

The ten crowns of Scripture

Part 1

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Duration	00:53:42
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/abe001/the-ten-crowns-of-scripture

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[00:00:00] I want to speak a little bit tonight about clowns, and by way of introduction I would like to read a few verses from the second chapter of Hebrews, a passage that has been very much before me of late, and that I have greatly enjoyed.

In Hebrews chapter 2, and I think we'll just start with verse 8, Thou hast put all things [00:01:01] in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. It's very precious to my heart in these two verses here at least, I dare not occupy my time with [00:02:04] the preceding verses, precious though they are, it's very blessed to see that in these two verses there is very briefly the history of two men. One of those men was manifestly a failure, and the second one comes to light in all the glory and triumph and victory of his person and of his work. You see in the early one we see that all things were put under him, that is Adam in the garden, remember Adam in the garden? God sent Adam there in the garden to be over all the works of his hands. You remember that the Lord brought all the animals before Adam and whatsoever name Adam gave [00:03:03] to that animal that was the name thereof. And Adam had dominion over the trees and the flowers and every green leaf for food. And yet it says but now we see not yet all things put under him, no we don't do we? We see that man is out of control, he has lost control. We won't waste further time talking about the man who was utter failure. And then we read but we see Jesus. Oh the blessed sunrise comes into view. We see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels. That doesn't mean the degree lower than the angels that it that he was made. It is he was made for a little. Lower than the [00:04:02] angels. For what purpose? For the suffering of death. Crowned with glory and with honour that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. So I wish to speak about crowns tonight. We have Bible students here and most of us I'm sure know that in the New Testament there are two words for crown. One of those words is the common word Stephanos and that is the victor's crown. The other one is the word Diadem and that is the kingly crown. Now looking round this auspicious company tonight I think I am quite confident in saying that none of us, brothers or sisters, [00:05:10] will ever wear a kingly crown. But thanks be unto God there is offered to us an opportunity of acquiring that which the scripture speaks of as this Stephanos crown, the victor's crown. I wish the time allowing, very short time, to cover quite a lot of scripture tonight. I wish to speak about no less than ten crowns in the New Testament. Nine of those are the word Stephanos and the final one is the word Diadem. So will you turn with me please to Paul's epistle to [00:06:02] Thessalonians. 1 Thessalonians verse 2. Chapter 2. 1 Thessalonians chapter 2 and the last two verses. This is crown number one and I'm going to call this one the soul

winner's crown. The Apostle says for what is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming for ye are our glory and our crown. What a blessed thing it is [00:07:09] that the Lord has deigned to enlist us, each one of us I believe, to enlist us in his service in the winning of souls. Because it is by the likes of you and me taking up the word of God, the gospel, the precious scriptures that souls are being won today. By the scriptures and by servants of the Lord. Humble, a simple brother here, a simple sister there, a word in the shop, a word in the factory. This blessed work of soul winning and the Apostle Paul refers to it as he says ye are our crown of rejoicing, ye are our crown of rejoicing. The Apostle is looking on to a day [00:08:06] when as a result of the soul winning then he will receive a crown, a reward in that coming day. What a blessed thing it is that the Lord would use you and me in this way in winning of souls. All of the work of his, it's all his work but in grace he deigns to allow us to have the credit. And as a little hymn, an American hymn comes to mind, the hymn writer says will there be any crowns, will there be any crowns for me? I would challenge myself tonight and each one here, do we covet such a crown? You know we look on to a coming day, of course if we belong to the Lord Jesus and I [00:09:12] trust that all here tonight belong to him. If we belong to the Lord Jesus and on account of his work then we will spend eternity in heaven. As close to him, more close we could not be. In a relationship that does not in any way depend upon us now, in the past or in the future but entirely depends upon him. Or you say that's great, that's lovely, that's all I want to hear. Eternity with Jesus in the skies has been secured for me, I don't want to hear any more. Well that's not a very good attitude to take towards the blessed Lord because he has indicated that apart from a [00:10:08] coming eternity in heaven, apart from that there is going to be opportunity for living here upon earth in the enjoyment of rewards that he will graciously award. Not in eternity, not in heaven but during his thousand year reign here upon earth. That is the time when there will be the opportunity for the display and living out of rewards. And in connection with this, of soul winning, you might ask yourselves very secretly and quietly, how stands the score in preparation for that day. Turn with me please to Philippians chapter 4. Still continuing the same thought of [00:11:04] the soul winners crown. The Apostle says in chapter 4, Therefore my brethren dearly beloved and longed for my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved. I beseech Judas and beseech Syntyche that they be of the same mind in the Lord. Now this still has to do with the soul winners crown. In Thessalonians perhaps it was winning souls in preaching the gospel. But here the Apostle is looking round on the assembly at Philippi and he sees a little matter that is not quite right [00:12:05] and his heart longs that this matter might be put right. Two sisters you notice are at odds with one another. Not quite the smoothness, not quite the harmony between these two sisters at Philippi. And the Apostle Paul can see that as a result of this, this might possibly have some impact, have some bearing upon that future crown. So he says I beseech Euodias and beseech Syntyche that they be of the same mind in the Lord. My joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord my dearly beloved.

