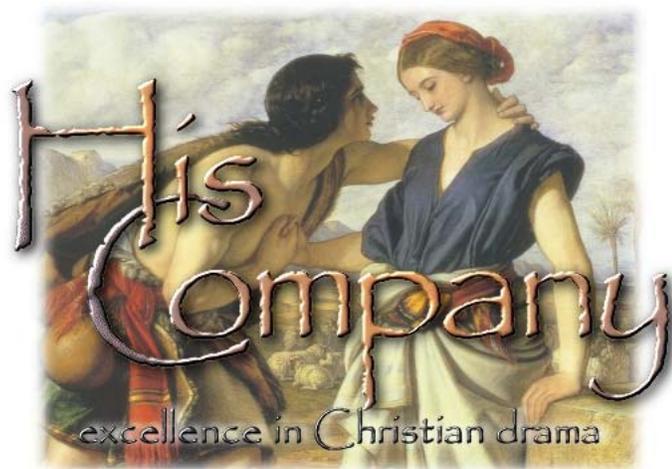


CROWN HIM WITH GLORY

AN EASTER MUSICAL

by
David S. Lampel



AUTHOR'S NOTE

5 *Crown Him with Glory* is an Easter musical. "After His death and resurrection—but before He ascended to the Father—the Lord Jesus spent forty days moving about the area, visiting with those closest to Him and giving final instructions to His disciples. This had been a traumatic time for the remaining eleven; they had never before lived through anything like the experiences of the past forty days. There were still many questions left unanswered. Before ascending, Jesus told His disciples to remain in Jerusalem until the arrival of the Holy Spirit—without whom they would be incapable of continuing His ministry. Then He was gone—and many of the disciples, like the apostle Peter, turned away from that moment confused and uncertain about tomorrow." (Narrator in *Crown Him with Glory*)

10 The apostle Peter and his wife have remained in Jerusalem after Christ's ascension—waiting, questioning, turning the recent events over in their minds. They are wrestling with questions that have no easy answers. The script contains moments of comfortable humor—especially with Peter—and moments of powerfully moving drama, as Peter recounts how on the night after they buried Jesus he walked through the silent city to the place where Jesus had been crucified.

15 The book originally used (for music) was *Crown Him with Glory*, by Dan Burgess; arranged by Dan Burgess and David Maddux (Discovery House Publishers, 1991).

The tape sign (🎵) imbedded in the text means to cue the intro for the next song at this point. This assumes, of course, that these specific songs are being used.

CHARACTERS

Peter, Rachel (his wife) and Narrators

SCRIPT

25 *House lights down.*
Stage lights up.

Before Trax begin, Choir enters, enthusiastically, from several directions. Then cue Trax.
Choir begins singing before all are on stage.

SONG: "CROWN HIM WITH GLORY" CHOIR

At cutoff, p12, lights dim on choir; up travel spot (or area lights) on narrators DC.

NARRATOR #1

(reading from a Bible)

35 In the past, God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets, at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he

made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

40 *(pause)*

After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.¹

NARRATOR #2

45 It is this Jesus of whom we sing tonight: this one who came to die that we might live. Because He became the one and final sacrifice for our transgressions, He is worthy of all our praise and His crown of glory. Jesus won the struggle over death

(pause)

by dying. He won the right to claim victory because He died.

50 *(pause)*

From His place in eternity, Jesus initiated history:

NARRATOR #1

55 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.²

NARRATOR #2

Then He stepped out of eternity and into history to begin the process of salvation that would result in His death, and the opportunity for eternal life for mankind.

60 **NARRATOR #1**

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken.³

65

NARRATOR #2

70 It all climaxed at the cross when Jesus died. At that moment, His death
proclaimed the end of man’s separation from God:

NARRATOR #1

75 At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to
bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and
the bodies of many holy people who had died, were raised to life. They
came out of the tombs, and after Jesus’ resurrection they went into the
holy city and appeared to many people.⁴

NARRATOR #2

80 But then came the event that set Jesus apart from every other savior that
had ever lived and died: Jesus lived again—and by His resurrection
declared victory over death for all mankind. He walked out of the tomb
to step out of history and back into eternity.

NARRATOR #1

85 After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven
and he sat at the right hand of God.⁵

NARRATOR #2

85 Jesus Christ is Lord! He has paid the price—even unto death—and now
death itself is vanquished and the Savior who died has now been
returned to the forever in which He has always lived.

