

# Upon His Head Were Many Crowns

by Rolfe Barnard

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of committing oneself fully to Jesus, not just giving something, but surrendering one's life to him, and living a life of daily repentance and commitment.*

**Duration:** 1:00:37

**Scripture:** Revelation 19:1-3, Revelation 19:6-13, Revelation 19:16, Revelation 19:20

**Topics:** "Worship And Praise", "Surrender To God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher describes a scene where the four and twenty elders and the four beasts worship God on His throne. They praise Him by saying 'Hallelujah!' and a voice from the throne commands everyone to praise God for all that He has done. The preacher then shares a personal story about an 84-year-old man who was determined to find his place in a church meeting, despite his age and physical limitations. The man eventually realizes the depth of what Jesus has done for him and responds by offering his rifle as a symbol of surrender. The preacher challenges the audience to consider how they can respond to God's abundant givingness in their own lives.

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## Transcript

I'd like to turn to the last book in the Bible, chapter 19. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, chapter 19, and I want to read a portion of Scripture. Beginning at the first verse, and continuing down to verse 16.

And after these things, this is sort of the wind-up. And after these things, all of the things that we've been occupied with in the first 18 chapters. After these things, I heard a great voice of much people in heaven.

And they were saying, hallelujah, salvation and glory and honor and power unto the Lord our God. And they were ascribing all praise and honor to the Lord because true and righteous are his judgment. And they made that assessment because he hath judged the great war which did corrupt the earth with her fornication.

And hath abandoned the blood of this bond slave at her hand. And they were sold that day, they said again, hallelujah. And her smoke rose up forever and ever.

And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne. And they worshipped him by saying, hallelujah, amen, so be it, hallelujah. And a voice came out of the throne saying, praise our God, all ye his bond slaves and ye that fear him, both small and great.

And I heard as it were the voice of a little towny group, nor of a great multitude. And as the voice of many walkers and as the voice of mighty thundering sea, hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, write, write what? Well write these words, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, these are the true sayings of God.

Thou shalt let his feet to worship him. And he saith unto me, don't do that. I am thy fellow bond servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus, worship God.

For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. And I saw heaven open, I saw heaven open and behold a white horse. Jesus sat upon him was called faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make law.

His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns. And he had a name written that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name was called the word God.

The ironers which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth was a sharp sword that was it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. And he treasured the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

And he hath on his vesture and on his fire a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. I want to seize upon one expression, one of the expressions the Holy Spirit through John, is pleased to use in seeking to describe him not as he was the first time he came to earth, but as he shall be revealed when he returns. And that expression on his head were many crowns.

And in seeking to listen to the missionary, the Jesus man, he listened to him very intently. He tried to absorb something of what the Jesus man as he called him was trying to get over to him. And the more he listened to the Jesus man, the more he was convinced that there was something he ought to do.

There was some response that he ought to make to that which according to the Jesus man, the Lord, And in his Indian way he meditated a lot after hearing each message. He missed that so much. And finally he came to the conclusion that he had found out what response he ought to make to that which the Lord had done in his direction.

And so he got his fire's hunting rifle and he fired it up and cleaned it up and shined it up to the next degree and then he carried it into the presence of the Jesus man. And he said, Yeah, Jesus man, you say Jesus so much for me. You give my rifle to Jesus.

And the Jesus man shook his head and said, No, Jesus, Jesus won't take your rifle. He don't want it. This man greatly perplexed with his rifle and went back to his wigwam.

And he kept on listening to the missionary. After much meditation, striving to rise within his own experience, Just how he could respond to the all out givingness of the Lord Jesus Christ toward him. And so he got the most prized possessions he had on earth.

He got his favorite moccasins. He hallowed them up and shined them up. Cradling them in his arms like a little girl with a doll.

Carefully, reverently he went into the presence of the Jesus man. And he said, Jesus man, you tell me what Jesus has done for me. You bring my rifle and say, you give my rifle to Jesus.

You say Jesus, don't want it, you won't take it. He said, you bring my moccasins to Jesus. You give them to him.

The Jesus man said, no, Jesus, you don't want the moccasins. You won't take them. And in a terrible condition, the old chieftain took his moccasins and went.

