

Founder & Senior Pastor: Dr. David Anderson
 Bridgeway Community Church
 Series: “CROWNS OVER FROWNS”
 June 2, 2024

CROWNS OVER FROWNS:
“The Crown of Glory”

I. SERMON INTRODUCTION

Praise the Lord, Bridgeway!

Sooo, how were those Beignets last week? :-) Let's thank **Ice Queens** for serving our Owings Mills Campus. Also, for those who went to their location in Baltimore, thanks for meeting me there. It was good to see you.

For those of you who have no idea what I am talking about, please check out last week's sermon on YouTube. (Title is “Crown of Righteousness”)

And, one last time, Bridgeway, I FORGIVE YOU! (*That will make sense when you watch the sermon :-)*)

TODAY ends our 3 week series on “**Crowns Over Frowns.**”

Question:
Have you enjoyed the series?

NEXT WEEK is our “End of the Year Wrap up” Celebration!

Can you believe we are at the end of the ministry year already?

We preach VISION around here 3 times per year.

- Every year we lay out our new theme in **September for our Vision Sunday** (the 2nd Sunday of September).
- Then again in **January for a half-time check in** with our **State of the Church Address**

- And Then again at the end of the ministry year, which is next week, “**The End of the Year Wrap Up**” the 2nd week of June, right before Father’s Day.
 - *Speaking of Father’s Day*, **Pastor David Heiliger** will be bringing the Father’s Day message here in Columbia, MD. And **Pastor Steve Hardnett** will be giving the Father’s Day message in Owings Mills.
 - This Summer’s Sermon Series will be called a “*Summer of Prayer*”
 - Our clergy and bible teachers will focus on teaching the Lord’s prayer, line by line, beginning with OUR FATHER” on Father’s Day with Pastors Heiliger & Hardnett.

Today’s Sermon:
“THE CROWN OF GLORY”

Let’s pray...

Our Key Verse from scripture this morning is **1 Peter 5:4** which says...

- “*And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the CROWN OF GLORY that will never fade away.*” (**1 Peter 5:4 NIV84**)

A crown that will never fade away. That’s pretty cool!

Question:
What is this crown for?

The Crown of Glory is for Shepherds who care for others.

Basically, it is a crown for caring!

The broader context around the verse teaches us that there are Shepherds who care. There are elders who care. There are spiritual leaders who care.

- Then, of course, there are people who just don’t care!
- There are leaders who don’t care for or care about others
- There are leaders, pastors, and preachers who only care about themselves.

- There is no eternal crown in heaven for *non-caring* and *non-humble* leaders.
- Remember, crowns are eternal rewards that believers will receive for their good works on the earth

REVIEW: There are 5 to 7 crowns in the New Testament where the bible talks about us, as believers, receiving rewards in heaven for the Christian life we lived here on earth. There is the Crown of Life for those who PERSEVERE under trials There is the Crown of Righteousness for those who ENDURE the Christian race of life to the very end.

Now, we see that there is a crown that is actually connected to other people.

When we interact with people, care for them, and lead them to Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, God has a reward for that – THE CROWN OF GLORY!

Hearing the name of this crown (GLORY), you would think that the “Crown of Glory” would be for, like, *praising or worshiping* God.

You would think that the “Crown of Glory” would be for, like, *lifting up the presence of God* in an amazing worship service where the *shekinah glory falls down upon the people*.

But no, the Crown of Glory is truly about serving other people.

For those who don’t take glory for themselves here on earth will be rewarded with the “crown of glory” when they get to heaven. *God gets the glory when we humbly show up in other people's stories in His name!*

Sermon in a Sentence:

God gets the glory when we show up in other people's stories with caring hearts.

The crown of glory is truly about how we treat other people.

Let’s read the entire context...