That is the soul winners crown. Now turn with me please for number two to the second epistle of Timothy, [00:13:06] chapter four. What are we going to say about this crown? Crown number two. In 2nd Timothy chapter four, the Apostle says in verse six, I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I 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 that love his appearing. This is a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, he says shall give me at that day [00:14:11] and not to me only but to all them also that love his appearing. This is not the rapture, this is his appearing when he comes into view and this crown, this crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give him that day is to all those that love his appearing. I ask you, I ask myself tonight, do you love his appearing? Is the prospect of Jesus shining forth? The word here as you probably know

is epiphany, shining forth the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus is going to shine forth over this whole world as the sun shines forth [00:15:05] and the heart of the saint rises up to that, those that love his appearing. The, it was grace that brought us to the Lord, grace that called us, grace that brought us to a meeting such as this. But you know it's not all grace, it's not all grace. How blessed to the Lord in his wisdom to deign that there should be rewards for that which is done in faithfulness to himself. So those that love his appearing have their eyes and their thoughts continually upon that matter in order that there should be no tarnishing of my crown for that day. That there should be no [00:16:10] falling in the shade of anything that he has given in that coming day when he shines forth in the brightness of his glory. A crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me in that day and not to me only but to all those that love his appearing.

Oh the prospect of the Lord shining forth as the sun in the kingdom of his father his father keep bright in our hearts and our thoughts that we might be morally in line with that which is suitable to him. Crown number three if you'll turn with me please to Peter's first epistle chapter five. [00:17:13] 1st Peter chapter five verse four and when the chief shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. The shepherd's crown when the chief shepherd shall appear. I think this is marvellous you know that this was written by Peter. Peter that Peter should be the one who takes up the rewards, the reward of the chief shepherd. Because it was to that work you remember that the Lord called Peter [00:18:02] in the last chapter of John's gospel. Remember Peter in the gospel account how he sinned most grievously how he denied the Lord and we find him in circumstances of utter shame and then in chapter 21 of John's gospel feed my lambs feed my sheep we might have said oh surely the Lord wouldn't commit to Peter the task of looking after the sheep after his history after his track record all that he had done so wrong but there in chapter 21 the Lord says to Peter feed my lambs feed my sheep.

The Lord appears on the scene and he says to Peter follow thou me he says feed my lambs feed my sheep. [00:19:04] The lambs the sheep that were more precious than anything to the heart of the saviour and he commits their trust their keeping their safe keeping into the hands of Peter. So Peter here in his epistle he says when the chief shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Now this crown this crown is for those who have looked after his things during this present time there's going to be a reward in a coming day for those that have looked after his things of course none more precious than those who have looked after his people. In an assembly circumstances we have the opportunity to look after the [00:20:06] the lambs and the sheep. I repeat that expression you look if you look it up it's most interesting in John chapter 21 the Lord says feed my lambs there are lambs in the assembly the tender ones that need very special treatment in looking after but he also said feed my sheep this pastoral work this shepherding is not just for the weak not just for the young but it's for those who are going on those who are healthy and strong and vigorous in the things of the Lord. You know there are no sheep that that need so much feeding as healthy ones are there. I'm sure if you have a dog or a cat at home you'll know that a sure sign of its good health is that it's got a good appetite and the the apostle here [00:21:08] notices that there is this work and there is this work here I don't doubt in Dorset the opportunity for exercising this shepherd care because in a very short time the chief shepherd is going to appear now the Lord speaks about himself as the good shepherd and that is in respect of his dying isn't it a good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep the Lord speaks about himself as the great shepherd a shepherd who is skillful above all other shepherds in leading his sheep but here he speaks about himself as the chief shepherd and that implies under shepherds under shepherds looking after the Lord's interests while he is [00:22:03] away and he says when the chief shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away well may we covet may we covet the crown for the under shepherds which the chief