But he kept on listening to the missionary. One day he came into the presence of the missionary and he said, Jesus man, you bring my rifle and you say I give my rifle to Jesus. You say Jesus, no want, Jesus, no take.

You bring my moccasins. You say, you give my moccasins to Jesus. You say, Jesus, no want, Jesus, no take.

He said, Jesus man, you bring me to Jesus. You let Jesus take. And the Jesus man said, yes, chief.

You don't want your rifle. You don't want your moccasins. You didn't come down here to get your rifle.

You didn't come down here to get your moccasins. You didn't come down here to get you. Yes, chief.

Jesus will take you. I have convinced most of us in spirit life to be believers. I think many of us striving to be believers.

I think many of us are trying to be believers. I wonder believers. Saving belief and saving faith is the utter commitment of me as a way of responding to the all-out mission that is to heaven and grace earth and God must manifest in the flesh.

Saving faith is not believing something. Saving faith is not giving something. Saving faith is the all-out commitment of one's self to the Lord Jesus Christ.

I wonder how many of us have ever been able to turn ourselves over. Lost. Stuck in doubt.

Live or die. Seek a trail. Survive or perish.

To hell or heaven. It's torn in a blur. Without trying to strike a bargain.

He'll give me what on earth he wants me for. But he didn't leave hurting down a crawl to get what I've got. He has that already.

I'm here to get you, Jesus said. He didn't say, stay up and go and draw me a map. He came down here and got me to get me.

He came down here and stood along beside me. He came down here and joined and took from me. God helped me somewhere and now he came down here and identified himself with me.

To demand you the best for you. On his head were many crimes. I know however this whole up-and-down thing satisfies me.

I liked living with my days and days and everything in everybody. He blessed, honoured, sweet worship, taking a bath in the daze. And as far as the world can tell, we still have nothing within to touch people, despised and rejected, taking a daze with the wicked.

Numbers with the transgressors pouring out with so unbeset, being the object of the bruising, according to the good pleasure of almighty God. Like to one of the people who were named objects of the marvelous mercy and grace of God, have been able to gradually crown him with me. I believe that my Lord will not be the savior of any man, except by establishing his sovereign rule in that man's life.

And when I face up daily to my poor response to the crowned rites of birthday Jesus, I know a little bit about what repentance means. My heart reaches out, not parocity or parasitism, in that I fear for this generation of great people, myself included, sometimes that haven't repented today. Jesus is just a fire streak to be used to keep out of hell.

I think I could have an experience 40 years ago and put that experience under lock and key and go over now and then and unlock it, look at it and go on the way. But if Jesus is God's Lord, if Jesus never has, all of it is claimed to be in the center of not a convenience, but from the very God in the heart of man. And may God have mercy on our son.

How could I love a baby without having my heart split open at the sinfulness that's still in my life and the awful lack of measuring up to what surely it means to be gladly under the sovereign rule of death who alone has the right to dispel my thoughts and everything about me and to gain that right by standing in my stead on that cruel cross. To say it in another way, I'm afraid most of us professing Christians don't split hell wide open. We've never been able to give ourselves.

I have to admit professing Christians are proud of the fact that they're tired of it. That simply means they're no longer saved. I feel sorry for a tired one.

I need professing Christians who've buried themselves to go to the house of God now and then. And when it's over they say, thank God that's over. Yes, in my experience.

In your experience is the stuff thing that smells a little like black people down the stairway to the other side of the room. But people who by God's grace have been able to respond to fear move toward us to be with us as we please. Still and steadfast.

But most of us, the only reason we move toward God is to think we can get something out of it. Oh, there's a little something in my soul that says that one of those whom I believe not what I believe, but whom I believe is confident, a little more confident there every day. I'm a little more persuaded I'm a child of death than I was yesterday.

Real than it was yesterday. There is a copy, oh I know I'm saved, that scares this place. 99 times out of 100 I'm afraid they're depending on an experience in search of a living union with a living God.

Holiness came to the Christians. They enjoyed a holy war going on inside of a child of God because there's a holy person inside. And the person took the son of God and used the hope of glory.

We are called to disturb. So the Christian is the happiest, most miserable person. Better to have that ho in his stomach than the quietness that marks the absolute Christ in you.

It is the hope of glory. In the crown rites I think I know a little bit about. Not much, but a little bit.

