

Make Church a Part of Your Life

WEEKLY SERMONETTE

"Crown of Thorns"

By Preacher/Teacher Terry Laughlin, CrossRoads Ministries

Nearly thirty years ago on Saturday night I sat in an indoor arena excitedly watching a beautiful Arabian stallion receive the very high honor of "Legion of Merit."

The lights were turned off and a large spotlight appeared at the entrance gate. Music played as this beautiful bay stallion entered at a gallop. The spotlight followed him as he loped throughout the arena while an announcer proclaimed all the achievements accomplished by this horse.

While standing in the spotlight, a coronet of roses was fastened around the stallion's neck. Then came a lengthy standing ovation as this horse was led from the arena.

In contrast was the coronation day of Christ nearly 2000 years ago. Jesus, the perfect man, went about accomplishing the complete will of God, healing the sick, feeding the multitudes and raising the dead. If anyone is worthy of honor, it is Him.

But, He was not greeted with lights, music and cheering. An unnatural darkness came over the land as He hung on the cross. (Luke 23:44) He heard "Crucify Him!" (Matthew 27: 23) "They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. They put a staff in His right hand

and knelt in front of Him and mocked Him. 'Hail, king of the Jews!'" He did not receive a coronet of roses but a crown of thorns was shoved onto His head. (Matthew 27: 28-30)

The first result of sin was a curse and thorns came in as a part of that curse. (Gen. 3: 17, 18) Suffering accompanies sin and thorns signify affliction.

"God made Him [Jesus] who had no sin to be sin for us..." (2 Cor. 5: 21) Christ was given a crown of thorns by the Roman soldiers, which was symbolic to Him being given the sins of us all. The prophet Isaiah gives us a very descriptive picture of what Christ suffered for us. "Just as there were many who were appalled at Him - His ap-

pearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and His form marred beyond human likeness." (Isaiah 52:14)

Jesus came and allowed the priests and teachers of the law to hand Him over to wicked men to be crucified, (Matthew 20:17-19) because God's Word says, "...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." (Hebrews 9:22) Ephesians 1:7 tells us, "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins..." This is the gospel; Christ died for you.

Knowledge creates responsibility. My friend, hearing the gospel yet choosing not to surrender your life to Christ is to treat the blood of Christ as something you despise.

Paul wrote, "...there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award me on that day -- and not only me, but all who have longed for His appearing." (2 Timothy 4: 8)

This world honors their kings with coronations of roses, lights and standing ovations. Christ received a crown of thorns, so you, if you accept Him, can have a crown of righteousness.

Will you crown Jesus as King and Lord of your life?



Hand of the Potter

The potter controls the size and shape of the vessel spinning on the wheel; depending on the pressure of his fingers, the clay takes the form he chooses. At times we are puzzled by

God, the greatest potter. We do not understand how He shapes us in His own image and we question the form our life takes. Isaiah (64.8) trusted God's love... "Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand." Worship this week. Let God shape you into His image.

Weekly Scripture Reading

John 5.19-47	John 6.1-24	John 6.25-59	John 6.60-7.24	John 7.25-52	John 11.1-44	John 11.45-12.11
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Scriptures Selected by The American Bible Society

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