shepherd will give in his day now if you turn with me for crown number four to the epistle of James chapter 1 verse 12 this is crown number four verse 12 blessed is the man that endureth temptation for when he is tried he shall [00:23:01] receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him this is the a crown a reward that is held out extended to the suffering saint the tried saint the one who is going through the mill of difficulties and trials of circumstances there is such a thing as collapsing under those circumstances and the Lord knows he is tender he is tender he knows the weight of these things but he doesn't allow any temptation to overcome us other than he gives a way of escape and to him he says that he's tried endure temptation when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to those that love him [00:24:04] the Stephanus the victor's crown you know i can never think of that word Stephanus without thinking of the martyr Stephen Stephen that man Stephen who was full of a holy ghost who stood before his accusers in calm dignity and spoke the word of truth to them have he stood there and as a result of his faithfulness he suffered for it suffered for righteousness and he suffered for the faithfulness he suffered for it suffered for righteousness suffered at the hands of men wicked men wicked men who took up stones to stone him and as they took up their stones to stone them he called down a blessing upon those who were stoning him he said lay not this sin to their [00:25:07] charge when he had said thus he fell on sleep yes Stephen is an example of a tried saint tried and found faithful to the end we read that devout men carried Stephen to his burial so we might not be called to stand before the mob that Stephen stood before we might not be called to go to the stake like they were in England some years ago but each in our own little circumstances today and you know it may be that due to our very feeble faithfulness the Lord is disinclined to entrust us with great things disinclined to entrust us with holding [00:26:06] very great things for him we have a brother in Chelms that used to say there are very few of us that are called upon to be faithful in big things but we are all called upon to be faithful in little things and you know that's where we fall down isn't it holding these little things for him well for those who when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to them that love him it's a touching word isn't it to them that love him I trust all here tonight love him I trust all here tonight would covet this crown a crown that is going to be rewarded rewarded to them that love him perhaps love him like Stephen unto death perhaps love him [00:27:06] in connection with your life here perhaps your work your career perhaps being passed by for the plumb job because of faithfulness to Christ perhaps foregoing night schools city and guilds or certificates because it falls on the meeting night you come along to the prayer meeting instead consequently you lose out in things of this world I think the Lord will forget that you think the Lord would pass it by no indeed you think the Lord would pass it by no indeed he would not oh let's covet these things dear brethren now turn with me please to the crown number five which is in Revelation chapter three [00:28:14] hmm well we know these words well enough don't we in chapter three verse 11 behold I come quickly hold on hold on behold I come quickly hold that fast which thou hast that no man take thy crown this is the Philadelphian crown isn't it how easily its luster is tarnished it's it implies doesn't it that there is a danger that there is a danger of somebody taking that [00:29:01] away from you hold that fast which thou hast that no man take thy crown so there is a possibility just before the end of having that crown snatched away you know these crowns they weren't crowns of gold they were crowns of leaves perhaps laurel leaves the picture is taken from the greek games isn't it how that the uh all the romans the gladiators or the the those who involved in the games if they won they had a crown a victor's crown placed upon their head and it was a little circle just a little circle of green leaves perhaps bay leaves or laurel leaves perhaps worth nothing in [00:30:07] itself but oh what pride what dignity the athlete came in from the arena and just as he went through the gates having then there was still the danger still the possibility that at the last minute that crown might be snatched from him let us look to these things uh one speaks about philadelphia and uh the philadelphia crown i remember mike johnson speaking here last time he said about he used to think that the brethren were philadelphia he acknowledged that

