

The crown of glory

1 Peter 5:1-4 "To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the **crown of glory** that will never fade away."

This was written by Peter. Who walked away from Jesus at his hour of greatest need, who denied him to save his own skin. God is in the business in using failures.

The crown that we are now going to think about, the Crown of Glory.

Mistakenly considered exclusively the "pastor's, bishops or elders crown."

Because it has been referred to as the "elders crown," many begin to lose interest when we begin to talk about it.

They might say, "I am not a pastor and if I am not a pastor, then I will not be able to receive this crown, so I do not suppose there is much point in thinking about it."

I believe that if you will examine all the Scriptures related to this crown, you will find that it is erroneous to refer to it solely as a "pastor's crown."

Elders

Elder is not exclusively a reference to one who is old in age, but rather one who is mature in spiritual experience

Titus 1:6-9 "An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, **not quick-tempered**, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is **self-controlled**, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it."

1 Timothy 3:2-7 "Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, **self-controlled**, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap."

You may feel that you are cut out to be a patient Bible teacher. And say I do not know anything about feeding a flock. Jesus gave the great commission to All of his disciples - including you and me to "Go and teach"

Peter writes like a player coach. I'm a shepherd to he says. (It's the same word in welsh shepherd and minister) Living among the flock, staying with the flock, in and out of season, using the staff of wisdom, leading to safe pasture and protecting them from ravenous false teachers and leaders. Ultimately they are Gods sheep; we entrusted to each other.

Images

God likes his images - circus - performing lions, tigers, elephants, seals, horses, dogs, and even a few men - but never sheep - they are just to stupid. Is it any wonder being a Christian seeking to help and care for others is such a hard task sometimes?

We do not grow all the food we feed our families. We have not manufactured all the food that is set on the table, but we have a way of getting it. No Christian I have ever met has got all the answers, but we do know a man who does.

Sometimes people get the idea that when they if have fed the flock that is all there is to do to shepherd the people. Would mothers feel that way? If they just prepared the food for the family, would they feel that there was nothing more to do? Of course not. Feeding our families food is a minor part of all of the duties that fall upon the shoulders of you parents. There is the constant battle with the laundry bin, and the dust mite. How many parents could tell the number of sore toes you have tied up and the thumbs you have kissed and the encouragement you have given? Similarly just feeding the flock is a minor part of the whole thing. As in the family also in the church, it is all part of taking care of one another.

Practical Christianity

Open your eyes *and your ears* and recognise that all around you are some of God's dear flock, some of God's dear sheep that need tending. It is not only that they need feeding; they need tending. There are broken hearts that need to be bound up.

There are individuals who are bearing burdens that are too heavy for them and you and I as shepherds have the privilege of bearing one another's burdens and so fulfilling the law of Christ.

You and I have the opportunity of making it a little bit easier for some others. We are all responsible for tending the flock. By tending the flock of God as one of His shepherds, we have the opportunity of receiving the Crown of Glory.

Maybe someone has not been in the services for some time, and you have not even noticed it. If you have noticed it, you have not particularly cared. You have not gone to see what the trouble is.

Look about you. Is there someone who tends to become bitter about something? Do you shrug your shoulders and say, "Oh, well, they are just that way?" Do you take it to the Lord in prayer? That is part of the ministry of the shepherd-to say, "Lord, this dear person has bitterness in his heart and he does not realise it. Please do something to help them overcome this."

Another person may put more emphasis upon the things of the flesh than they do upon spiritual things. Perhaps there is someone, and the things of the flesh are taking a great demand on them. You see the things of the flesh; you see materialism griping their heart. You shrug your shoulders and you say, "They is not as interested in spiritual things as they used to be," and that is about all that is done about it. Wrong, pray, visit maybe - without a critical spirit. Encourage others by sound doctrine

Maybe you can't see anything you can do for others, we are all called to be examples. Being examples to the flock. Greek word tupos - an impression, the stamp made by a die, we are to pattern our lives on Jesus. We may say that we are not perfect, but like Paul able to say, "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ" 1 Corinthians 11:1

It will make you a target of criticism, even by fellow Christians, we all make mistakes and we will certainly be misunderstood. In the end what matters is am I approved by Christ or just applauded by men.

There is no reason why, if you are a child of God, you could not receive the Crown of Glory, the Crown of the shepherd. Certainly you do not need to look for an opportunity. It is on every side: All you need to do is to gently and patiently minister to those who are in need and you will have all you can do.

The crown of glory is not given necessarily for success but to those who hear at the judgement those lovely words, Matthew 25:23, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'" Or as the AV puts it "enter into the joy of the Lord"

God appreciates all you efforts and will say. Well done good and faithful servant! - Mature Christianity.

Who loves you in the Lord, who prays for you, who seeks for what is best for you - a recipient of the crown of glory - why not show them you appreciate it and thank them. Don't make them wait for their coronation to realise their efforts were not wasted. And any mature Christian can do that for others.

May we seek opportunities to ensure that we receive the Crown of Glory that will never fade away.

Homework

Who is your favourite Biblical failure that God

Noah who got drunk

Aaron who succumbed to idolatry

Samson who was a weak willed womanizer

David who was an adulterer

Gehazi who was greedy

Jonah who was a prejudiced prophet

Peter who denied his Lord

John Mark who deserted Paul and Barnabus

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