NARRATOR #3

90 After His death and resurrection—but before He ascended to the
Father—the Lord Jesus spent forty days moving about the area, visiting
with those closest to Him and giving final instructions to His disciples.
This had been a traumatic time for the remaining eleven; they had never
before lived through anything like the experiences of the past forty days.
95 There were still many questions left unanswered.

Before ascending, Jesus told His disciples to remain in Jerusalem until the arrival of the Holy Spirit—without whom they would be incapable of continuing His ministry.

100 Then He was gone—and many of the disciples, like the apostle Peter, turned away from that moment confused and uncertain about tomorrow.

Cross-fade lights from narrators to drama set.

105 *The Time: A few days after the ascension of Jesus*
The Place: Jerusalem; the home of a friend to the Lord's disciples
Rachel, wife of the apostle Peter, is cleaning up after a meal. Peter enters the small room⁶ in a huff.

110 **PETER**
(slightly out of breath; looking about)
 Where are the others?

RACHEL
(continuing to go about her business)
 Around. They've been in and out all day.

115 **PETER**
(emphatically; with frustration)
 I wish everyone would just stay put for once! How are we to know when it's here?

120 *(pause; to Rachel)*
 Maybe I should go out and round them all up.

RACHEL
(immediately, but patiently; as if to a child)
 Now just take a deep breath and count to five.

125 **PETER**
 Don't you want me to count to ten?

RACHEL
(immediately)
 I don't think you could make it.

PETER

130 I'm all right. I just wish we could stay united on this.

RACHEL

(going to the pot and beginning to dish some up)

Have some supper. I saved you some stew.

PETER

135 *(are you kidding?)*

Who can think of eating!

(pause; reconsidering; innocently)

What kind of stew?

RACHEL

140 Lentil.

PETER

(considering; sounds good after all)

Mmm—

RACHEL

145 *(handing him the bowl)*

Eat. Do you some good.

PETER

(staring into the bowl handed him)

I don't deserve you, you know.

150 **RACHEL**

(what's the surprise?)

I know.

155 *Peter takes a large piece of bread and, using it as a sop, attacks the stew with relish—and considerable appetite. Realizing, just as the food is entering his mouth, that he has failed to give thanks, Peter stops, abruptly, and looks toward heaven.*

PETER

(quickly and mechanically)

160 Blessed art Thou, Jehovah our God, King of the world, who causes to
come forth bread from the earth. Amen.

Peter returns to his stew, speaking between mouthfuls.⁷

165

PETER

I ran into Nathan this afternoon. It was good seeing him. He misses our fish. Says no one else can supply his market with as steady a supply.

(pause; admitting reluctantly)

170

Sometimes I find myself longing for the old days—days spent out on the boat—where my only concern was on which side to drop our nets.

RACHEL

(not looking up from her work; sarcastically)

And when to come in—

PETER

175

Back then I knew what I was working for. Everything was clear and simple: Get as many fish as you can out of the water and into the boat without tearing your net.

(pause)

Rachel, I even catch myself wishing for the old ways

180

(ashamed)

before Jesus came to us.

RACHEL

(going to Peter; sitting next to him)

You don't really mean that.

185

PETER

It was easier then. The old way put God so out of reach, there was no point in even trying.

RACHEL

(with gentle sarcasm)

190

So then you had an excuse.

PETER

195 God was more distant then. What did He care about a simple fisherman
tending his nets.

RACHEL

You were never a simple fisherman.

PETER

200 Things have become too complicated. Too many questions and not
enough answers.

RACHEL

(pause, thinking)

What about the others? What are they saying?

PETER

205 *(shaking his head)*

We're all stumbling about the city wondering what to do with ourselves,
ducking into doorways to avoid the Romans—avoiding even our own
people. "Stay in Jerusalem," He said.

(Peter begins gesturing wildly, waving the small bowl of stew about)

210 Sure. He's gone. He's done with it.

Rachel grabs for the bowl in the nick of time, taking it from Peter before she rises from the bench.

215 **RACHEL**

(rising, moving about the room; after a pause; introspectively)

I feel Him every day. I scrub the floor, go to the market, care for the
children—and it's as if I feel Jesus more closely than ever before. Doesn't
make sense.

220 **PETER**

(going to her)

You didn't see him that last time. You weren't there. It all felt
so—final. His work was done here. He spent three years teaching us all
He could, then God took Him back. And He was gone. Up into the clouds

225 and He was gone.

RACHEL

(firmly; a little miffed)

No, I wasn't there. But don't talk to me as if I've been in Egypt for the last three years. Jesus was no stranger to me.

230

PETER

(rigorously)

Then why is everything so mixed up? Why is my mind such a jumble of—

RACHEL

(stopping Peter physically before speaking)

235

Everyone's feeling it.

