

## 8.

### “LORD, LORD”

The chapter you are about to read covers a subject of extreme importance. It is an issue which is of tremendous consequence to every believer in Jesus Christ. It is a topic which is not very well understood in our day and about which many have some erroneous ideas and even entrenched misconceptions. Therefore I would like to ask all the readers to pay careful attention to what is being said. Please read these words with an open mind and a heart which is genuinely seeking to know the truth. Do not jump to any instantaneous conclusions, but rather read the entire chapter before forming your own opinion about these things. In fact, I would urge you to also read carefully the several chapters following this one because this subject is so important that we are going to dwell on it at length. There is no other single topic which I know of in the scriptures that has been so neglected and so misunderstood by God's children in these days. May the Lord add His blessing to these words.

It is well known by most Christians that when a person is born again he receives eternal life. This means that in eternity he will be with the Lord. It is my belief that all true believers will be dwelling with Christ forever. Once we receive Jesus Christ, nothing any man or angel can do can take Him away from us. He Himself promises us that He will never leave us nor forsake us (Heb 13:5). His plan is that all of His children be with Him for eternity. The scriptures read: "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21). This means that they are rescued from God's eternal judgment and they will dwell

with the Lord forever. In my understanding, the scriptures provide an ample basis to trust in this position.

However, there are many who believe – perhaps even some of you readers – that you can “lose your salvation” or in other words, be unborn again. I have no desire to begin a theological argument with these dear brothers. Such discussions are usually not very fruitful in the spiritual sense. I would only like to point out here that many verses which are used to support this view are not addressing the subject of the new life at all but instead are speaking about the coming Kingdom. As you will see as we continue, there are many verses which detail some very serious consequences for disobedience. Yet when we look closely at these scriptures with the Kingdom in mind we find that most of these verses are clearly speaking about the Millennium and not about eternity. Perhaps you are one who believes that your spiritual rebirth and that of others is constantly in jeopardy. I don’t believe it is essential to convince you of my position. I would only respectfully request that you finish reading the subsequent chapters with an open mind to find perhaps a different understanding of many Bible passages than you have had before.

With this in mind, there is an essential fact of which we must not be ignorant. While I believe that eternal life is indeed eternal while others may not, the Bible is crystal clear about another subject. That is that not all Christians will enter into the coming Millennial Kingdom. Let me repeat this. The holy scriptures clearly teach us that not all believers will participate in the coming Kingdom reign of Christ. Some may be actually born again. They may be God’s children. But many of God’s own will not be allowed into God’s coming Kingdom. This is a scriptural truth which we will be investigating together. As we open God’s word, let us also open our hearts to Him so that He can reveal His purposes to us.

Remembering once again here that the words, “the kingdom of heaven,” do not refer to “heaven” but to the Millennial Kingdom, let us read Matthew 7:21. “Not every one that says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of my Father in heav-

en." On one hand we have just read that "whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21). Anyone who calls on His name can be born again. Yet, on the other hand, not everyone who calls on Him will enter His Kingdom. Here there is another qualification: those who enter must do God's will or in other words, be obedient to Him.

Please consider this carefully. Even though all believers will be in eternity, not all of them will be allowed into the 1,000 year Kingdom of Jesus Christ, but only those who are obedient. Is this surprising to you? Should it be? It certainly makes sense that Jesus Christ will want as part of His earthly Kingdom only those who have obeyed Him and served Him faithfully while they lived on the earth. Surely He would not want His heavenly administration to be full of lazy, irresponsible, rebellious individuals. No, only those who are obedient and faithful will enter into the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ and will reign with Him.

The reason why is very simple. You cannot subdue rebellion with rebellious individuals as your representatives. You cannot take a thief and make him the president of a bank. You cannot use an unfaithful person to help others become faithful. It simply will not work. Therefore, in order for Jesus to establish His kingdom on the earth, He must first establish it within those through whom He will reign. This is the aspect of the Kingdom of God which is taking place today. We will speak more on this subject in later chapters, but for now, we must spend some time looking at the scriptures which teach us a most important truth.

## THE TEN VIRGINS

Perhaps one of the clearest sections of the Bible which applies to this subject is the parable of the ten virgins. This parable is found in Matthew chapter 25, beginning with verse 1. Once again remembering that "the kingdom of heaven" is not "heaven," let us read it together:

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened to ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were

wise, and five were foolish.

Those who were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

And at midnight a cry was heard, 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you: but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding (festivities Gk): and the door was shut. Afterwards the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us.'

But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man is coming" (Mt 25:1-13).

