

CROWNS FOR THE BELIEVER

The Ultimate Victory...The Cherished Crowns!

Do you have a hero that you admire...or you have admired in the past? Who achieved the ultimate goal of:

Winning the Heisman trophy...made it to the pros...in football...or baseball? Or...maybe your hero might be a valedictorian of your graduation class...or Miss Texas...or someone that won a Grammy for their acting? Hitting the home-run that won the World Series... Maybe someone like Peyton Manning who was the quarterback who won the Super bowl as the oldest quarterback to ever do so. Many records were broken by Mr. Manning and those records will be there until someone else comes along and shatters his record. Kids in Pee Wee Football...right now are dreaming of breaking the record of Peyton Manning...their hero.

Yes...you have your heroes! You know them...and you have said to yourself...

Why not me?

Why couldn't I have done something that would have received those kinds of accolades?

As bad as we might have wanted it...

In the economy of the earth, there are a limited number of crowns!

But...

There is going to be a Winner's Circle you are going to get to stand in...and it is going to be more spectacular than winning any earthly crown!!

Because...

- Heavenly Rewards are not limited to a chosen few, but "*to all those who have waited with love for Him to come again*" (2 Timothy 4:8).
- The Winner's Circle in heaven is not reserved for a handful of the elite, but for a heaven full of God's children who "*will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him*" (James 1:12).
- Jesus promised (He keeps His promise...always) that "*When the master comes and finds the servant doing his work, the servant will be blessed*" (Matthew 24:46).

- Paul shouts it out with authority, "*The Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether his is slave or free*" (Ephesians 6:8).
- The beatitudes state... "*Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven.*"

**For all we don't know about the next life, this much is certain:
The day Christ comes will be a day of Reward:**

- **Those who went unknown on earth...will be known in heaven!**
- **Those who never heard the cheers of men...will hear the cheers of the angels!**
- **Those who missed the blessing of a father...will hear the blessing of their heavenly Father!**

**The small...will be great!
The forgotten...will be remembered!
The unnoticed...will be crowned!
The faithful...will be honored!**

**What the hero heard when you cheered as he accepted the trophy
would be nothing compared to what you will hear in the presence
of God.**

**Peyton Manning received all kinds of accolades, "things," and
money...But, YOU will receive a crown!
Here is a preview of at least Three (3) Crowns you will receive:**

CROWN OF LIFE-

"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him" (James 1:12).

To help you appreciate the crown...let me reiterate (tell you again): **Heaven will be wonderful, not only because of what is present, but what is absent!**

Remember what the apostle John said in his list of "no more." "*God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more:*

DEATH CRYING SADNESS PAIN

Because all the old ways are gone." Revelation 21:4

NO MORE...NO MORE...Death! But...A Crown of Life-Forever!

Jesus urged the Christians in Smyrna to "Be faithful, even if you have to die, and I will give you a Crown of Life" (Revelation 2:10).

ANOTHER CROWN... CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS-

Paul said, "I have done my best in the race; I have run the full distance; I have kept the faith...and now there is waiting for me the victory prize of being put right with God, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that Day...and not only to me, but to all those who wait with love for Him to appear" (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

Righteousness = to be in a right relationship with God. Like an adopted child...papers signed, payment made...but the child is not born...and, of course...has not been taken home yet! We are adopted "in Christ"...papers signed (name in Lamb's Book of Life)... payment made (Jesus has paid the cost)...We have been Born again...but eternal life awaits us...when he takes us home.

We are "in Christ" now...with a right relationship through His blood...but, when Christ comes we will even be "righter"! (I know it is not a word...but it sure fits here!)

Our wardrobe will be complete!

In heaven...sin will be no more!

On earth- Because of sin:

- You have worried!
- You have turned away when you should have helped!
- You hoarded when you should have shared!
- You have argued and snapped at the ones you cherish!
- You have felt ashamed, guilty...bitter!
- Sleepless nights, cloudy days...and a pain in the neck because of tension!

But...in Heaven, you won't have those...No regrets, heartaches, pain...suffering!

Because of sin...the young are abused!

Because of sin...God is cursed and drugs are worshiped!

Because of sin...babies have no daddies and husbands have no wives!

Sin has sired a thousand heartaches and broken a million promises!

But...in heaven...NO MORE SIN!

