

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

ROYAL HOMAGE.

A Sermon

DELIVERED BY

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“And cast their crowns before the throne.”—Revelation. iv. 10.

THERE are a great many things we should like to know about heaven. Our curiosity has been excited full often to ask a vast number of questions, but after being excited, it has never been gratified, for God's word has told us little about the details of that happy realm. I suppose the Lord thought it better to leave the future shrouded in mystery that we might think more of the common every-day duties of the life that now is. Hence the revelation he has made directs our faith to himself and to his dear Son, and does not distract our attention with descriptions of scene and circumstance into which our imagination would fondly rise. He has thus saved up the details about the next world until we get there, to make surprises of them, so that heaven might be all the brighter because it so infinitely exceeds anything that we had conceived. We are not told, for instance, where heaven is. There have been very learned conjectures about certain stars and constellations, which are supposed to be the centre of all the celestial system, and therefore may be the centre of the universe; and, therefore, the place where the throne of God is absolutely located, and the presence of God peculiarly revealed. When all is said, it is only “it may be,” and it is just as unlikely as it is likely. I regard such speculations as star-gazing to be idle and unseemly, impertinent and unprofitable—a pure waste of time, and perhaps worse. We are not told anything even about the social communion of heaven. We do know, or at least, we think we have abundant reason for believing, that saints know each other, that they are not like men in a great mass, indistinct and undistinguishable, but that there is fellowship among the saints, that Abraham is Abraham, and Isaac is Isaac, and Jacob is Jacob, and the redeemed ones from among men sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as such, in the kingdom of God. The New Jerusalem

is said to have its streets, and streets imply intercourse, but there is little said about that—just an outline, as it were, such as an artist might make with charcoal—none of the filling up and the bright colours. We are told little of the food of heaven, or whether there is any—whether the bodies need aliment to feed on for their nourishment, and nectral draughts for their refreshment; albeit, when the manna once dropped from heaven men did eat angels' food. And we are told little of the celebrations of heaven, whether the worship will be uniform, or whether there will be certain days joyous above the rest, high days, feasts and festivals, jubilees, and glorious times of the unveiling of God's presence in sevenfold splendour, when the harps shall pour forth more melodious tunes! Of all these things we should like to have known something, but our heads cannot hold much. One thing would have pushed out another. Passages like this we could not spare—"The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." Concerning such a sentence I will venture to say every single syllable in the verse is worth more than whole volumes about heaven might have been, though the Spirit of God might have inspired them—worth more for present and practical purpose to us who are yet among the sons of men. Are there any dear brethren who understand the Book of Revelation, the Book of Ezekiel, and the Book of Daniel? I am pleased to hear it. But if the Lord will help me to understand Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, I shall be perfectly satisfied to go on preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, for I think I shall get up to them by-and-by in their knowledge of prophecy and mystery, when I come into clearer light and see the Master face to face. Meanwhile, there are sinners to be saved. We must go about doing this soul-saving business in his name, with the simple means put before us in the gospels and epistles, which we are enabled to understand by the Spirit of God through our own personal experience of the truth revealed.

Now, to-night, let us take a glimpse, just a glimpse, within the veil, such as our text affords us. We find the twenty-four elders (who, without straining the passage, we might conceive to be, and who doubtless are, the representatives of the church), sitting on their thrones before the august Majesty of God, with crowns upon their heads; and they are represented as casting those crowns before the throne of God.

From this sublime picture I gather two things:—first, *that these representative men, representatives of the church of God, will all be crowned—they are crowned heads*; and secondly, *that they all cast their crowns before the throne*. When we have talked of these things, we will gather a few lessons of practical moment for this present life.

I. Brethren, THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN ARE ALL CROWNED. I say, "all," for these represent the whole. The four-and-twenty elders are represented as saying, "Thou hast redeemed us out of every people, and language, and nation," so that they represent all. It may be that there are degrees in glory. It may be that there are none. I do not attempt to solve the question. But if there are, yet there is no degree below a crowned head in heaven. All the saints have their crowns.—"A crown

of life that fadeth not away" is the very lowest portion of the very least saint who is admitted into glory.

Now, how is it they come to be crowned? Our answer will be six-fold.