This is a very interesting and enlightening parable. It is a parable concerning the Kingdom and the "wedding feast" (vs. 10 Gk) aspect of it. That it is a parable which applies to Christians – real believers – shall also become apparent as we look at this passage together. (Please do not let anyone tell you that these verses apply only to the Jews or that they are not for this present dispensation. To say such a thing is to render this passage of scripture virtually meaningless to believers and to blind their eyes to the truth which is herein revealed.)

Who then are these ten virgins and what does this parable mean? We know from the scriptures that virginity is a term which is applied to believers. Paul says that he had espoused certain believers as "a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Cor 11:2). Virginity here means purity, holiness and an undefiled life. This is a reference to believers who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, who have been

cleansed from all their defilement and who are now holy and pure before the Lord. All ten of these individuals were virgins. The only difference between them is that five of them were wise and five were foolish. The Bible does not say that five were saved and five were unsaved, or that five were good and five were wicked. We read only that five were wise and five, foolish.

All ten of these virgins had at least some oil in their lamps. This is evidenced by the fact that before they fell asleep, all of their lamps were lighted, otherwise they could not later have been "going out" (vs 8). A lamp wick without oil would have burned out almost immediately. The wise ones had extra oil in their "vessels" (vs 4) while the foolish ones apparently had only a little in their lamps. The "vessels" here must have been an extra container of oil which they brought to replenish their lamps when the need arose. This oil which they had is a type of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament the priests were instructed through Moses to compound an anointing oil (Ex 30:22-25) symbolizing the Holy Spirit which God has now poured out. Of these ten persons, all had oil. They had all partaken of the Holy Spirit.

Notice also that each of these lamps was lighted and burning. The scripture reads: "The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all the inner depths of his heart" (Pr 20:27). The spirit of man is where the Holy Spirit of God dwells in a born-again person. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit," reads I Corinthians 6:17. The joining of God's Spirit to man's results in the kindling of a spiritual flame in each believer which begins to give them supernatural light. Surely these virgins who had oil in their lamps and had their lamps burning must have been regenerated, born-again believers.

Another thing which tells us that these were believers is that they were waiting for the bridegroom. No unbeliever is waiting for the bridegroom. Only those who know Him and love Him are waiting for Him. We read in verse 5 that while the bridegroom tarried they all fell asleep. Symbolically, all these believers died while they were still waiting for their Lord. But at midnight a cry went forth, "Behold, the bridegroom is coming!" and they awoke. The

scripture reads, "And many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake" (Dan 12:2). When the Lord returned, these believers were resurrected, raised up from the dead to meet the bridegroom.

Still another positive proof that all these "virgins" were real Christians is that that *only* believers are resurrected when Jesus returns. Please pay careful attention to this since it is a very important truth and has a strong impact upon a proper understanding of the scriptures. No unbelievers are going to be raptured. There will be no non-Christians accidentally resurrected when Jesus comes again. Therefore, there is no possibility of any unbeliever trying to get into the wedding feast. No unbeliever could be there outside the door crying "Lord, Lord" seeking entrance. Those who do not believe are not resurrected until 1,000 later at what is known as "The Great White Throne" judgment. Therefore, it can only be that these virgins are believers.

## OUR TRUE CONDITION

But here we see that after their resurrection some of these virgins began to notice their true spiritual condition. They were in trouble. They lacked oil, and their lamps were going out. They had not paid the price to go and buy while they were still living. Evidently they all had the opportunity but five of them were foolish. No doubt while they were living their life on this earth they chose to please themselves. They didn't seek the Lord's face and do His will. They didn't pay the price necessary to be full of the oil of the Holy Spirit. Their foolishness caused them to be disobedient, negligent, and wasteful of their time and energy. So when the bridegroom came and entered into the wedding feast, these five foolish virgins were left out. Those who had been obedient, who had gotten the necessary oil, were allowed to enter. But those who were disobedient, unfaithful and slothful in their dealings were instructed by the others to go and buy – to go and pay the required price. While they went the door was shut and when they came again knocking, they were not let in.

This passage corresponds exactly to the other one we have already quoted which says that not everyone who

merely claims Jesus as their Lord will enter into the Kingdom, but those that do the will of the Father. Here is an immensely sobering truth. It is one to which every believer should give serious consideration. If, in our individual lives, we are unfaithful and disobedient, the Son of Man will come at a time when we are not looking for Him (Lk 12:46) and will find us unprepared. Since we see that not every Christian will be allowed to enter, how should this knowledge affect our daily living? My hope is that this realization will sober some who are only pleasing themselves, cause them to repent and to begin living from this moment on for their King.

