



**"No Cross,  
No Crown"**

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# The Cross and Crown

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We're currently going through a sermon series on the book of Esther, and one phrase stood out to me in the first chapter. King Xerxes "spoke with the wise men who understood the times." (verse 13) You may recall that phrase from the story of David fleeing from Saul. Among those who joined his band of adventurers were "men who understood the times and knew what Israel should do." (I Chronicles 12:32)

I'd like to think that, for these men, understanding the times was more than a political calculation: Saul's on the way out, and David's on the way in, so we'd better get on David's side. I'd like to



think that they were responding instead to the wind of the Holy Spirit and aligning themselves with him, rather than following the popular and mighty.

Let's face it: Many of today's politicians put their fingers to the air to discern which way the political winds are blowing and adjust their positions accordingly. They can argue for a certain position for years and abandon it in a heartbeat in their quest for power or their fear of getting passed by.

Unfortunately, today's church has often been more than willing to play that game along with them, ending up "tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming." (Ephesians 4:14)

In the verses leading up to that passage, Paul gives us the remedy: Unity in the faith of Jesus and maturity in the fullness of his image. In short, we must become more like Christ! His way is love for our enemies, compassion for foreigners and the poor, and blessings on our persecutors.

We shouldn't find that our walk with God is easier or more difficult, depending whether things are going our way or we're facing opposition. We will have ups and downs in the circumstances of our lives, but adversity shouldn't blow us off course. If we keep our hearts and minds fixed on Jesus, we can stand firm, whatever comes our way.

*Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. (I Corinthians 15:58)*

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Some have asked about contributing to our fundraiser for Spring Garden Academy's Performing Arts Summer Camp. You can write a check to SGA directly or write it to Highway, and we'll pass it along.

PO Box 15191, Philadelphia, PA 19130

# Thanks for Praying!

Praise the Lord! I was planning to share a prayer request that came in from one of our members earlier this week, concerning a serious skin condition. However, I received news this morning that the condition has cleared up! Let that testimony be our encouragement as we continue to pray for:

- opportunities to partner with community organizations,
- our musical fundraiser for performing arts at SGA,
- a new insurance company (by March!), and,
- a member who asked prayer for healing in her eyes.







**Our Mission: The Next Generation!**

## 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 with you in praying about, please let us know.

From time to time, we hear from people who actually read these newsletters, and it's such an encouragement! Thanks for keeping in touch!

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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 church has a subscription to Right Now Media, an on-line video library featuring Bible studies, commentaries, Christian entertainment for all age levels, and more. You can access all of it for free! Sign up at <https://highway.ag/rnm>.

**Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. (Colossians 3:2,3)**



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