I can't put any confidence in yesterday's faith. Faith is life's analysis. It is all to depend upon.

All to rely upon. All the commitment to a person. Surely that be a day for day prophecy.

And when I read the scriptures of our time again and again that there is no commitment toward the Lord Jesus Christ that does not need to be made over and over and over again. I can understand how we're kept by the power of God but we're kept through faith. And I cannot conceive of this generation of professing Christians that think they can make it today apart from the ambassador of United for the living son of the living God.

We're a generation accepting it And I get people telling me about their glorious experience of salvation and it scares me. The only evidence your heart has got and that you've ever been brought to the universe is a life of daily repentance and a life of daily commitment.

Have you ever been able because of the mercy of God to be like the old Indian chief and say Lord you bring me I want to talk just a little while this morning bring to you three reasons why everybody ought to commit himself You see you not your money, not your time but you you ain't got any money to settle on a thousand bills belong to the Lord the silver and gold are mine you have none of your time your next breath is not yours it's the Lord's but you are you and you didn't come down here to redeem the time you didn't come down here to try to rescue somebody's money you came down here to rescue you First reason I offer why everybody ought to call on Jesus Christ just for the gift of God the Lord for his sake Down our way we sing a chorus maybe I can get it this morning with an only he is

worthy let us praise him only he is worthy let us praise him oh bless he is worthy let us praise him praise him the Lord they were having a bible conference in England and they were discussing the learned preachers discussing the mystery of the trinity they were trying to explain the unexplainable and how that God is true and yet God how that God is one and yet three they had a heart with who was always present in the services his name was Philibilly and Philibilly sat there and cried that Philibilly see gender that mystery how God is one and yet three and three and yet one and he began to scribble some on his notes and that was not permissible and one of the wardens came and touched him on the shoulder and reprimanded him for irreverence and he took his pencil and notebook away and took

it up like little shoes he used to have but don't teach us that and the man who was speaking glanced at this paper and didn't notice it and kept talking and then he glanced at it again and then he stopped and said Philibilly warden and your reverend do you want to read to you what Philibilly wrote and there Philibilly tried to listen and he wrote down one and three and three and one that's too much for Philibilly but this and Philibilly and one of them have died for me and I was a student in school in Texas one day I was talking to campers going and buying something and a Jewish Christian he's been called a priest by mentioning his name he stopped me and he was embraced at my desk and he said well have you got a little time to spare just to let somebody cry on your shoulder and open up

his heart I'm in such terrible burden and distress and conflict with a ghost tell somebody to think of birth he said well I said well sure I've got time for that I went up to his room and he told me this story the Lord had

been so gracious opened his eyes and just beautified made Christ real to us and when that happened the priest's mother and father closed their home to us come to know the Lord Jesus he's never seen his mother or father never been back home we in the course of time had come to school and had a little old church about sixty or fifty miles from Fort Worth he and his wife lived out there we'd come in Tuesday morning or early and go in the morning or till Friday noon and go back to his congregation and he said well last week just last week my father came to see me he didn't

allow me to come see him we got on a train to Chicago and came back to my home in the afternoon of Monday left on Friday where was you?

Oh and he said while he was blessed in my home he never had a crossword or a word of criticism I was his firstborn and he'd come on a mission and he said instead of staying over here I'd drive each evening after Christ was back it's been hours to spend the night and the next morning I'd have to come back to school and so forth it went on for four days and he said my daddy would talk to him a little while but so soon he he'd get on just one subject and he'd call me by my Jewish name I can't pronounce that and he'd say calling by Jewish name my firstborn I've come to ask you to give up your Jesus and come home and the old man was sincere he was an orthodox Jew and he thought that of all of the crimes that could be committed his boy had been guilty of that horrible, horrible crime of firing

a gun to the knee that one Jew wound up on a Roman Tabernacle the king conceived they took him down and put him in a hole in the ground as far as this world knows that's the last he said no daddy was sincere that's the kind of victim of some of the fires that almost terrorized his faith give up your Jesus and come home he said mama is dying take your wounds ready but mama goes in once a week raises the wounds tears the wounds cleans it, tatters it nobody's better in your room to occupy it since you left it said your life practice is waiting to go and add them carry on he said mama mama's dying give up your Jesus and come home said if I go home without you I think you'll kill me he said papa has to get up and bury my face he said that went on for four days the Friday afternoon I hurried

