just the day before. As the story unfolds over the course of one long day, it depicts the stages of life—from cradle to grave—of a very wicked man in an evil age.

Wise begins his account of Badman's life at childhood, indicating that he was bad from the start. Even though Badman's parents were godly and sought earnestly to bring him up in the ways of the Lord, he steadfastly ignored the spiritual concerns of his parents. Instead, he became addicted very early on to some very bad habits.

One of these bad habits including lying so much that his parents could hardly believe a word that came out of his mouth. He also began to steal; although small things at first, he graduated to larger items like his neighbor's livestock. In addition, he hated going to church and would try to break the Sabbath as often as he could. Swearing and cursing came naturally to him.

His parents' efforts to love and discipline Badman were futile, so his father sent him off to live with a friend who ran a successful business to be an apprentice. His new boss was a godly man who did his best to instill principles of Christian morality into his wicked apprentice. But it was all to no avail as Badman soon left him for the employment of another man just as bad as himself. This downward spiral was made worse when he became friends with three wicked men who led Badman further into the sins of drunkenness, stealing, and sexual immorality.

After his apprenticeship ended, his father gave him money to start a business, which soon failed but only after he took on more debt. He needed money quickly and believed his best option was to marry a wealthy Christian woman, which he soon found in a young lady whose parents had already

died, leaving her no one to look out for her best interest...including herself. He successfully deceived her by pretending to be a Christian himself, and they eventually married. In no time, he removed his disguise and proceeded to spend all her money on debts and prostitutes. Deceived and heartbroken, his wife refused to give up on her faith, all the while continuing to pray for her husband's salvation. The marriage produced seven children, of which only one was a Christian and dedicated to his mother. The others followed Badman's path, which led to more pain for his poor wife.

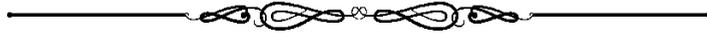
Badman's business practices were always under scrutiny as he created various schemes like going bankrupt to deceive and fool his creditors out of their money. He was also quite skilled in defrauding his customers by using false weights and measures in business transactions, even going as far as charging customers twice, requiring those who protested to show their receipts.

Once, when he became gravely ill, he seemed to show remorse for his ill-spent life. He made promises to God of repentance if his life would be spared, and he also began treating his wife and children with love and affection. Unfortunately, his wife's hopes and prayers for his repentance were soon dashed after he made a full recovery and returned to his sinful lifestyle.

Unable to manage the stress any longer of being married to Badman, she soon fell ill and died, having prayed for his soul until the very end. Badman put on a show of grief for a short time but then was deceived himself into marriage by a wayward woman. His second wife was just as wicked and deceptive as he, making his life miserable and leading him into poverty. But as wickedly as he lived, his death came peacefully after having never repented and accepting Christ as Savior. This, of course, had no bearing on God's final judgement of Badman's life or his eternal destiny.

In wrapping up Badman's story, Bunyan takes great pains to expose the danger of not examining one's spiritual condition. When God reveals Himself in our lives, it forces a choice in our hearts. Will we choose to follow Him, or will we walk away? The result of walking away is a foolish and dark life and eventually results in a hardening of our hearts concerning the ways of God. And like Badman, when we continue to reject the awareness of sin in our lives and God's grace and mercy, He will eventually give us over to the desires of our own hearts—dangerous place to be, as Badman soon found out.

# Session 1: Badman's Childhood Years



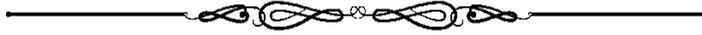
In this week's readings, we meet two friends, both struggling with the same basic concern—just from a different perspective. That concern is an overwhelming burden regarding the evil that's so prevalent in the world as well as those who practice it. For Attentive, a bright and conscientious young man, it involved a sleepless night and many unanswered questions. But for his older and much wiser friend Wise, it was sadness regarding the death of a fellow townsman just the day before. The man's name was Mr. Badman. He wasn't a friend, family, or a neighbor, but Wise had known Badman and watched him grow up. Unfortunately, Badman's reputation was not a good one but rather he led a wicked life, and Wise believed Badman died unrepentant and was now in hell.

In this weekly session, you will spend some time examining Badman's childhood and how the sins of lying, stealing, swearing, cursing, and breaking the Sabbath began when he was just a boy.

## Session 1 Chapters

- Chapter 1: A Badman, a Bad World
- Chapter 2: A Horrific End
- Chapter 3: A Wicked Beginning
- Chapter 4: An Expert Liar
- Chapter 5: A Thief
- Chapter 6: Breaking the Sabbath
- Chapter 7: Empty, Worthless Swearing
- Chapter 8: Profane Cursing

## Chapter 1: A Badman, a Bad World



1. The relationship between Wise and Attentive could be described as a mentorship. How is mentoring different than ordinary friendships? What are the benefits of a mentorship? Describe any mentorship that impacted your life.

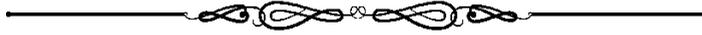
2. C.S. Lewis once said, “Think of me as a fellow patient in the same hospital who, having been admitted a little earlier, could give some advice.” What are qualities of a good Christian mentor?

3. The word “mentoring” does not appear in the Bible, but Scripture provides numerous examples of mentoring in both the Old and New Testaments, including Moses and Joshua, Eli and Samuel, Elijah and Elisha, and Paul and Timothy. How did Jesus define His style of mentorship in Matthew 16:24? What is the cost of allowing Jesus to mentor you?

4. Attentive was troubled in his spirit from a night of examining the bad state of worldly affairs. What troubles you most as you examine the world around you? What brings you comfort? Are you holding out hope that the world will get better?

5. Wise said it is those who shine God's light that make this world a "beautiful place to live." Read Matthew 5:14–16 and then write it in the space below, circling the word "light" each time you find it. Share a time when God called you to share your light to expose darkness. In what ways are Christians tempted to hide their light? How will you take more of an initiative to "let your light shine" before others, specifically in the areas you listed where you routinely are tempted to hide it?

## Chapter 2: A Horrifying End

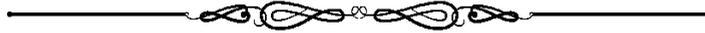


1. Wise was troubled by his belief that Badman died two deaths at once. Read Revelation 21:1–8. What is the second death, and what fate is assigned for those who are evil? What does Jesus promise to those who overcome? Are you bothered in the same way as Wise when you consider those you know who die without Christ?

2. Attentive said that we are spiritual beings destined to live forever. How should the reality of eternal life change our perspective on how we live today?

3. Describe the horrifying experience Wise mentioned regarding the damned and the questions they will ask themselves after death as well as the answers they arrive at.

## Chapter 3: A Wicked Beginning



1. Wise described Badman as having a wicked beginning but also claimed that he had good parents. Is it ever fair to associate a child's behavior with that of their parents? When is it an unfair assessment? Describe a time when you found yourself judging another's parenting without knowing the full story.

2. Attentive told Wise he believed all children are born into this world polluted by original sin. Romans 5:12 essentially says that we are born with a sinful nature inherited from Adam. Every one of us is affected by Adam's sin; there are no exceptions. In an individualistic culture, there are some that might say corporate guilt is unfair. How would you answer that objection?