



THE CROSS *and* CROWN

"No Cross, No Crown"

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"Brothers and sisters, pray for us." | Thessalonians 5:25

Jesus came from the Father "full of grace and truth."

Candace and I listened to John's Gospel on a recent car trip, and I was overwhelmed by three words: "grace and truth." John uses the phrase twice in the first chapter, notably drawing a contrast between Moses, who brought the Law, and Jesus, who brought grace and truth.

For anyone who's counting, John mentions truth five times in the chapter and grace six.

It's easy for us, in our zeal to confront people with the truth, to let grace fall by the wayside. Perhaps we're afraid that extending grace means compromising truth, but Jesus provides us with examples which show that we don't have to sacrifice one for the other. Later in his Gospel, John writes of the time when the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees brought to Jesus a woman who had been caught in the very act of adultery. Like Moses, they came bringing the Law, saying that she must be stoned. Jesus extended grace to her – but, at the same time, he confronted both the woman and her accusers with the truth that they had sinned.

It is clear from this incident that grace must precede truth. Had Jesus acted on truth before he extended grace, the woman would have been killed, and grace would have been without effect. Sometimes, we get it backwards, expecting people to repent before we show them grace, but, as Jesus shows on multiple occasions, it is the Christian's extension of grace that opens the door for sharing truth.

Grace and truth are two sides of the same coin. We can't focus on one at the expense of the other. Unless we get both sides right, the only thing we are offering is a counterfeit.



With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all that there were no needy persons among them. (Acts 4:33,34)

Brothers and Sisters, Pray for Us!

Thank you for so graciously standing alongside us in prayer! Please continue to stand in faith with us for:

- more of God's Spirit, likeness, mission and vision,
- our upcoming summer ministry opportunities (and the challenges they bring),
- God's continued provision for the financial needs of the academy and church, and
- more people to be called to and excited about ministry in Tioga/Nicetown.

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.)

Please do keep in touch! We're always delighted to hear from you and to pray with you!

✉	PO Box 15191 Philadelphia, PA 19130
🌐	17 th & Tioga Streets (3501 N 17 th Street) Philadelphia, PA 19140
☎	Church/Academy Office: (215) 226-1000
💻	CrossAndCrown@Highway.AG

* **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 !

Did You Know?

The oldest known coins were created in Lydia, in what is now Turkey, in 600 BC. Lydian staters were made of electrum, an alloy of gold and silver.



These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. (I Peter 1:7)



Highway Mission Tabernacle ♦ Resurrection Life Church ♦ PO Box 15191 Philadelphia, PA 19130

Welcome@ResLife.AG ♦ Church: (215) 226-1000 ♦ Otis: (215) 266-5976

HighwayTabernacle.org ♦ ResLife.AG ♦ Sunday services at Noon: ResLife.stream

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