They are all kings *Dei Gratia*. You know how our monarchs like to put it on their coins, "*Dei Gratia*"—"by the grace of God," though. I don't know with what propriety; for on the whole about as graceless a lot of individuals as are to be found anywhere are kings and emperors and all hereditary rulers. If one were to take promiscuously half-a-dozen kings and half-a-dozen paupers, I think in respect to moral character the paupers would probably not have the most cause to blush. And I am sure there is a larger per-centage of the poor on earth than of the richest among men who are heirs of the kingdom of heaven. But what they take for themselves as being by the grace of God, everyone in heaven may say of himself truly. They are all kings by the grace of God. Ah! ask them and they will tell you it was the sovereign will of God alone that set them apart; it was the Lord, their heavenly Father, who chose them from among the sons of men that they should be his sons and daughters; and it was the grace of God which first led them to know anything about reigning with Christ. Grace came and enlightened their understanding; grace influenced their wills; grace changed their affections; grace made them to be heirs of heaven, and they will tell you it was grace that kept them where grace brought them; that they did not merely begin in the spirit to be afterwards made perfect in the flesh, but that as grace was Alpha, it was Omega. The Spirit of God which wrought in them mightily, made them diligent in every good word and work, and willing to be and to do according to God's good pleasure. And every crowned head there will tell you that the very last act of faith before he entered into fruition, was as much based upon grace and as much the fruit of grace as was the first act of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is not a king in heaven that has his crown on any other terms than this, "by the sovereign grace of God."

But, though it may seem astonishing, in the second place they are all kings by hereditary descent. "How?" say you, "They were born in sin and shapen in iniquity; they are of the fallen Adam, heirs of eternal misery." Quite so, but they have been born again, and it is in their new nature that they are before the throne of God. They have been "begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." "Beloved, know ye not that they are the sons of God," and though "it doth not yet appear what they shall be," yet are they truly God's sons, and, therefore, when Christ shall appear they also will appear with him in glory. There are none in heaven but God's sons. The angels, it is true, are there, and they are his ministering servants; but there are none of the human race there that are merely servants. They are all sons. Some were prodigal sons, and some at times had got into the bad temper of the elder brother in the parable; but they are all sons, and they are there because they are sons. They have come to their crown by inheritance, as much as any Prince of Wales ever succeeded in this country to his crown. There is born in the image of God's Son a new and peculiar race with heaven entailed

upon them, an entail which hell can never spoil. They are kings, then, by hereditary descent.

But, thirdly, they are kings by another right. They are kings by marriage alliance. There are some that come to royal dignity by being affianced and betrothed to kings. There is many a crowned head that would not have been so by descent, but has come to be so by being given in wedlock to a royal consort. Now the Church of God is the Bride, the Lamb's wife, and, because he is crowned, therefore he will have it that his church shall be crowned too. He gave her himself; he gave her everything that he had; he relinquished heaven for her sake. He suffered on earth for her, bled on the cross for her, went into the grave for her, and now he will make her partaker of all he has. As he took all her shame, so she shall take her share in all his glory. He went to the cross for her, and she shall come to the crown with him. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, because they are one with Jesus. Because he lives they live also; and because he as the only begotten Son stands ever in his Father's love, therefore do they stand in the same.

But fourthly (and you will think surely that all the rights in this world meet in these crowned heads, and so they do), they are kings by right of conquest and of victory. A crown should signify, and did signify in the olden times, struggling, battling, and contending. The first crowns, I suppose, were given to those who were the strongest men and had fought best in the day of battle. Well, we have already said that the crowns in heaven are all the gifts of grace, and yet at the same time it is true that those who have the crowns have fought for them: "These are they that came out of great tribulation." It was not that tribulation procured them their crowns; still it seems to be a rule—the usual rule in God's church—that those of his servants who are to be rewarded should work, and those who are to be crowned should fight. At any rate, if you and I suppose we shall get the crown without contending for it, we shall find ourselves mistaken. Canaan belonged to the Israelites: it was theirs by a covenant of salt; but they had to fight for it, and dispute every inch with the Hivite and the Canaanite and the Jebusite, and so must we. We shall get to heaven by God's grace, but we must go on pilgrimage to get there. There is no chariot to carry us all along the road; we must foot it; we must climb the Hill of Difficulty, and go down to the Valley of Humiliation, and he that endureth to the end the same shall be saved. Master Bunyan's picture of the bright spirits on the top of the palace who sang, "Come in! Come in! Eternal glory thou shalt win"—would not have been complete if he had not pictured the armed men at the bottom of the stairs who stood there to keep back any who sought to enter the house—would not have been complete without the description

of the man of the grave countenance. The man with the ink-horn said, "Set down thy name," and when he had put down his name, he drew his sword and fought desperately until he seemed to die, yet by-and-by he was seen on the top of the palace for he had won the day.