- *1 “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: 2 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; 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.*

4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the CROWN OF GLORY that will never fade away. 5 Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.' 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." (1 Peter 5:1-7 NIV84)

II. EXPOSITION OF 1 PETER 5:1-7

Peter is the writer and he is giving a sermon, a pep talk, a word of wisdom to those who are in church leadership. He believes he is qualified to teach this message for three reasons found in verse 1. He is a fellow elder or leader. He is a witness to the suffering of Jesus Christ (which I am sure he reflects on since he denied Christ three times right before Jesus was crucified). He will also be present on the last day when the glory of Christ is revealed.

Basically, Peter is saying: *"I walked with Christ in the past. I am serving him now. And I will be with him in the future."*

Based on this, Peter is saying, please listen to my sermon!

Peter gives a 3-point sermon on *leadership* in general, *shepherding* in particular.

This is what he says...

1. *Care For Those Under Your Care* (1 Peter 5:1-4)

Peter is saying, "be a care-giver." As a leader, you don't use people for your personal gain, you serve people for their gain. As a spiritual leader, you are called to care about people as human beings and as precious sheep who you have been given the precious responsibility to shepherd.

A good shepherd *feeds, leads, and tends to the needs* of his or her sheep.

Let Me Say It Again:

A good shepherd *feeds, leads, and tends to the needs* of his or her sheep.

This is what good spiritual leadership is all about...

A. FEEDS (*Teaching*)

Teaching the Bible in a way that is digestible and practical. **1 Peter 1:25** says...

- *But the Word of the Lord remains forever... (ESV)*

Not all self-help books endure forever! They are often time-stamped and quickly become irrelevant. But the Word of the Lord remains forever and from generation to generation it endures and will continue to feed your soul

That's why it's important you learn how to feed yourself from God's Word! And your teachers here at Bridgeway want to give you a good, practical, and digestible diet of Scriptural teaching. Earlier in this sermon, Peter writes...

- *Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk [that is, the Word of God], so that by it you may grow up in your salvation... (1 Peter 2:2 NIV84)*

Now we need three things to grow in the Lord: the *Word* of God, the *Spirit* of God, the *People* of God. And a good spiritual leader not only shepherds by feeding, but by *leading*...

B. LEADS (*Directing*)

This means leaders who are giving direction and influencing people in a way that is for God's glory and their gain. Not leading them for your personal gain and adulation, but to strengthen their faith and elevate their walk with the Lord.

So, good leaders *lead*, *feed*, and *tend to the needs* of the flock...

C. TENDS TO THE NEEDS (*Caring*)

This means to *care*. Showing true care and concern for those under your leadership...

- Shout out – to our BCC Caregivers Ministry
- Shout out – to Pastor William Jin & Rachael Maruca
- Shout out – to our praying Elders & ECW
- Shout out – to our Clergy and Ministry Champions

Question:
Are you a good spiritual leader?

- Are you a good spiritual leader in your household, in your neighborhood, in your life group, in your ministry, in your department, in your business?
- Wherever God has given you influence to lead, this message applies.
- Wherever God has allowed you to have *a voice, a platform, or influence* is exactly the place where He is expecting you to serve others as you the Lord serve Christ.

When Peter exhorts the spiritual leaders to be caring, he also tells them how NOT to lead. He basically tells his readers not to serve with the WRONG MOTIVATIONS.

Check it out...

Just like God wants us to give of our resources with the right motivation, he wants us to serve others with the right motivation, too.

Question:
What are the right motivations and what are NOT the right motivations?

We are to serve others because:

- A. WE WANT TO, NOT *because we have to* (v. 2a)
- B. WE ARE EAGER, NOT *because we're greedy* (v. 2b)
- C. WE WANT TO EXEMPLIFY SERVANT LEADERSHIP, NOT *because we want to dominate and/or preside over others* (v. 3)

In other words, this is caring leadership because of DESIRE not just DUTY!

- When leadership only feels dutiful it slowly ceases to be beautiful.
- But when serving others is rightly motivated, it feels joyful and honorable.

So far in Peter's 3-point sermon, we have learned point 1 which is to "*Care for those under your care.*" And we learned that good leaders FEED, LEAD, and TEND TO OTHERS IN NEED.

When we do this with the right motivation, there is a divine reward that will be awarded to good shepherds. The Crown of Glory!