PETER

I know I'm not alone. But that doesn't help. Rachel, I feel like I'm split into two people: On the one side, is the Peter who lived with his Master, who was changed by Him, whose life gained new purpose from the Son of God—and who was told by Him to continue with the Way, to spread the word. But on the other side is the Peter who

240

(frustrated)

could never quite put all the pieces together, who kept sticking his foot in his mouth—and who now feels as if his Master has left him.

245

RACHEL

Listen to your heart instead of your mouth. You know that's not true.

PETER

But— ☹️

(pause; calming down)

250

I miss the old days because the confusion used to be simpler. I've always been confused, but now it seems to be scattered in the wind. Before Jesus came to us, we were confused by only one thing: Where was the Messiah? Why didn't He come? We're ready. Where is He?

255

Cross-fade lights from drama set to choir.

SONG: "ALL WE LIKE SHEEP"**CHOIR**

At cut-off, p21, cross-fade lights from choir to drama set.

260 *Peter and Rachel have continued their conversation (during "All We Like Sheep"). By now Peter is more agitated than when we left them; there is more of an edge to everything he says. We rejoin them...⁸*

RACHEL

(simply)

265 Would you have had any other Savior?

PETER

(of course not)

No.

(he's given this some thought)

270 But I think Jesus should have another Peter.

RACHEL

(quietly)

Are you still having the dream?

PETER

(frustrated)

275 It clings to me, day and night. Just when I think I've finally shaken it off,
I—

RACHEL

(immediately; losing patience; almost angry)

280 Peter, how many times must we all remind you? How many different ways
can we say it: Jesus forgave you. Why is it so hard for you to accept it?

PETER

(responding with intensity)

285 Because no one else sees the color of my heart. But Jesus could. Others
saw my actions, but Jesus saw my motives. Others saw a few moments of
weakness, but Jesus saw the hypocrisy.

RACHEL*(insistently)*

290 And all of it He forgave.

PETER*(not giving in, but wanting to draw the argument to a close; immediately, angry)*

I won't argue facts with you. Our Master died, He rose, He met with us
 and talked with us and showed us His hands and feet and side. I won't
 295 argue facts with you. It all happened. He met with me on the shore and
 fried up some breakfast fish for us to eat. He told us to deliver His
 message throughout all the world, but to stay here in Jerusalem until the
 Spirit comes. I still hear His words. It all happened. Then he stood on a
 hill and was pulled back into heaven by the hand of God. It all happened.

300

*Peter ends the last speech more subdued, thoughtful.***RACHEL***(still pressing, but with some compassion)*

305 Then why are you still hurting?

PETER*(moving away; after a long pause; beginning simply, but crescendoing to an emotional pitch)⁹*

I never told you this before. The night after they buried Jesus I went out
 310 into the city. The streets were so silent and black, and I wrapped the
 blackness about me and tried to forget what I had done. Even then I was
 so afraid—I was so afraid someone would see me and identify me with
 Him.

(angry at himself)

315 I was so ashamed, but I couldn't stop being afraid for myself. In my heart I
 knew what Jesus had said—that there was purpose in His dying. But in
 my mind I saw only a coward who had denied even knowing Him.

(with great shame and remorse)

He had trusted me, and I thought only of myself.

320

(pausing to regain the image of that night in his mind)

The street was empty—that twisted street that had been filled with people laughing and mocking and spitting their hatred.

(thankfully)

325 It was empty, and I embraced the emptiness like an old friend who understands your pain when no one else can.

(wistfully, with sorrow)

For the first time since that day Jesus found me, I could no longer feel Him beside me.

(distantly)

330 I was alone; very much alone.

(pause)

The guard was asleep, and soon I was outside the city.

(gathering intensity)

I didn't really want to see it, but something drove me on.

335 *(speaking quickly)*

The path was still muddy from the storm; I tripped on the wet stones in the dark; I think I was praying that a bolt of lightning would strike me down and end my misery. But soon I was there—

(stopping abruptly; seeing it)

340 and that ugly stand of wood was still there. I couldn't keep my eyes from traveling up that post,

(painfully; grimacing)

to the crossbeam that was still in place. Rachel,

(with anguished horror)

345 do you know that the spikes were still there—still embedded in the wood. And I couldn't look on that cross without seeing the dying body of Jesus.

(angrily)

I know the cross was empty—I know He wasn't there—but

(crying out)

350 He was!

(whispering)

He was.

(disgustedly; after a pause)

And I put Him there.

355

RACHEL

*(firmly, with impatience; setting Peter straight, but—more angry with herself—
admitting her own complicity)*

No. We all put Him there.