"Lord, I must fight if I would reign,
Oh bear me safely through."

They are kings then, because they have fought with sin and with temptations. They are not crowned without having contended for the victory ; and you know how sharply some of them have had to contend, even unto blood have they resisted, striving against sin. Yea, the brightest and fairest of them have had to bear the brunt of fiercest persecutions, to fight with lions, to die at the stake, and through sufferings that cannot be told have they entered into rest.

Then, fifthly, the crowned heads in heaven have their crowns, and their crowns befit them well, because of the nobility of their character. If honours were fairly distributed among men, we should not so often see the meanest spirit in the loftiest place. It is ever one of the hardships of this life. Of this the wise man complained—that he had seen servants on horseback and masters walking in the mire—the great spirits in the world in rags and the mean spirits clothed in scarlet—the men that deserved well lying at the gate licked by dogs, and the men that deserved ill faring sumptuously every day and clothed in scarlet and fine linen. Now it is not so in heaven. There, in heaven, nobility is given to the noble, and to the upright in character the reward of the righteous ; for though it is not of debt, but of grace, yet the pure in heart shall see God, and they that are undefiled in the way shall inherit the blessing. O how bright those spirits are that are crowned ! The crowns do well demean them : they are without fault before the throne of God. There is no infirmity about their character or imperfection about their constitution. If you should dwell with them a thousand ages you would never hear them speak an idle word, and if you could inspect their hearts with omniscient eyes you would not read therein one godless thought. They are sanctified perfectly, delivered from every taint of corruption, and now they are like their Lord himself in holiness of character. Well should they be crowned whose character has thus been made glorious by the work of the Spirit of God within them !

And, once more, they have another right to their crowns, because those crowns represent real possessions. There are little princes in this world whose principalities are about as large as ordinary kitchen gardens, and they account themselves very great indeed. The man of great esteem is like John R. in English history, who had not a foot of ground. The less the man's possession, often the man's greater

self-possession. But in heaven there are no pauper princes. There they are rich to all the intents of bliss. They have their crowns, but they have their kingdoms. All things are theirs—the gift of God—and God is theirs and Christ is theirs. They are clothed with honour and majesty—not outwardly only but inwardly—and they have all the concomitants that should go with royal dignity. Seemeth it not, however, like a dream, as one thinks it over and tries to realise it! Let us pause one moment and follow the reverie, to which a well assured faith gives substantial reality. You and I, if we believe in Jesus, will soon sit with Jesus, where we shall be crowned! We are poor to-day, obscure, and ignoble: we have no influence, it may be, and possibly are of little account among our fellows; but within a short time, perhaps ere this year or even this month shall have run out its anxious days, we shall be with crowns upon our heads spiritually. We shall be before the throne in spirit, and then by and by when the Lord shall come, we shall in body as well as in spirit sit there raised from the dead and made perfect for ever, enjoying the rank of kings and priests unto our God, for we shall reign for ever and ever! Can you conceive of it? Bunyan represents Mercy as laughing in her sleeve. Truly, as we think this over, one feels inclined to laugh for very joy of heart. Shall *I* wear a *crown*? Those who were despised and rejected of men and counted fools—will they be kings? Those saints that were made to lie in prison for their Master's sake, and no names of ignominy were thought base enough for them—will they be kings? Will the angels be courtiers, while these humble ones, raised and changed, but yet the same, sit as kings in the midst of the courts of heaven, there to abide for ever? It will be even so! Come! If the head aches to-night, let the reflection that it will soon be crowned be a consolation to you. Come! If you have had much to worry you throughout the day, let the sweet thought that you will soon be where not a wave of trouble shall ever cross your peaceful breast, be a rich consolation to you. There is a throne in heaven that no one can occupy but you, and there is a crown in heaven that no other head can wear but yours, and there is a part in the eternal song that no voice can ever compass but yours, and there is a glory to God that would be wanting if you did not come to render it, and there is a part of infinite majesty and glory that would never be reflected unless you should be there to reflect it! Wherefore comfort one another with this, that ere long you shall be there! Because the grace of God has elected you, you have an hereditary right through the new birth; you have a marriage right by reason of union with Christ; you have rights of conquest as a warrior; you shall have the rights of character, for your character will be perfect ere long; and you have the rights of possession, for God has given you all that which goes with the crown.