### **“I DON’T KNOW YOU”**

No doubt we should take a moment here to discuss one phrase which is used in this parable that might cause some misunderstanding. It is the one where the Lord is heard saying, “I don’t know you” These words are found both in the passage where we read, “Not every one will enter the Kingdom” and in this parable about the ten virgins. Some have insisted that because Jesus says he doesn’t know these people that they could not be His children. They argue, how could He say “I don’t know you” if He had begotten them. Please pay careful attention to the answer for it is very significant. There are several reasons which explain this statement of the Lord.

To begin with, the word “know” – the Greek word which is used here – is translated in another place in the King James Version, “allow.” In Romans 7:15 Paul says, “For that which I do I allow not.” This means that he didn’t approve of doing it. This word can also be translated “certify,” according to W. E. Vine in his Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words. Using these other possible translations, Jesus would then be found saying in these passages, “I certify you not” or “I approve you not.” “You have not measured up to the standard and therefore you are not certified or approved.” These individuals who were foolish, unfaithful and did not do the will of God while they were alive were not certified, approved, or allowed by God when He came to establish His Millennial Kingdom.

Obviously God knows everyone who has ever existed upon the earth. He knows their name and all the things they have done. But when He comes to inherit His kingdom, He is only going to acknowledge knowing those who have been faithful and obedient.

Would the Lord Jesus deny that He knew some of His own children? Yes, He would. It is one of His solemn promises which you can count on being true. He says plainly that whoever “denies me before men, I will also deny before my Father” (Mt 10:33). This means that He will deny that He knew us. He will deny having knowledge of us because we denied Him. And what does it mean to deny Him? It means that by our lives, including our attitudes, words, actions and decisions, we denied His kingship, His lordship and His rightful authority over us. In short, we were disobedient children. You don’t have to say with words, “I deny Jesus,” to deny Him. All you have to do is ignore Him and deny that He has any claim of authority over your life. Don’t get me wrong; our denial of Jesus can be verbal and outward, but it can just as easily be non-verbal and inward, manifesting itself in stubbornness, disobedience, and self-serving living. Those people who conduct their lives in this way are the ones to whom Jesus Christ will say, “I never knew you: depart from me, you who practice lawlessness (rebellion, sin, disobedience)” (Mt 7:23).

This situation could be likened to a woman who had a son. She loved her son very much and raised him the best she could. But when he grew up, he became disobedient. Let us imagine that he became a murderer, a thief, a rapist, a drug pusher, and was involved in evil of every kind. His mother naturally was ashamed of him. Let us suppose that after many years this man came back home and said, “Hi, mom, how are you doing? Can you lend me some money?” This woman would probably say, “I don’t know you. I disavow that you are my son. I am ashamed of you because of your disobedience, rebellion and evil works and I am disclaiming any knowledge of you. You are not allowed inside my house.” This is just how it will be on the day of the Lord’s return with those who have acted foolishly and unrighteously.

## PAUL'S GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

Let us now go on to several other passages of scripture which tell specifically who will or will not inherit the Kingdom of God. In I Corinthians chapter 6 we find just such a passage. Here Paul the apostle says:

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any” (I Cor 6:9-12).

What Paul is telling these believers is that if they continue to participate in the rebellion and sin in which they once participated before they came to know Jesus Christ, they will not inherit the Kingdom of God. He is reminding them that since they know that people who practice these things will not inherit the Kingdom, they should not expect to either if they continue to do them. Although they once did them, they have now been cleansed and should not go back to doing them.

For what other motive would he write this passage to these Christians? Surely everyone already knew that unbelievers will not inherit the Kingdom of God. But here he is speaking specifically about believers who continually and unrepentantly practice various sins. Since this is so, we should be careful not to live in the old way, because if we do, we will not inherit the Kingdom. I sincerely pray that no Christian allows himself to be deceived about this. No one who is living an insubordinate life will enter into the Kingdom of God.

A passage in Galatians 5, starting with verse 19, says essentially the same thing: “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are; adultery, fornication, uncleanness,

licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revels, and the like: of the which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that *those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God*" (Gal 5:19-21). Do you know any Christians who are involved in these kinds of sins? Do you practice these things yourself? If you do, then you can be assured that you will not inherit the Kingdom. You will not enter into all that God has prepared for you. Although we usually think of unbelievers as the people who do these things, it is a shame to say, but yet true, that there are many Christians who still practice them.

Let us start with the first word in verse 21, "envy." How many of us envy others and are jealous of what they have and who they are? How many of us have hatred in our hearts towards someone else? Or, how many of us love to strive about certain doctrinal teachings? Could it be that some of us are "serving Christ" with some kind of selfish ambition as our motivation? Don't you know that those who practice such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God? I'm writing this to warn you, to tell you plainly that not everyone will enter in, but only those who are obedient.

