



# THE CROSS and CROWN

“No Cross, No Crown”

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To me, the tragedy of the book of Job is that Job suffered so long without hearing from God. From the beginning of Job’s story to the end, we see his great faith in God’s goodness, yet his faith in God’s presence seems to be lacking. Thus, we find him lamenting, “If only I could speak to him! If only I could plead my case before him!” Instead, unaware of God’s presence, he spends most of his time arguing with his friends and fending off their bad advice. It is only in the closing chapters of the book that God, who was (of course!) present the entire time, reaches his fill of being slandered and speaks directly to Job and his friends.

How different is Job’s experience from that of Habakkuk! Habakkuk, too, has complaints to air about what he perceives as God’s injustice, but rather than bickering with his friends, he takes his complaints to God. The first two chapters of Habakkuk record the back and forth of Habakkuk’s complaints and God’s responses, and the book ends with Habakkuk’s complaining replaced with praise. The key difference is given away in the first verse of the second chapter: “I will look to see what he will say to me.” Habakkuk had an expectation of hearing from God.



In the two previous editions of this publication, we have contemplated the importance of expecting to hear from God through our circumstances and through our Bible reading. Let’s add to that list the importance of expecting to hear from God when we pray.

I’ve come to realize that I spend too much time praying – too much time giving God my wish list – and not enough time listening for him to tell me what I and the people for whom I’m praying actually need. When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, he said that we don’t need to be wordy, because God knows what we need before we ask. The fact is, *we* often don’t know what we need. When our prayer is based solely on our understanding, we get frustrated and discouraged, thinking that God isn’t listening, when, in fact, the problem is that we’re asking the wrong things, because we’re not listening to him. If you want to supercharge your prayer life, start with the expectation of hearing from God. Pay attention to what he has to say, and let his response guide your prayers. God promises wisdom to all who ask, and, when we pray in his wisdom, our prayers become powerful and effective!

*I will listen to what God the Lord says; he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants—  
but let them not turn to folly. (Psalm 85:8)*

# Thanks for Praying!

There's something in the works for the housing situation. Please continue praying with us for that and for:

- God's wisdom and direction for all of our decisions,
- our upcoming mini-musical and fundraiser,
- people to be called to missions during April's missions convention, and
- laborers to be sent to our harvest field.







Our passion for the next generation is unfailing!

## 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 for, please let us know. (We will only publish your requests in this newsletter with your permission.)

We really do love hearing from you! Every message and phone call helps so much!

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\* **Important:** If you'd rather not be on our mailing list, we won't be offended! Just call or write us, 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, or subscribe to it at [crossandcrown.online/subscribe](http://crossandcrown.online/subscribe) !

## Did you know?

When the London Bridge began sinking under the weight of traffic in the 1960s, the city of London decided to build a new bridge and put the old one up for sale. It was bought by an American oil magnate and shipped, piece by piece, to Lake Havasu, Arizona, where it still stands as a tourist attraction. This was the New London Bridge, built in 1831, and not the bridge from the nursery rhyme (which is at least 200 years older).

**The bricks have fallen down, but we will rebuild with dressed stone;  
the fig trees have been felled, but we will replace them with cedars.**

(Isaiah 9:10)



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