

The Crown

Symbols, Metaphors, Similes



"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him"
James 1:12.

What does the crown stand for to you? On this earth we see it often as a symbol for royalty, but there is another crown that is talked about in the Bible. I don't think it is a crown made of gold or silver. It won't be heavy because it will be given by God to those who serve Him, but it will have a few requirements according to what we read about the crown in the Bible.

Is this crown free to us? Yes, and No! There is always listening to what Paul said, knowing in your heart that the Bible is the word of God that was given to Paul and other writers and written down for us.

I compare it to a child with a new ball or someone with a new game. He/She may not want to share, but if one doesn't share there is not near the fun to be had while sharing. We are very much like that every day. We have been given the promises by God, but we need to share them so we can enjoy them along with other people with whom we come in contact. This does not only refer to Spiritual gifts, but to physical gifts as well. Yes, the crown will be a gift, but not one that we can buy, or give away. It is a prize for sure, but it is also an honor that can only be given by God. It is an oxymoron because it combines contradictory terms! It is a gift, but it can't be bought. It can't be bought by you or me or given by you or me. It is a reward, but we can't earn it. Our obligation is to tell others about it so they can have it too, but we can't take the credit for their getting it.

When Paul wrote a letter to the people in Corinth, he told them that they could never hinder the spreading of God's Word, and also it was their duty to make sure it was spread to the entire known world. Paul said he knew that traditionally the people in the temples lived off the profits of the people, and the sacrifices often served as food for the people who worked at the temple. He thought this was wrong. He did state that we all need to support everyone who is spreading the Message of Christ, regardless of how they are spreading that word. He said he was compelled to do it and doomed if he did not.

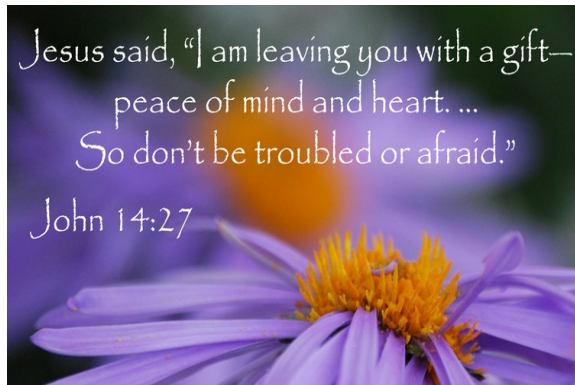
Paul, did as they say, "drive a hard bargain." He talked about running the race and knowing that we all need to run hard. In the end, one wins, but the reward or crown is earthly. He encouraged the people of Corinth and us today to run the good race for the crown that will never tarnish or fade. He knew that meant that he had to set an example every day. And that is still the challenge we face every day.



It is so easy to see the earthly crown, but the Heavenly Crown is waiting for us. Maybe we won't wear it on our head like a King or Queen. I don't think I will and I don't want that, but I do want to know that I am worthy of the crown of righteousness when my race on this earth is finished. The "crown" will be unimportant then. I don't know if we will all have crowns, but the knowledge that we can spend eternity with our Lord is crown enough for me.

As Paul was nearing the end of his time on this earth, he wrote to Timothy and told him that his time was coming to an end and encouraged

Timothy saying *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."* II Timothy 2:8, 9. That same crown of righteousness is available to each one of us.



In a Robert Frost poem, he wrote

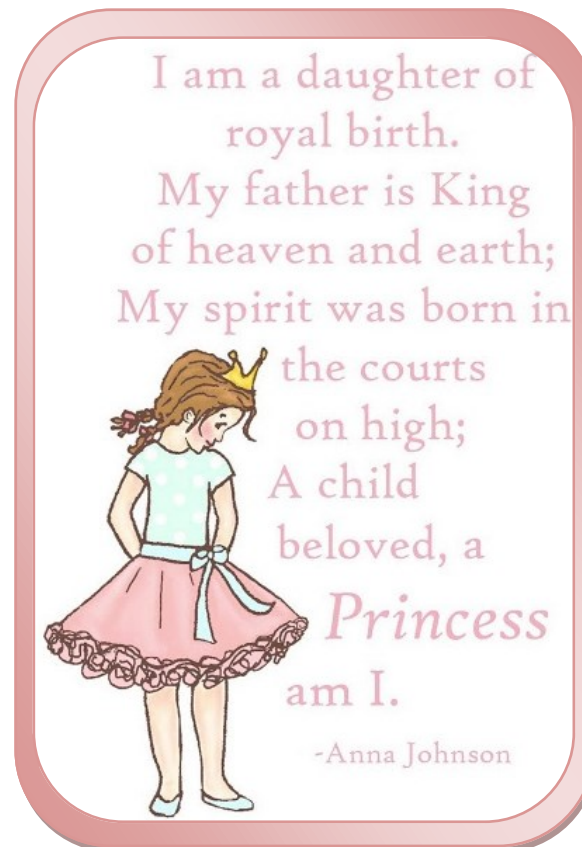
"And were an epitaph to be my story,
I'd have a short one ready for my own.
I would have written of me on my stone:
'I had a lover's quarrel with the world.'"

I think we all have a lover's quarrel with the world at times. Think about it for a minute. There are things we love about this world, but we also want to be with Christ someday. We know what is right, but do the wrong thing. We know that there is a crown waiting for us, but we don't always want to share it with others. We love so much about

this world that we are tempted so many times, and yet Christ overcame that temptation when He was here on earth.

But He knows we can't always do that. Our feet are made of clay. So He came down and sacrificed His life so that we may someday have that crown and spend eternity in a world where temptation does not exist. That is the best gift we could ever ask for and it is ours for the asking.

The crown awaits you today if you accept Christ as your personal Savior.



Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, You have given us Your Word and we know it is true. Help us to tell others about Your promise of a crown of righteousness so that they too may know You as their true Father who loved them enough to die for them. Help us to spread the Good News in our everyday living and speaking. Then help us to remember to give You the glory. Amen

1. Do you have a crown waiting for you? How do you visualize that crown?
2. How can we help others to know about this crown? Why is the crown a symbol?
3. Do we have an obligation to financially help others to know about the crown of righteousness?
4. Paul indicated that those spreading the Word needed to be helped, but then said that we all need to spread the Word. Is this another contradiction of terms? What is our obligation in this?
5. If we can't give the crown to someone, what is our obligation to help that person know about the crown?

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