II. Well, now, secondly we come to a department of our subject which seems more easy to believe. Though they all have crowns, **THEY ALL CAST THEM BEFORE THE THRONE.** We can well conceive that ; for to many of us that would be the first impulse of our minds. If ever we get to those sacred heights we will do adoring homage, and if ever we receive any honours we will present them to him to whom all the honour is due. Why, then, ask ye now, do they cast their crowns at the foot of the throne ? There are four answers which may very properly be given.

The first, no doubt, is for the reason of solemn reverence. They see more of God than we do, therefore are they more filled with awe and thrilled with admiration. From what we—who worship, as it were, in his outer courts, and get but distant glimpses of his majesty and his mercy—from what we at present know of God we should be constrained to say, “Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory for thy mercy and thy truth’s sake.” But where God more gloriously reveals himself, and where his attributes are more clearly seen, no doubt there is more overwhelming emotion, and more intense reverence ; hence at once, and of spontaneous impulse, the soul pays all the homage that it can before the throne of God. Methinks it would seem to them as though it could not be that they could sit with crowned heads in the presence of the King of kings. That head that once was crowned with thorns, when we see it adorned with the royal diadem, surely we should not bear to be crowned in the presence of such an one ! For what are we, and what is our Father’s house ? God has done all he can for us, yet what shall we be as compared with him, the infinite and eternal ! and as compared with Christ, the ever-blessed who died for us ? O, our reverence will always make us feel in the lowliest state of self-abasement at the foot of the throne !

Moreover, they are no doubt actuated by sincere humility. Reverence to God always brings a humble opinion of one’s own self. Here below, beloved, we sometimes murmur at the divine will when his appointments cross and foil our inclinations. Were we more humble and less self-opinionated we should utterly distrust ourselves, and put implicit confidence in him. We should at once cast our wills at the Lord’s feet. Here we set up our own opinion in opposition to the revealed will of God. We should not do that if we knew ourselves, but we should lay our judgment at the foot of the throne. But up there they judge righteous judgments, and, knowing God and beholding his glory, they shrink into nothing and lay themselves at his feet—much more do they renounce their will. They feel, they know, they confess, that any honour or desert they have has been obtained through the grace of God—that they must fully, heartily, unreservedly ascribe to that grace that which they dare not arrogate to themselves.

Doubtless, also, they do this for another reason, namely, because of their profound gratitude. They bless God that they are where they are, and what they are. If you ask those before the throne, they will tell you that not only do they owe their crowns to grace, but every single gem in their crowns. They have not one single star in their diadem but what the Lord put there; and there is not a single sparkle of any crystal sapphire that is in their coronet but what they may trace the flashing gleam to the sovereign grace of God. Therefore, how could they keep anything to themselves? Gratitude constrains them to lay their crowns where their crowns came from.

And, above all, they are actuated by intense affection. They love their Lord, and loving their Lord they do anything to adore him. Self-denial is the name we give on earth to that grace which not only ignores but consumes one's self in the fervor of zeal, in the passion of love. What word would answer for the like?—though the greater vehemence of those in heaven I cannot tell. They are glad to fling their richest goods, their choicest trophy, their most cherished treasure, at his feet: they love him so. Here we love ourselves, and cherish some fond attachment to our fellow-creatures also, and our hearts are stolen away by some earthly object, but there they love God intensely, continually, undividedly, without a flaw, and consequently they cast everything down before him, and they lay their crowns at his feet.

As we see what they do, let us consider what we should do, and anticipate what we shall do when we join that august assembly. I would like to have a bright crown, bright with many gems of souls turned to righteousness, for they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as stars for ever; but I think the sweetness will be to have a bright crown to lay at his feet, not for the sake of wearing it but giving it, if thereby a saved one might give honour to his Saviour. You will notice they do not attempt to put the crown upon the Lord's head. No, we cannot add to his splendour! He is infinitely glorious! Without creatures, without servants, without saints, he is glorious: we cannot add to his glory; we can but lay our crowns at his feet. We cast them at the feet, though we cannot put them on the monarch's head. And would not we wish to have as bright a crown as possible, for the sake of placing it there. O, fight, thou soldier of Christ, and bear hardness that thy crown may be a precious one. Pray, minister of God, that you may preach with all your heart and soul and strength, that your diadem may be a sparkling one. Dear sister in your tent, or dear brother out in the battle, be valiant for God; for we all agree in this, that, whatever the crown shall be, at his dear feet we cast it.