Not only are there believers who strive, envy and hate but it has also come to my attention that there are literally thousands of Christian men and women who regularly commit fornication and other sexual sins. There are also innumerable people who profess to know Jesus but spend countless hours in bars, drinking and participating in the worldly atmosphere, jokes and conversation. The sad truth is that many of the individuals who "come to church" on Sunday morning do other things during the week that would raise the eyebrows if not the hair of anyone who genuinely loves the Lord. It is even true that there is a growing number of Christians who use marijuana and other drugs claiming that they enhance their "spiritual" experience. This is a lie from the pit. And it is these kinds of activities about which the scripture is talking. No one who does these things will enter into the Kingdom but only those who do the Father's will.

## THE STORY OF ESAU

Perhaps you remember the story of Esau. He was the firstborn son of Isaac and because he was the first born, he was the rightful heir of all that his father had. However, one day returning from hunting he was tired and hungry. His brother Jacob had just cooked up a delicious pot of beans. So Esau entered into a bargain with Jacob. He traded his birthright – that is his right to be the first to inherit from his father – for the food. He exchanged something of extreme value for temporary earthly, physical gratification. Later, when he thought about, he changed his mind and wanted his birthright back. He repented and cried, but it was too late. He had already sold out for a very cheap price.

This story still speaks to us today. Hebrews 12:15,16 exhorts us to be “looking diligently lest anyone should fall short of the grace of God...lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.” This is an exact picture of how it will be when Jesus returns. There are many believers in today’s church who are exchanging their right to inherit the Kingdom together with Jesus Christ, for earthly pleasure. They are indulging their flesh in various types of sins and imagining that tomorrow they will be able to reign and rule with Christ. However, these individuals will be excluded from the Kingdom. They will not be let in, even when they cry out with tears and repentance. “There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mt 25:30).

Please notice here how the writer especially emphasizes sexual sins. How easy it is to think that these things don’t matter. How small a “morsel” a little sexual indulgence may appear in our own eyes. However, when temptation strikes, when our flesh cries out with every cell for sensual gratification, let us remember what lies ahead. Upon our choices lies our destiny. For many disobedient believers on that day there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

I am not saying that there is not room for repentance. Surely there is – TODAY. But when the heavens open and Jesus appears in glory, it will be too late. Take advantage of this opportunity therefore right now and thoroughly

repent for everything in which you are involved with does not glorify God. Change your thinking and your activities to conform your life to His will. In this way, and only in this way, will you be ready when He comes and be able to enter with Him into His kingdom and glory.

Now let us read together in chapter five of Ephesians, starting with verse 1. Here again Paul is writing to believers:

*“Therefore, be followers of God, as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and has given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling aroma. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God” (Eph 5:1-5).*

I believe that these verses speak for themselves. It is very true that in Jesus Christ we have cleansing from these sins – that His blood is available to us today to wash us clean. However, I would like to submit to you that it is only the repentant ones who confess their sins whom God is going to cleanse (I Jn 1:9). Those who are unfaithful, rebellious, disobedient and continue unrepentantly in their sin are going to be held accountable. True, if they are believers they have escaped the wrath of God and eternal judgment, but the scriptures tell us clearly that they will not inherit the Millennial Kingdom.

## **WHO WILL ENTER**

Who then will enter into God’s kingdom? It will be those who have submitted their life completely to Jesus Christ and are allowing Him to express His life and nature through them. Jesus taught: “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5:3). “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Mt 5:5). “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’

sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 5:10). Those people who are humble, who are meek, who are obedient and who submit themselves to the heavenly rulership of Jesus Christ are the ones who will possess the earth when He comes again. They are the ones to whom He will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant...enter into the joy of your lord" (Mt 25:21).

A passage in II Peter also speaks clearly to us about this subject. Starting with verse 9 in chapter 1, we read, "For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things, you will never stumble; For so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Pet 1:9-11).

"He that lacks these things" is somebody who is foolish, someone who is lazy and irresponsible in his relationship with Jesus. Peter explains to us here that if we do the will of the Lord, our entrance into His Kingdom is assured. Praise God! What a glorious day this will be, when all those who love Jesus Christ, who look forward to His appearing and who have served Him during their lifetime, will enter into the joy and the abundance which He is preparing! Oh, hallelujah, what a glory it will be to see all those faithful saints, some of whom have even lost their lives for the Kingdom of God, enter into this wonderful 1,000-year reigning and feasting experience.

