

# The Coming of the Crowning Day

by T. Austin-Sparks

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life of faithfulness and obedience to God, resulting in the attainment of the three crowns: righteousness, life, and glory.*

**Scripture:** Romans 5:3-5, 1 Corinthians 9:24-25, 2 Corinthians 4:17, Philippians 3:8-9, 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 2 Timothy 4:8, Hebrews 12:1-2, James 1:12, 1 Peter 5:4, Revelation 2:10

**Topics:** "Perseverance in Trials", "Crowns of Faithfulness"

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## Description

T. Austin-Sparks emphasizes the significance of the crowns offered by God to His servants, which symbolize victory and honor through trials and tribulations. He discusses three specific crowns: the Crown of Righteousness, which represents God's rightful place in our lives; the Crown of Life, awarded to those who endure temptation and remain faithful; and the Crown of Glory, given to those who selflessly serve the Lord. Each crown is tied to the challenges faced in life, highlighting the importance of perseverance and faithfulness in the face of adversity. Ultimately, Sparks encourages believers to strive for these crowns, recognizing the privilege of standing for Christ's Lordship in a challenging world.

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## Transcript

Peter, Paul, James and John all point us onward to the crowns which God offers to His servants. In each case the thought is related to an ordeal, whether it be a fight, a race or a trust. Three crowns are spoken of - the crown of righteousness, the crown of life and the crown of glory, and it seems that what is meant by crowning is the sealing of a course in triumph and with honour, the crown being a symbol both of victory and of honour.

### 1. The Crown of Righteousness

Righteousness is really a matter of God having His rights, that He shall be all in all, everything being centred in Him and given to Him. Unrighteousness is a disposition that we shall be the centre, and everything given to us, which is, in fact, satanic. Sin is the dethroning of God from His true place: righteousness is the bringing of God back into His place. That is what the cross has done.

Paul was a great champion of the righteousness which is established by the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and for that he fought a good fight. So far as we are concerned there is a challenge as to how far we will let go of our personal interests so that God should have His place. This is the battleground. It is a very real battle. So far as Paul was concerned he affirmed: "for whom I have suffered

the loss of all things, and do count them but refuse...", the issue being that he might be found in Christ, not having a righteousness of his own, but that which comes through faith in Christ. It has always been that by means of the people who have but one interest, namely that the Lord should have His rightful place, that the kingdom of Satan has been overthrown. That is righteousness and that is the battleground. The apostle says that there is a crown of righteousness at the end, awaiting those who have been willing to pour out their lives so that the rights of God might be secured for Him by the cross of the Lord Jesus.

## 2. The Crown of Life

This crown is also placed in the setting of difficulty, suffering and adversity. It is for the man who endures temptation (James 1:12). Whenever we triumph on the battlefield for the rights of God, there is a new release of His life. It is the objective of the enemy always to seek to quench that life. The Word tells us that we are all in the battle for life. Satan at the beginning schemed and worked in order that he should capture the race for himself and defeat God's ends. Whenever he has succeeded it has been by hindering men from having divine life; a life which is not only continuity of existence but a quality of holy life.

Satan is now out to quench you. As the Lord's child, the question arises as to just how much you will lay hold on the Lord's life and how much in faith you will resist the working of spiritual death. You get up in the morning wondering what is the matter with you. For no apparent reason you feel depressed, "dead". What are you going to do about it? Will you yield to it? Or will you put up a real fight in prayer? You will find that this is something more than just a passing bad feeling; you are in the battle for life.

It is the man who is approved who will receive the crown of life. How are you going to be approved? You have never seen a scholar approved who threw aside his test paper and said: "I can never do anything like that! It is no use trying!" or even one who said: "I cannot go on any more. I will give it up!" No. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10). Is it a battle? Well, do not give in. Is it a race? Do not drop out. Is it a trust? Do not surrender your trust. Go right through with it, and you will receive a crown of life.

## 3. The Crown of Glory

"When the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory" (1 Peter 5:4). Sometimes you can almost see that in people here and now. They have such an utterance of devotion to the Lord and such a complete selflessness of life that they carry around with them a radiance of God's glory. Put it the other way round and you will certainly agree that in people who are always occupied with themselves and taken up with their own troubles and difficulties, there seems to be a constant shadow. Such people bring nothing of brightness and glory with them. Glory is really the nature of righteousness and life manifesting itself.

It is very significant to notice the setting of Peter's words. He has just been talking to the under-shepherds, and telling them to feed the flock and to do it not for filthy lucre or the praise of men, but disinterestedly, denying themselves in the interests of the Lord and His people. It may be costly so to serve the Lord, Peter says, but if you do it with that spirit then at the end there will be a crown of glory for you from the chief Shepherd who is Himself crowned with glory.

So there is righteousness - God having His place in all things. And there is life - victory in His name with His own eternal life regnant in us. And finally there is glory - the life of the Lord manifesting itself in fullness in a glorious outburst of triumph over sin and death. These three crowns, these three seals, these

three marks that we have triumphed, these are what the Lord has set His heart upon to give to us who are redeemed by the blood of Christ and indwelt by His Spirit. May our hearts also be set on obtaining them so that He may find satisfaction in us, through grace.

Let us make no mistake, though, that these will not come easily to us. They are the fruits of battle, of fierce battle and very often of inward battle. I sometimes think that it might be easier if our foes were more outward and the battle objective, easily discernible. It may be that in some cases believers are cast into prison and tried for the sake of the Lord's name, but in any case we are all put into positions where the responsibility for the testimony of Jesus are worked out in us, and the principle of faithfulness unto death operates in our case. When the thing to be overcome is inside, when it is I myself who must be slain, then it may be ever harder. This, then, is the moment to look away to Christ on the throne and to know that He has provided a victory which we can daily enjoy.

There is a serious business on hand for the Church. It is nothing less than the fulfilment of her vocation, the accomplishment of her course and the preserving intact of her trust. We are called to stand for the absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ in a hostile world. What a privilege to be called to stand for those sovereign rights, and then what a wonderful prospect to be offered crowns for so doing. We want Christ to have all the crowns. He wants to share crowns with us. He has been "crowned with glory and honour"; He calls us to be partners together with Him at the coming of His Crowning Day.

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