**To be crowned in life means no more death!
To be crowned in Righteousness means no more sin!**

THE 3RD CROWN- CROWN OF GLORY-

Peter said, "And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away" (1 Peter 5:4). For those who have never trotted around the bases to cheers of fans because you just broke the record...or hit the home run that won the World Series...this hits home!

...The promise of a "crown of glory." Your day is coming...What the world has overlooked, your Father has remembered!

And... "*He (God) will praise each one of them*" (1 Corinthians 4:5). Incredible sentence.... "*God will praise each of them.*"

Not:

- The best of them.
- A few of them.
- The achievers among them.

But...God will praise each one of them!

You won't be left out. God will see to that. God himself will give you the praise!

God does not delegate that job.

God will praise each one...Not all at the same time.

Not David; Not Moses; Not Paul; Not the angels...Not even Jesus!

God himself will personally praise you. The crowns will be given one at a time with the simple statement from God himself..."Well done thy good and faithful servant..."

Be encouraged with this truth...Stay strong, don't give up, and don't look back. Let Jesus speak to your heart as He says..."Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown" (Rev. 3:11).

One of the things that we all must realize...is that...

Our life is a continuing influence on some soul...somebody!

The movie "Schindler's List" was a movie that will long go down in history as a movie that impacted lives.

As Oskar Schindler found out what true compassion and gratefulness was! We, too, will someday find out.

Schindler saw and came face to face with those delivered...You will too!

**He stood in the community of rescued souls...You will too!
When will it occur?... When Christ comes!**

The promise of 1 Thessalonians 2:19 isn't limited to the apostle Paul...
"YOU are our hope, our joy, and the crown we will take pride in when our Lord Jesus Christ comes."

Speculation: God (with Jesus at His side) will make a statement to you...and then ask you a question;

"I'm so proud that you let me use you.
Because of you, others are here today.
Would you like to meet them?"

Most of us wonder...as to what influence have I been in my world in which I live? In your mind... Paul would be the one to get the praise...or maybe the missionary.

God might then say..."Do we have anyone here who were influenced by this child of mine?"

One by one they begin to step out and come forward...each with his grateful message:

- "You never knew I was watching you...but because of your faithfulness and your unwavering commitment to God...I knew I wanted what you had. I am here because of the Father's love...and Jesus' sacrifice...but, you influenced me...thank you... thank you!"
- "By what you had on your desk...and the way you lived your life...I am here today."
- "You stopped and helped me change a flat...you generously gave of your time...a great influence on me...I realized that this was what Christianity was all about...giving!"
- "You prayed with my family at the hospital when my mother was on her final approach to heaven's gate...You greeted me with a smile and I heard everything you said with your mouth...and your heart."
- People from other countries saying, "You sent money and missionaries to our country...many were saved, I was one of them...thank you for sending the message." And...throughout the throng of people...words shouted... "me, too...Thank you! Thank you!"

But...God saves the best for last...

Your family parts the crowd...and your spouse embraces you...and states..."I love you, you precious gift (man/woman)."

Your parents...hug...and state that they are so proud of you!
Your children...hug your neck...and say, "Thank you,
daddy/mom...for being the influence and inspiration that led me to
Christ."

Great, great, great grandchildren...some in whom you have never
seen...they thank you for an inherited legacy of faith.

Will such a moment occur? Speculation...I don't know!

But...Two things are sure:

1. The grandeur and glory will far outstrip any description this finite mind can imagine... *"No one has ever imagined what God has prepared for those that love Him."* 1 Cor. 2:9
2. If such a moment of reunion occurs, you can be certain you won't regret any sacrifice you made for the kingdom. Because, even with all the hardships you have endured because of Christ...you would do it all again...thousands of times!

Heaven knows no regret...

**God is too kind to let us face the opportunities we missed;
but he is happy to let us see the ones we seized!**

**Yes...you would change more diapers, fix more cars late in the
night, prepared the lessons...and repaired the roofs.
One look into the faces of the ones you love...and you would do it
all again!**

Note: This lesson was inspired by the book, "When Christ Comes" by Max Lucado. I have used the information to provide a teaching lesson for all Christians who realize that it is "Christ who makes our home-going possible." Our faith and trust in Jesus as our Savior makes everything worthwhile.

Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith!

Max Lucado's book - When Christ Comes

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