## **THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL**

Everything written in God's word is written for our benefit. Therefore, it might be good for us here to spend a little time thinking about the Children of Israel. After hundreds of years of bondage in Egypt, God came to rescue them. He sent Moses and delivered them from their heavy burden of slavery to the whims of an earthly king. After miraculously delivering them, He led them through the wilderness toward the "promised land." It was in this land that they were meant to finally have rest and live a life of blessing and fruitfulness. However, most of them continually rebelled against God. They refused His speaking and

were disobedient. Therefore, God swore an oath that they would never enter into this “rest” and that they would die in the wilderness.

The writer of Hebrews refers to this part of Jewish history at great length to make a very important and sobering point. Beginning in chapter 3, he begins to quote Old Testament scriptures and generally develop a parallel between what happened with the Children of Israel and what will happen also with believers. He is using Jewish history to make an extremely important point. Here the writer speaks of the future rest, the seventh day rest – the Millennial Kingdom (Heb 4:4,5). He is referring to the Day of the Lord, *His* day of rest which is coming. In this connection he says, beginning with verse 1 in chapter 4: “Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it” (Heb 4:1). This “you” mentioned here must refer to believers since it is to them that he is writing. Verse 9 says, “There remains therefore a rest for the people of God” (Heb 4:9). Verse 11 states, “Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest any should fall after the same example of disobedience” (Heb 4:11).

Here we have clearly and carefully elucidated for us by the writer of Hebrews exactly the same truth which we have been studying. That is that it is very possible for someone to become born-again, to actually be a child of God, but not be allowed to enter the coming Kingdom – the coming rest. The reasons for not entering are the same as that of the Children of Israel – unbelief and disobedience. I urge you all to read chapters three and four of Hebrews carefully and to see in the light of all the things about which we have been seeing how this passage applies specifically to the coming Kingdom; how the rest, the victory over the enemy and the enjoyment of Christ in His coming glory, are something which we must labor to enter into. Our entrance into the Kingdom requires diligence and faithfulness. It is quite clearly written here that it is possible to “come short of it” or in other words not be able to enter. It is even quite scriptural to have within us a certain amount of fear – a holy, Godly fear – of not measuring up to the standard which God requires.

## WHEN JESUS COMES

Interestingly, it is our condition when Jesus comes that will determine whether or not we enter into the Millennial reign of Christ. It may be that we have been faithful to the Lord for many years. We have always been a faithful servant. But as we get older, certain temptations enter in. For example, perhaps we think that God would forgive us if we divorced our older, somewhat wrinkled, saggy, less attractive wife and married some cute, young "morsel," someone more "spiritually attuned to our needs." Maybe we hope that it wouldn't be "too bad" to just indulge ourselves a little after so many years of service. After all, maybe we imagine, God's forgiveness is great and He understands our weaknesses. Ezekiel 18:24 speaks to this situation very clearly saying: "But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity... All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed."

It is not enough to have been faithful in the past. We must remain faithful until the end. Paul says in one place that he did not count on having "already attained." At that time he did not have the confidence that he had already "apprehended" (Phil 3:12,13). You see, Paul definitely had eternal life. He had certainly been born again. Yet he could not be sure of inheriting the Kingdom. He was constantly pressing on (Phil 3:14). In I Cor 9:27 Paul says that "I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified." I don't think Paul was afraid of losing eternal life. He knew that nothing could separate him from God's love (Rom 8:35). But he was concerned about the possibility of being "disqualified" from something. He knew that to inherit the Kingdom, he must continue faithful until the end.

But later on near the end of his life – a life of faithfulness and fruitfulness – he did receive the assurance of the Kingdom. In II Tim 4:7,8 he asserts that now: "I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness." The "crown" here

refers to reigning in the Kingdom. So we see that it is only through a lifetime of faithfulness that we can be assured of inheriting the Kingdom with Jesus Christ.

While it is possible for someone who was faithful to become unfaithful, it is also possible for someone who has lived a life of sin, to repent, become obedient to the Lord and succeed in entering God's Kingdom. In God, there is room for repentance. Our sin can be forgiven and we can change our course of life. Our Lord is very forgiving and loving and will allow us to return again to Him. It is not what we have done in the past, but how we are living when Jesus comes that will determine our entrance into His Kingdom. If you are realizing that you have not been pleasing to the Lord, right now is a good opportunity to turn again to Him, repent and allow Him to reign over every aspect of your life. Once again Ezekiel speaks to us saying: "But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed...None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him" (Ezek 18:21,22). Hallelujah, it is possible for a sinning child of God to return to Him, do His will and be able to inherit the Kingdom!