home from school and there was no time for the train, my daddy was going home my daddy was packed up sitting in the living room the suitcases overclosed his back I said well daddy it's time to go I wrapped him with his coat and put on his hat I reached down to pick up the suitcase and my daddy held bare arms and BARE FACE no questions said Heimann there's still time you can send for your clothes I'll buy the ticket give up your Jesus and come home my friend said well if I had to take my hands and disinvite my father's arms and pin them to his side he said come on dad, it's time to go he got down to the depot and out came the train it stopped I put his suitcase up in the stands and he said goodbye and he put his hand on the wheel and then before I knew it he ran around and embraced me

again I thought I'd try to jump out of his body he said Heimann there's still time I'll buy a ticket on the train if I go home without you to kill mama Heimann give up your Jesus and come home my friend said well if I had to disinvite my father's arms and pin them to his side he said come on dad, it's time to go he got down to the depot and out came the train it stopped I put his suitcase up he said come on Jesus I love him enough to give myself to him anything for an utter commitment won't get the job done he gave himself what he demands is you what a crowning did I serve for a loved one's sake there's so much hell in the world he gave him I think there's no hell quite so terrible as the hell in the heart of a mother who has a bad daughter or a father who has a bad daughter or a wife who

has a bad husband or a husband who has a bad wife oh I've had the privilege and the fortune traveling the land and I've had broken hearts of little two-week children who didn't know all they were saying I've had them weep, sob until your first heart would break out of their bodies pleading with their parents to be saved although they didn't know it all then that they were pleading for something to happen so there would be so much hell in their home I have seen wives open their hearts until you're not there but I'll be there for the rest of their lives in the cautiousness that they're made in rebellion against the pains of Christ who paid it for me I sometimes say it that an unsaved boy a girl, a man, a woman is for no other reason but to give themselves to my Lord to heal a broken heart

and erase the agony and hell in the heart of some child of God that they have to live in the agony of knowing their loved ones are wrong with God I remember Sam Churcher strong-willed chairman of the board of deacons at the place that asked me on the phone and I said, Sam, I'll be there at nine o'clock and I want to ask you a question and I want you to be there and he said, oh I'm just tired of the diastasis fund, I said, go on away I said, I'll be there and you be there I was giving orders I said, just go away he said, alright preacher I'll make sure he's nine o'clock right there I went in his office, he gave orders no phone to ring, nobody interrupt they sat down inquired about the weather a minute he said, preacher he said, what's your business I said, I've come to ask you a question

do you know the Lord do you know the Lord he said, I'm afraid that's what you're going to ask me, I said he said, I've been waiting the day you'd ask me there I could see it coming what Sam didn't know was that for some months I've been having to deal with this thirteen year old boy with this nine year old boy and with his wife what Sam didn't know was the times his wife had lost the children he said, we'll not go back to the house, we can't stand it any longer it's amazing how much hell there is in lots of so-called religious homes it's amazing the children can't pass the school grades because there's so much hell in the home it's amazing how much hell Sam called Sam didn't know that I'd been telling the wife to stay with it, to stay with it Sam didn't know that after the preaching

service on Sunday evening, there came his wife and she said, I can't stand it any longer you don't know a picture you don't know what we have to live you don't know and I sent her home I made my mind I was going to talk to Mr.

Sam and I said, Sam do you know the Lord, and that's why I said, no, you know I don't know any picture he said, oh I don't know about that ever happened to me when I was a youngster, they said I ought to become a Christian, so I went down and went through the motions he said, I stayed in church and they made me this and that and the other and he said, these last years have been hell he said, I've had so much pride I've been willing to go to hell rather than walk down the front of a congregation say you can when you're bored as deacons with a lost rebellious sinner on his way to hell and the person asked if I always got up off our knees I said, what's going on Sam he said, everything preacher I won't know till I get to the judgment of the court, I said, get your hat he said, where are we going, I said, just get your hat we're going somewhere went down and got in his car I said, where are we going, I said, you know where we're going and he went to his home and of course it wasn't supposed to be his home at that time we sat in the front door in the front room, I said, call your wife and Sam said, no that's the way she came right Mr.