Sermon in a Sentence:

God gets the glory when we show up in other people's stories with caring hearts

The 2nd point to Peter's sermon for those who are shepherding is this...

2. Cultivate A Culture Of Multigenerational Submission & Humility Because It Invites God's Mighty Hand To Lift You Up (1 Peter 5:5-6)

- 5 *“Young men, in the same way, be submissive to those who are older. All of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, ‘ God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble; 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.” (1 Peter 5:5-6 NIV84)*

Those who are elders (over 40/50/60 years old?) are to be examples of care, humility, and godliness.

But notice now that Peter is *not* just talking about Elders in the context of church leadership offices. He shifts by talking to younger people about how to relate to older people, in general.

- Older people are to be *examples*...
- Younger people are to be *honoring*...(and submissive)
- Older people are to be *humble*.
- Older and younger people are to be *mutually submissive* to one another and *humble toward one another*.

I love this idea of mutuality!

Not dominance. Not coercion!

This is not the idea that, *“I’m older so submit to me whether you like it or not. Go sit down and wait your turn!”* This is not the idea of the older suppressing the growth and development of the younger out of fear, jealousy, or feeling like your value is ebbing away as you get older.

Getting older can be a real fear for those who are aging. If we are not careful, it can unearth some feelings of ill will and cause us to undermine our success and successors...

There is also not this idea of, *“You’re too old and out of touch so go sit down, old man/old lady, and watch me work.”* There is not this idea of manipulating to bypass the older leader to short circuit the hand of blessing that he or she must give.

There is not this impatience that causes one to dishonor the head that God has placed above them. This is a real temptation for younger leaders who rise up and want to take power away from the previous generation instead of waiting patiently for God’s timing.

Remember, Peter says...

- *“Humble yourselves...and He will lift you up in due time” (1 Peter 5:6 NIV84)*

There is the cultivation of a culture where there is mutual respect multi-generationally. There is a humility within the community of generations. The younger (under 40/50/years old?) ones are to submit, serve, and learn.

Together, all are to submit to one another. We *need* each other multi-generationally.

This is why I love Bridgeway!

- **E.G. Tech Team** - The young people behind the cameras (Way to go, Larry Mickens! Way to go, Tiaa Barnes!)
- **E.G. Clergy Team** - Our youngest clergy member is 29 years old. Our oldest clergy member is 76 years old
- **E.G. Cute Dog Video** - Check out this cute video of leadership with the older dog helping the younger pup. It is so cute. The older dog is so patient. :-)
<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/HxcFPtPy8tFdT1V4/?mibextid=xfxF2i>

Let’s review what we’ve said so far...

1. ***Care For Those Under Your Care (1 Peter 5:1-4)***
2. ***Cultivate A Culture Of Multigenerational Submission & Humility Because It Invites God’s Mighty Hand To Lift You Up (1 Peter 5:5-6)***

And lastly...

3. *Cast All Your Cares On To Christ Because Cares For You* (1 Peter 5:7)

This comes from verse 7, where Peter writes...

- 7 “*Cast all of your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*” (1 Peter 5:7 NIV84)

This was the Bible verse on my very first business card as a licensed minister. 1 Peter 5:7.

I used to hand them out like water to let strangers know that God cared for them, and so did I.

Main Point:

Peter wants to remind us all that Jesus Christ is the Chief Shepherd

- HE is the Good Shepherd.
- Jesus is the one who can handle ALL of our cares!
- Peter says, “*Cast ALL your anxieties on Him*”

Not some. How many? ALL!

- Your pastor can’t handle ALL your anxiety!
- Your life group leader can’t handle ALL your anxiety!
- Your therapist can’t handle ALL your anxiety!
 - *Therapists need therapists! Just FYI!*
- Your youth leader can’t handle ALL your anxiety!
- Your sibling can’t handle ALL your anxiety!
- Your best friend can’t handle ALL your anxiety!
- Your spouse can’t handle ALL your anxiety!