III. Now I come to the practical lessons which these simple facts should teach us.

There is at first sight a simple, obvious reflection, which will readily occur to the thoughtful hearer. By this text, we can know whether we are on the way to heaven or not ; because no man goes to heaven to learn for the first time heavenly things. We must be scholars in Christ's school here, or else we cannot be taken into Christ's college above. If you and I should walk into some great cathedral where they were singing, and ask to be allowed to sing in the choir, they would ask whether we had ever learnt the tune, and they would not let us join unless we had. Nor can we expect that untrained voices should be admitted into the choirs above. Now, dear brothers and sisters, have you learnt to cast your crowns at the Saviour's feet already ? Have you been professors of religion for some years, and been honored in the Sabbath-school class, or in the ministry, and have you been enabled to maintain an upright character ? Well, in some measure, you have a crown. Are you in the habit continually of casting that at his feet ? Let me put it to you :—have you anything that you call your own to boast of ? Have you some good things that you have done that you could speak of ? Could you say, like one of old, “ Lord, I thank thee that I am not as other men ” ? Have you been very good and industrious, very consistent and persevering, and do you feel you deserve a good deal of esteem and honour as an acknowledgment of your distinguished services ? My dear friend, I am afraid you are learning a music that will never answer in heaven. There is no one in glory that ever says—“ I have done well : I deserve credit and honour.” Quite the reverse. There the one music is, “ *Non nobis Domine !* ” “ Not unto us, Lord ! Not unto us ! ” Have you learnt that ? Is that your spirit every day ? O, I think I hear one say, “ Yes, indeed it is ; for I have nothing whatever that I can boast of. I cannot say that I lay my crown at his feet : I do not seem to have any.” Yet, very likely, the person who is saying that is the one who is serving God more zealously than any of us ; for, it is the mark of God's children that the more beautiful they are the more uncomely they think themselves ; they that are very lovely themselves, all unconscious of their own attractions, can see a loveliness in others, while they perceive nothing to recommend their own character. When you yourself are mourning and lamenting that you are so deformed or so deficient, it is a mark that you are better than you think. The spirit that gives all glory to God, and takes no glory to itself, is the spirit that is on the road to heaven. May you judge yourselves by that !

The next lesson, beloved, is a lesson of unanimity. Our text says they *all* cast their crowns before the throne. There are no divided opinions in heaven, no sects and parties, no schisms there. They are all in perfect harmony and sweet accord. What one does, all do. They

cast their crowns, without exception, before the throne. Let us begin to practise that unanimity here. As fellow Christians, let us get rid of everything that would divide us from each other, or separate us from our Lord. I do not read that there was a single elder who envied his brother's crown, and said, "Ah, I wish I were such an one as he is, and had his crown." I do not read that one of them began to find fault with his brother's crown, and said, "Ah, his jewels may be bright, but mine have a peculiar tint in them, and are of greater excellence." I do not read ought of dissension; they were all unanimous in casting their crowns at Jesus' feet. They were all unanimous in glorifying God. And it is high time we gave over congratulating ourselves, or censuring our fellow Christians. Rest assured there is something in the man you condemn, if he be a child of God, which condemns you, and you might do well to become a scholar of his in some respects. If any honourable rivalries occur among brethren, let both cast their crowns at the foot of the cross, or at the foot of the throne, and ascribe all to him who gave them. Those that have obtained the prize are unanimous in their ascription of praise. Do you ask the reason? I suppose, first, it is because their understanding is alike transparent. Here our understandings are divided: one cannot see this, and another cannot see that. There are a great many differences of opinion, though there is only one truth after all. The fault must be in our perception; and, doubtless, the blame may be distributed among us; but none the less does our allegiance to truth demand that we stand by our own convictions, or rather by God's revelation. We cannot all be right: it is no use our professing that we are. When a person says, "You must give up this, and you must give up that, for the sake of charity," they do but ask us to practise benevolence at the expense of honesty. What right have I to give up a truth? Truth is truth, and we must fight for it, and die for it, if need be. Every effort to promote union among Christians by compromise is treachery to the Most High. If you are right and I am wrong, contradict me; or if I am right and you are wrong, I will contradict you. Yet I will not outrage charity, I will rather cherish it. Is my opponent poor, I would supply his need without regard to his creed? Be he a Jew or a Papist, give him his civil rights. Let them benefit by our good works; but let us never connive at their evil. The way to unity is to find the truth out, and acknowledge it together. When we come to the word of God all of us, we shall come together; but any patching up, making this compromise and that unwarrantable concession, is all wrong. If it did lead to a unity, the unity would be worse than a division. In heaven the understandings are clarified and purified; they understand that their salvation is of grace, and they all cast their crowns at Jesus' feet. Wesley does it; so does Toplady. The Arminian that preached doctrines that sounded like the will of the flesh,

casts his crown as freely as the Antinonian who was wont to say, "It is of grace ; it is of grace alone." There are no differences there. They have come to see eye to eye, because they see with the eyes of the pure in heart who have been made to see God.

