

Casting Our Crowns Before the Throne

"And they cast their crowns before the throne." – **Revelation 4:10**

Summary:

The crowns of heaven represent the honour, victory, and glory bestowed upon the redeemed. Yet the saints cast their crowns before God's throne, acknowledging that every blessing comes from him and that they are unworthy of the honour. Grace brings down human pride, and growth in spiritual knowledge produces deeper humility. Heaven is a world of humble gratitude where Christ receives all the glory; believers must therefore begin cultivating that same spirit now.

Outline:

1. The honour of the redeemed

- The saints are crowned with righteousness, life, and unfading glory.

2. The crowns are cast before God

- The redeemed confess that every honour and victory has been received from him.

3. Grace brings down human pride

- Conviction leads sinners to abandon self-confidence and walk humbly with God.

4. Knowledge deepens humility

- Clearer views of sin, mercy, and obligation make believers feel their unworthiness.

5. Preparation for the worship of heaven

- Those who will praise Christ eternally must learn to give him all the glory now.

Text

Christianity both distinguishes and elevates individuals. Those who possess it begin to rise on earth, but their true dignity is revealed and perfected in heaven, where they are crowned. Racers, conquerors, benefactors who save others, and bridegrooms—like Solomon's mother in her day of espousal—are all crowned. Princes ascending to power are crowned, and saints on high embody these characters; their crowns are called "a crown of righteousness," "a crown of life," or "a crown of glory that fadeth not away." This divine crown surpasses any worldly prize: "Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible."

However, when they are thus honoured, they 'cast their crowns before the throne' as they approach, showing by this act whom they have received the honour from and admitting they feel undeserving of it—all in line with the unique purpose of the Gospel, which states, "that no flesh should glory in his presence; but, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

It is not easy to bring someone to this mindset, as it is not natural to them. Typically, they are as proud as they are poor.

Hence, he would be wise despite being born like a wild donkey colt. Despite poverty, he claims to be rich, full of goods, and in need of nothing. Even without strength, he relies on his own heart; and although guilty before God, he attempts to justify his own righteousness. He is impatient with his suffering, as if he has a right to complain, and ungrateful for his mercies, as if he deserved them. The day of conviction is a time for humility, when a person's proud attitude is humbled.

Then he submits himself to God and walks humbly with Him. He marvels at the patience that has borne with him and worships the abundant mercy that has saved and called him. As he progresses in his divine journey, he becomes increasingly aware of his own insignificance, saying, 'I, who am but dust and ashes,' or 'Behold, I am vile.' He questions, 'Who am I, and what is my father's house?' and feels unworthy of any of God's mercies or for Christ to come under his roof. He considers himself unworthy even to untie the latchet of Christ's shoes. He says, "I am not worthy to be called an apostle," "I am less than the least of all saints."

These instances of self-destruction involve men who were all esteemed greatly by the Lord. They serve as strong proofs and inevitable outcomes of our spiritual growth in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. Ignorance underpins pride; once you undermine this foundation, the illusion collapses.

Our current understanding is limited; in the future, we will see things in God's light. We will gain new perspectives on the depth of sin, the severity of our offences, our guilt and deserving, our obligations, and the marvellous love that surpasses knowledge within our salvation. This will naturally lead to a sincere humility, causing us to hesitate and decline special privileges—not out of dislike or unwillingness to be grateful, but from a feeling of unworthiness.

That world is a world of humility and gratitude, with all dignitaries casting their crowns before the Saviour's throne, recognising that their exaltation depends solely on His righteousness. They continue to praise Him, saying, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake."

Now, whatever heaven may be, we must prepare ourselves beforehand to enter it. God has created us for this very purpose. He has humbled our nature's pride and made us willing to submit to God's righteousness.

Are we saying, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ"? Is the main sentiment of the blessed now residing in our hearts and ruling our lives—"By the grace of God I am what I am. Not I, but the grace of God which was with me"?

This sermon is taken from William Jay's devotional, *Morning and Evening Exercises* (January 5, Morning), first published in 1854.