- If that were true, we would have such a high divorce rate! We all have multiple problems and it takes multiple people and resources to handle the complexity of our human condition. If you think getting married will fix all your problems, you are setting yourself and others up for disappointment and misery.

ONLY the CHIEF SHEPHERD can handle ALL of your CARES!

Question:

What are you anxious about these days?

What “cares” are you on your shoulders right now?

Friends, God *can* handle it. The Bible says...

- *“Do not be anxious about anything, but pray about everything”*
(**Philippians 4:6 NIV84**)

It promises that the PEACE OF GOD which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (see **Philippians 4:7**)

As he ends the Book of First Peter, the apostle Peter has given us a 3-point sermon when discussing the Crown of Glory.

1. Care For Those Under Your Care (1 Peter 5:1-4)

- **Practically Speaking:** *Let's be good shepherds who Feed, Lead, and tend to other's Needs.*

2. Cultivate A Culture Of Multigenerational Submission & Humility Because It Invites God's Mighty Hand To Lift You Up (1 Peter 5:5-6)

- **Practically Speaking:** *Let's all be as humble and submissive to one another as we can, multi-generationally, so that God will lift us all up in due time.*

3. Cast All Your Cares On To Christ Because He Cares For You (1 Peter 5:7)

- **Practically Speaking:** *Let's point each other to the chief shepherd who can handle all of our cares and anxieties.*

Sermon in a Sentence:

God gets the glory when we show up in other people's stories with caring hearts

LEADER HIGHLIGHT: One specific leader I'd like to highlight who I believe feeds, leads, and cares well; who is humble and submissive; who is a surrendered man... and that is **Pastor Dave Michener**. He's a man I really wanted to lift up today. Bridgeway, you are so blessed to have the kind of people like Dave Michener who embody good shepherding. And I am blessed that I don't have to serve alone, but get to serve with a community of caregivers who care for you, care for me, and care for the Lord!

III. SERMON CONCLUSION

In conclusion...

Question:

Guess what we get to do with all of the crowns and rewards we receive in heaven?

Whether it is the "Crown of Life" for perseverance, the "Crown of Righteousness" for endurance, or the "Crown of Glory" for caring for others, we get to do something absolutely amazing with these awesome crowns!

Check it out in **Revelation 4**...

In heaven, all these creatures are gathered together worshiping Him who is on the throne. And it says:

- *8b "Day and night they never stop saying: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.' 9 Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, 10 the twenty four elders [all believers are represented here] fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their CROWNS before the throne and say: 11 'You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.'"*
(Revelation 4:8b-11 NIV84)

[INVITE THE MUSICIANS OUT]

The beautiful thing about receiving any crowns, rewards, or awards in glory is that we will have the beautiful honor of casting our crowns at his feet in worship.

I want to have as many crowns and jewels as I can so that I can have something to bring the Lord in worship. There's an old hymn called "Crown Him With Many Crowns" that says...

- *“Crown him with many crowns / The Lamb upon the throne / Hark how the heavenly anthems drown all music but its own / Awake, my soul and sing / Of him who died for thee / And hail him as thy matchless King through all eternity!”*

That hymn was a classic when I would hear the choral ensemble at Moody Bible Institute sing it. There’s also a christian rock band named Casting Crowns

When asked about the name of their group, their band leader said in an interview that their group was leading praise and worship in Florida, and they were reading Revelation 4 and singing a Chris Tomlin worship song that says, *“WE FALL DOWN... We lay our crowns at the feet of Jesus...”*

And that’s exactly what we do when we finally see Him. We’ll fall down and worship Him with whatever gifts He has given to us.

SPECIAL SONG REQUEST: *As we close, there is a special song that I requested to close out the series. It is called “Take Me To The King.”*

- One day friends, as believers we will all be at the throne of His grace to worship King Jesus...
- Bring all of your cares, all of your anxieties, all of your problems and lay them at His feet right here and now...

And if you are faithful to him, one day in heaven we will be able to lay all of our “crowns” at his feet in worship!

Amen & Amen!

[SHAUNA sings at COLUMBIA; SANORA sings at OMR]