But then they are all agreed in heart as well as in understanding. They love each other, and they love God : all their affections flow in one channel and in one direction. Hence unitedly they cast their crowns before the throne. Brethren, let us stick together closely in unity of judgment and heart. We have done so many a year to my marvel and astonishment. May the same Spirit of God who has made us a three-fold cord in our unity with Christ, keep us so in years to come, if it please him to spare our lives. May we in this church be like the four and twenty elders, always casting our crowns before the throne.

Once again, these redeemed ones in heaven teach us the true way of happiness. They set before us what perfect bliss is. You observe, it does not consist in selfishness. Never believe that possible. If a man says, "I shall make myself happy," he will rather mar than make happiness for himself ; but when he seeks the glory of God, he will be happy in the pursuit as well as in the attainment of his object. Did you ever go out for a day to enjoy yourself ? If you went out with that intent I am sure you would find yourself hard to please ; but if you went out to enjoy the society of other people, or to help them to enjoy themselves, you will most likely have been very well rewarded. There is no happiness beneath the clouds like the happiness of unselfishness. Strip yourself, and you clothe yourself. Throw money away, and you grow rich—I mean in a spiritual sense. To scatter is to gather ; to give is to grow rich. It is a hard lesson for some minds to learn, but it is a lesson which Christ taught us. He saved others, but himself he could not save ; and yet he has glorified both himself and his Father by that very sacrifice of himself.

Happiness, again, consists in adoration, for these blessed spirits find it to be their happiness to adore God. The happiest days you ever spent are those in which you worshipped God most. If you are doing a great deal, but have your minds far off from God, your labour will be irksome, your spirits will flag, and you will lack the stimulus of his approbation. Mary was happy at her Master's feet, because she was there adoring him. Mind you have much of Mary's spirit, and adore God all day long, for that is the vestibule of heaven.

But then they were not merely happy because they were self-denying and adoring, but because they were practical. They took off their crowns and laid them before the throne. And our joy on earth must lie in practically carrying out our principles. The best religion in the world laid by will be of no good. You shall only get joy out of it

when you throw it into the wine-press in clusters and tread it in practical service. Cast your ability to do and to suffer, as well as the crown of your labour and patience, at the foot of your God ; serve him with all your heart and wisdom and strength, and thus, thy self-denial and adoration being mixed therewith, you shall realise on earth as much as possible a foretaste of what the joy of heaven may be.

O, that our souls may be always aspiring towards this blessed place where we are to dwell, proving the sincerity of our faith by fighting under God's banner for the crown—by living in the spirit of adoption, whereby we prove our right to our crown by cultivating daily communion with Christ, whereby we prove our union with him by always ascribing all honour, power, and blessing to the Lord our God, whereby we anticipate the homage of heaven. Brethren and sisters, be not slack in worship. I am afraid we are. We are sometimes told that in the Church of England the most prominent thing in worship is prayers, and that we do not come together so much to pray as to hear a sermon. There may be some truth in the charge that is thus preferred against us, and if there be truth in it, do not let it be so any longer. But I hold that hearing a sermon is worship. If it be practically heard it is worship, and if it be applied to the soul, there is no higher adoration on the part of the entire man than listening to the truth which God will speak through the minister to our ear and heart. It is a part of worship, and a very blessed part too. But mind you make it so, and let it be so to us that while some worship within walls we worship everywhere, live worshipping, live adoring. Recollect, sermons are as it were but the wet block, but adoration is the great end of preaching. "Praying is the end of preaching," says Herbert. So it is ; but praising is the end of praying—the result which is to come out of it all. It is that for which praying exists, that God may be glorified. Pray God to help you to do so in every breath you draw, in every act you do. Let your common actions be a part of your holy, priestly life, and be priests and kings in your doings in the house, in the shop, in the barn, and in the field. The Lord bless you, dear friends.

And as to those here present who know not Christ, ye will never be crowned, if ye abide in ignorance of Him, or in enmity against Him. Oh, that the Lord would change your hearts and lead you to the Saviour ! May you see him crowned with thorns and trust in him, and then you shall come to be crowned with the royal diadem hereafter. The Lord grant it for his name's sake. Amen !

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Revelation iv. and vii.