Kyle, to see him to see me wondering why he's home and that's why he said, Mary, I've got something to tell you he said, the Lord saved me a while ago he said, I'm able to surrender to Him and I've come to ask your forgiveness and I've come to tell you about a new husband and I've come to ask if you'll take me try me one more time and she looked at me and her heart leaped out of her throat and she said, Mary

Margaret can I, can I can I believe that I said, I believe so and then out of the agony of the air and hell she said oh God and then she embraced me I said, Sam, call your boy he said, they're not here I said, call them he went and called and got in touch with me and oh Lord, here the boys came one of them 9, one of them 13 and Sam addressed the 13 year old boy told him the same story

and once again the 13 year old boy looked to me and he turned out fabulous and once again joy and while that's going on I heard a commotion over in the corner of the little 9 year old boy down on his knees talking like his heart was breaking over and over again I heard these words thank you Lord, thank you Lord now I won't be afraid to come home now I won't be afraid to let the neighbors in the house thank you Lord thank you Lord, thank you Lord my God, it was for soul's sake not for Jesus' sake but for your brethren's sake a man ought to crown Jesus Christ with the life committed to him if you're the crowder for your own sake you got the crowder you know that's a lie to hear that God gave you the choice of what you do with Jesus, you've never had a choice in the matter you've had some

choice as to when you'll crown him, but the scriptures say it's not a question of when are you going to crown Jesus, King of kings and Lord of lords, it's a question of when one day every knee shall bow, praise God one day every tongue shall confess, glory to God that Jesus is what God said he'd been all the time that Jesus is Lord not to salvation but to the glory of the Father you're going then this morning you're going to bow to my Lord you're going to commit yourself to him you're going to own him you're going to acknowledge him you're going with that own ease going to begin that tongue going to speak and you're going to bow and own him and crown him Lord oh be so much better if you could do it now be so much better if you could do it now when it's not popular when it goes against the

grain but be so much better if you could do it now for your own sake never shall I forget on Easter Sunday morning in Oklahoma Shelby, Oklahoma a man that was the closing day of the meeting of course Easter a big Baptist congregation a lot of people there we had a church meeting and I sat there and I was saying and I looked for one man I finally found him 84 years old and he had climbed into the third floor the lower floor a balcony and a balcony above that and he had got in that corner on the last seat on the last floor he got just as far from the place there as he could and still be in the building 84 years old he climbed those two balconies there up way over there and I'm saying I'm saying that time after time the pastor and I have preached time after time he said I want to be with a

sweet person time after time we get up off our knees and as I leave that's the way you're able to connect yourself to the bloodstream of Jesus.

And that's the time that a 84-year-old man would say, Preacher, I came. I swear, I came. And there you are.

And I preached that morning. And we stood for a gospel in the priesthood. And I couldn't help it to save my life.

At least I heard it. And I said to the pastor, I'll be back in a minute. And he kept saying it.

And God was blessed. And I walked on a little while. Way back up.

Climbed up the first step to the second balcony. Climbed up the other step to the second balcony. Way over there.

I asked the people to excuse me. They were standing on that last, that last little piece. And I reached my reach.

And I stood there and looked at that old man. 84 years old. He was feeling down his feet.

Trembling like an aspen leaf in the wind. One more time, I said, I'll come back again. Are you able to commit yourself to blessed days? And one more time, an 84-year-old man with his face stained with tears.

I guess told me the truth. I don't know. He said, preacher, I can't.

And, of course, I walked back. And that was that. And exactly on the hour, 3 o'clock that afternoon, his granddaughter went to his room about something.

And found him dead. And I thought through the years, wonder what that man meant. I can't.

And the last words he ever said to this preacher. Preacher, I can't. And I suppose he didn't.

I talked to multiple people who said, preacher, I want to believe, but I can't. I want to give myself, but I can't. And I don't know how to handle that.

But I've been going up and down the land. Saying, if you can, if you can, maybe you can. I don't know where to hope for you if you can't.

But if you can, don't say you're going to do something. Don't make a profession. Don't make a decision.

But if you can, commit yourself for time and time again to the Lord for your own. If you can. Will you bow your head? While the pianist and song leader come, we're going to sing your song.

Father.

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