that was a proud thought not a not a worthy thought for a saint of god as a matter of fact a worthy thought for a saint of god is for us to be [00:31:03] down in the dust of confession before the lord as far as what we have achieved but nevertheless there is this this we are where we are found today and thank god for it in a in a circle where the truth is put forward and maintained and kept in the books in the bookcase on down here or at your home where you can get down the books and read that pure and blessed ministry of the word none of that uh secures us from this so the the lord says behold i come quickly hold that fast that no man take thy crown one corinthians chapter nine [00:32:05] so this is crown number six an incorruptible crown one corinthians chapter 9 verse 24 know ye not that they which run in a race run all but one receiveth the prize so run that he may obtain and every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown but we an incorruptible i therefore so run not as uncertainty [00:33:02] so fight i not as one that beateth the air but i keep under my body and bring it under subjection lest that by any means when i preach to others i myself should be accustomed here's the apostle paul with his eye on the end of the race his eye on the end of the games i suppose when the whole theater is shut down and all of the events are finished will there be any crowns on my brow will i carry any crowns out of this scene into that day of reward and display there is the danger there are many dangers on the way of losing the crown of course the first danger and i would speak very seriously about this to everyone here tonight [00:34:05] they've got there's a very great danger and this is number one danger of running in a race when you're not qualified when i was a lad in my teens i say this with some shame and embarrassment i spent a great deal of my time on the london dog tracks watching the greyhounds running most saturday afternoons i was at a london greyhound track and i used to like to watch how the dogs ran and i remember one occasion when the dogs were going round the circuit running for all their worth there was one dog saw a gap in the hedge just [00:35:03] as he went past he must have caught out of the corner of his eye he must have seen that gap in the hedge and instead of going round the circle he was across the middle in one bound and of course he got in home long before the others and everybody cheered you know the dog that has done it but he was disqualified cutting the corners disqualified for not running fairly in the race i suppose they could have been a dog running in that race who was out from the crowd and hadn't been enlisted wasn't on the judge's list might run very well might get the applause of the crowd but if you're not in the master's book you're wasting your time wasting your time [00:36:01] if you're not in the lord's book if you haven't been divinely enrolled the lord said to his own rejoice rather in this that your names are written in heaven what a wonderful thing to know that our names are written in heaven what a foolish thing it would be to spend the best part of our days down here running as christians when we've never even trusted christ as our savior it would be the most wasteful life that a person could possibly lead so that would be the first grave danger not being enlisted but the apostle paul says there are other dangers aren't there he says but one receiveth a prize he had his eye on the prize [00:37:02] remember those two who came to the lord and they said to the lord grant no it was a woman wasn't it a woman for her sons she said grant unto my two sons please grant unto my two sons that they may sit with thee the one on my right hand and the other on my left in my kingdom the lord looked at her as a matter of fact it says the disciples were indignant that she should ask such a favor for her sons the lord doesn't rebuke her no suggestion that the lord reproved her for her action in fact on the contrary there was a woman who coveted a high place in the kingdom of our lord jesus christ for her children the lord said you remember you know well what he said he said are you able to be baptized for the baptism that i am baptized [00:38:03] of are you able to drink of the cup that i am drink of and they said we are able he said he shall indeed be baptized for the baptism and i am baptized or he shall indeed drink of the cup he said but to sit on my right hand or on my left is not mine to give he doesn't stop there he says but it shall be given to him who my father appointed shall be given to him who my father appointed so he gave that woman i believe room for hope room for encouragement it didn't exclude any it didn't exclude the possibility of

