

Coronation Day
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On June 2, 1953, Princess Elizabeth was crowned Elizabeth II, Queen of England in an elaborate ceremony at Westminster Abbey in London. I am (thankfully) not old enough to remember the ceremony, but I've seen some the Coronation Chair displayed Westminster, and I was shocked at how small and incredibly painful it looks. It's all wood—no royal padding! I've gazed at the bejeweled and purple-velvet-lined crown behind a well-guarded glass case at the Tower of London. It looks terribly heavy what with all those diamonds.

I've watched Royal Weddings and been fascinated by the ceremonies and pageantry associated with royalty. The changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace is amazing thing, too. There's something about seeing royal robes and diamond crusted crowns that makes us stop in our tracks and stare with wide-eyed wonder. Like it or not, there's something about someone legitimately wearing a crown that demands our respect.

When I visited Westminster Abbey and St. Patrick's Cathedral, I fell in love with the beauty and solemnness of it all. And, mercy, but there were some huge, huge pipe organs in those churches. Just being on a guided tour invoked a certain formal attitude. We whispered. We walked softly. We quietly admired.

I think it would be wonderful to worship in one of huge cathedrals. I might like it...for a Sunday or two. Then I think I would miss the rather informal worship services I'm used to. Services in which I feel free to chuckle at the preacher's lame jokes, tap my feet in time to the lively music, voice an "amen" or two in agreement with a truth spoken, and even hold up my hands in prayer and worship if I feel so moved.

But still...there's a lot to be said about formal religious ceremonies.

What if, when we come together to worship, we would envision our Crowned King, Jesus, sitting on a special chair right in front where everybody could see Him? What if we acted with respectful reverence when we thought of Jesus wearing the Crown of Thorns on His head? What if at the mention of the name of Jesus, we bowed our heads in worship? What if, when we read or heard or meditated on God's Word, we understood that the words came to us from Jesus Our King through the heart of God our Father? What if Jesus was actually in our presence, in all His glory, as our Crowned King? Would we give Him the respect and honor He deserves?

There are some churches (and believers) who value this approach to the royalty of Jesus. There are some churches (and believers) who devalue this approach as too formal, too relegated, too steeped in man-made tradition. I think there's a bit of rightness to both points of view.

But just once, before we get to heaven, wouldn't it be great if every person in this country would come together to celebrate the Coronation of Jesus, our King of Glory? "We see Jesus, crowned with glory and honor," (Hebrews 2:9).

That would be something, wouldn't it?