



**"No Cross,
No Crown"**

The Cross and Crown

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His name was Mr. Oglesby. I remember little else about him other than that and the white moustache that rested above what seemed to be a perpetual smile.

And he was my friend.

I remember standing for a picture with Mr. Oglesby, who, to my ten-year-old self, seemed ancient. His arm was around my shoulder, and I was bursting with delight. At the time, I didn't understand what it was that always made me happy when I heard that we were going to see Mr. Oglesby, but, looking back, it's clear to me that it was the Spirit of God in him.

When I was in college, my campus pastor once observed that there was nothing like an old Christian – someone who had lived in and been shaped by God's presence for years and years. It was certainly the reason behind the graciousness and joy of living that I picked up on in my friend, Mr. Oglesby.

About twenty years later, when I moved to Philadelphia, I had the privilege of meeting Mr. Boswell, another gentleman who had spent a lifetime with Jesus. Several years into our friendship, Mr. Boswell moved to an assisted-living facility. He was over 100 years old when my father-in-law and I went to see him. When we told the receptionist whom we had come to see, the staff buzzed with excitement. He was the delight of everyone who provided care for him, and it was obvious that their days were brighter for his presence with them.



Mr. George Boswell, with Pastor Stephen Bogdan

It occurs to me that Messrs. Oglesby and Boswell were not putting out an effort to be gracious, peaceful and joyful; they were just being themselves. And I suspect, just as a child doesn't realize that he has gotten taller until someone who hasn't seen him for a while points out how much he's grown, that these gentlemen weren't even fully aware of how abundantly the fruit of the Spirit had blossomed in their lives. You can rest assured that the people they encountered were aware of it, though!

Never underestimate how much of a blessing you are, just living your life, when you're walking faithfully with God. Although you may not realize it, when you walk in God's light, his glory shines through you to a world that desperately needs comfort, encouragement, hope and love. You may never know – but eternity records – how many lives you're blessing!

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.

(II Corinthians 4:6)

Thanks for Praying!

Amid all of our need, we are encouraged, because God is answering your prayers! Please continue interceding for

- our Sunday morning Connection Circles (small group discipleship classes for all ages),
- our summer interns, in their next steps with God,
- our preparation for fall ministries, in both the church and the academy, and
- financial provision for the ministries and missionaries we support.







Our Servolution youth attended the XTEND conference at the recently reopened Met.

We're praying with you!

If you're on our mailing list*, you're on our prayer list! If there's anything specific that we can join you in praying about, please let us know.

We love hearing from you! Drop us a note and let us know you're out there!

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* **Important:** If you'd rather not be on our mailing list, we won't be offended! Just call or drop us a note, and we'll remove you. (We'll still keep you on our prayer list!)

If you'd rather receive this letter via e-mail, please let us know!

Did you know?

The smallest mammal by weight is the Etruscan Shrew, which weighs less than a tenth of an ounce (approximately the weight of this newsletter). The smallest by length is the Bumblebee Bat, which is about an inch and a half long (about the length of a thumb).

“Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures . . . wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds,” (Psalm 148:7,10)



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