you and me that place at the lord's right hand or his left i'm inclined to believe you know that the apostle paul got one of those places but perhaps the other one is still vacant go in for it [00:39:05] who knows all the grace of the lord what he is able to do and so he says every man that run up in a race one receives the prize so run that he may obtain is that how you're running or have you given up you're going to say well i'll complete the course but i'll never come in no he says run in such a way in order that you might obtain and every man he changes from the running you see the the figure here one moment it's the runner that's out in front and now he turns to the wrestler every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things i'm not talking about the fatties that you see on the box these days wrestling i'm talking about the men who were strong and lithe and subtle in their wrestling they were quick and fast and [00:40:07] energetic and how why were they like that because they said no i suppose to the fatty things the things that perhaps would tempt the senses but would make them lose the match and they said no to those things why because they had their eye on the crown they wanted to walk out of that stadium with that little green crown on their head the victor's crown the one that has won well may we have something of that desire to to win we're not we're not we're not competing with our brethren you know we're not competing with our brethren that isn't the thought at all we're striving against those things that would militate against us winning so he says [00:41:03] they do it to obtain a corruptible crown but we an incorruptible an incorruptible crown that they have not away so he says and so i keep under my body keep it under bring it in subjection lest that by any means when i preach to others i myself should be a cast away i suppose there is a possibility isn't there of a successful gospel preacher whose whose work the lord graciously blesses with saved souls i suppose there would be a danger of such a one getting proud and uh saying look what i've done look at the success i've done and all of the while going on like that whittling away whittling away his reward [00:42:08] that we might have an incorruptible crown he says lest by any means when i preach to others i myself should be a cast away preaching i suppose is happy work speak preaching without self-judgment is ruinous ruinous preaching to others seeking to put others right without letting the word of god find its home in our own hearts is ruinous well may we be preserved from it turn with me please to crown number seven in matthew chapter 27 [00:43:14] i suppose this is this this is one of the most magnificent crowns of all matthew chapter 27 verse 28 speaking about the lord jesus and they stripped him when they had plaited a crown of thorns they put it upon his head and a reed in his right hand they bowed the knee before him and mocked him saying hail king of the jews they stripped him and put on him a scarlet robe [00:44:02] king of the jews they stripped him put on him a scarlet robe of mockery scarlet you know as a kingly color they stripped him put on him this robe mocking him mocking him as a king and they plaited a crown of thorns that was this world's estimation of our lord put on his head a crown of thorns did e'er such love and sorrow meet for thorns compose so rich a crown blessed lord he took it all meekly it all meekly think of the dignity of our lord there as they fussed that crown of mockery [00:45:01] upon his blessed head think of the dignity he stood there took it all crown of thorns upon his head they put in his hand a reed you ever wondered why they put in his hand a reed you know what they used the reed for it was a measuring reed it was the reed that a conquering king laid out as measuring the land that he conquered they were mocking the lord as much as to say where is your kingdom now where is your conquest where is your victory he sung that hymn in weakness and defeat he won the mead and crown trod all our foes beneath his feet by being trodden down bless the conquest [00:46:04] slain our blessed lord there his robe of mockery crown of thorns upon his head the reed in his hand and they bowed the knee before him in mockery scoffing him saying hail king of the jews well you know they're going to bow the knee before him again and not in mockery but in compulsion he is worthy that every knee should bow to him one of the most blessed things that a person can do today when there is no compulsion when there is the blessed restraint or constraint the holy spirit one of the most blessed things that a man or a woman can do today is bow the knee to jesus rightly crowned is jesus who hath atonement made [00:47:07] hebrews

chapter 2 where we started for crown number eight verse 9 hebrews chapter 2 verse 9 we see jesus who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory we said at the outset you know that of these 10 crowns nine of them are Stephanas [00:48:04] the victor's crown the 10th one is diadem the kingly crown this this one number nine still Stephanas it's still the victor's crown it's still the crown of glory as the blessed lord carries everything through triumphantly and gloriously for god for god he's the victor walks through this scene carrying all before him in virtue of the work that he did on calvary's cross we see not yet all things put under him but we see jesus here he is adam dishonored god in the garden has dishonored him ever since every son of adam every child of adam since has dishonored god god in his blessed wisdom at the right moment brings forward the one exception to that the lord [00:49:06] jesus christ we see jesus made for a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death crowned with glory so what is glory what is glory not much glory down here not much glory outside of christ think of the lord mayor's banquet all the splendor there the chandeliers the feasting the trumpets and the costume the dress and all of that all going to be swept away it's it loses its glory by the fact that it's all going to be swept away it's all tinsel show but our blessed lord his glory is glory that endures forever and it says glory and honor [00:50:08] honor oh how how admirable is the glory and honor of the lord jesus finally in revelation chapter four we come to the 10th crown so revelation chapter 4 and verse 10 the 4 and 20 elders fall down before him before him that sat on the throne and worship him and cast their crowns before the throne saying thou art worthy oh lord [00:51:05] to receive glory and honor and power for thou hast created all things and for thy pleasure they are and were created i think i miscounted a little bit there that's number nine but i want to run number nine into number 10 which is in chapter 19 verse 12 here it is the first time you know you only get this word in revelation diadem it's the only place in the scriptures that it's found revelation chapter 19 verse 12 his eyes were as a flame of fire and on his head were many crowns diadema on his head were many crowns but i'd like you just to close with this precious thought that in chapter 4 you find crowns at his feet stefanus crowns that we were given to us according to his wisdom [00:52:06] and matchless grace crowns that the apostle wore crowns that he coveted and strove after and won what do we do with those crowns those stefanus crowns cast them at his blessed feet we come to chapter 19 we find on his blessed head crowns of glory this is diadem on his head crowns of glory a kingly crown the only one in this universe whoever will ever was ever is competent to bear that universal imperial crown of universal dominion well may our hearts enjoy bowing down to his blessed name in the meantime while we wait for his coming hymn number 39 [00:53:09] on his father's throne is seated christ the lord the living one all his toil on earth completed all his work for sinners done in the glory see him god's eternal son son of god his incarnation opened first the tale of grace son of man in new creation leader of a chosen race well may glory crown him in the ordered place hymn number 39