(with rhythmic intensity)

360

The soldiers drove the spikes, but we all held Him down so they could.
And we were all pulling on that rope that lifted Him into place. ☹

(softening, but still making her point)

Jesus died for all of us—not just you. We're all guilty—not just you.

(compassionately; going to him)

365

Oh Peter, it's good that you remember His suffering, but remember that
He died to take away your suffering. The guilt of the law has been
replaced by the grace of Jesus. He loves you; when will you be able to
love yourself?

370

*Cross-fade lights from drama set to travel spot (or area lights) DC (soloist). Bring up lights
on choir at this point or later at m.23, p24.*

SONG: "HE WAS LIFTED HIGH"**SOLO & CHOIR**

375

*At cutoff, p38, lights remain up on choir as narrators move DC; travel spot (or area lights)
up DC.*

NARRATOR #1

380

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the
Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish
but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only
begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have
everlasting life. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who
does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in
the name of the only begotten Son of God.”¹⁰ ☹

385

NARRATOR #2

Jesus was lifted high on a cross for our sins—yours and mine. He died.
But then He came up out of the tomb in which He was buried. If Jesus
had not walked out of that tomb, He would only have been a martyr; but
because He did, He's a Savior.

390

Travel Spot (or area lights) out on narrators DC; they return to choir position.

SONG: "HE AROSE"**CHOIR**

At cutoff, p48, lights cross-fade from choir to drama area.

395

As lights up Peter and Rachel are in the room; Rachel gets two cups while Peter takes the water jar. She holds the cups while he pours. As he is pouring the water into the second cup, he speaks.

PETER

400

(relaxed; with none of the tension of the previous scene)

Do you remember, Rachel, during the hottest summer months, when I'd
come home from a long day's work? I'd be so hot and sweaty and filthy
from the boat, you made me leave all my clothing out behind the house.
I'd come in and scrub and scrub until my skin was raw—and even then,
there was a smell of the sea about me. Most came off with the soap, but
always some remained.

405

(he takes a drink; reassuring Rachel)

I feel better about it. God's given me a wife with wisdom—and more than
her share of brass. But not all of it has washed away. The truth of God's
grace just isn't enough to make me forget the past.

410

RACHEL

(unsure; thinking out loud)

And maybe it shouldn't.

415

Peter looks at his wife as she continues.

RACHEL*(still thinking)*

420

Your father taught you everything he knew about fishing. You began with that knowledge from his life. But after he died, you were on your own, and sometimes you made mistakes

(Peter objects)

—don't argue with me: sometimes you made stupid mistakes.

PETER

425

Well, not stupid—

RACHEL

Didn't you learn from those mistakes? Didn't they make you a better fisherman?

PETER

430

(defensively)

I see. So I should continue making stupid mistakes so I can be an even better—

RACHEL*(interrupting)*

435

I really don't think you'll have to try.

(pause)

All I'm saying is, Jesus knew what He was getting in the bargain.

PETER

Did He know what He was getting with Judas?

440

(jumping up)

That's what haunts me.

RACHEL

Listen, you said it yourself: Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God."¹¹

Could He really have been taken by surprise?

445

PETER

(cautiously; working slowly through his thoughts)

450 There was a darkness that lived with Judas from the beginning. From the
start there was a certain calculation to his actions. And at the end, he was
like a man who had done business with the devil.

RACHEL

And was God surprised?

PETER

455 *(thinking a moment; then letting a small smile spread across his face)*
God knew the heart of Judas as well as He knew mine.

(with tempered joy)

I'm not as evil as I might think! I'm a man—nothing more, but nothing
less.

460 *(after calming down)*

But still, I feel like damaged goods.

RACHEL

I think you have an advantage. You know what it's like to let someone
down—you'll know how to forgive when somebody lets you down.

465 **PETER**

I just love Him so much—I don't want to ever let Him down again.

RACHEL

You probably will. But as you said: Jesus knows your heart. He knows
how much you love Him.

470 **PETER**

(wistfully; whispering to himself; with regret)

I wish I had washed His feet.

RACHEL

(not hearing)

475 What?

PETER*(slightly embarrassed)*

Oh, I was remembering that last supper with Him.

480

(exasperated)

It seems like the last three years of my life can be marked off by the stupid things I've done around Jesus. He was teaching us, and I was too thick-headed to see it.

(with awe)

485

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, knelt down before me, took my filthy foot in His hand, and washed it. His hands were covered with the dirt of the street. The Son of God.

(with mock arrogance)

And I protested! No sir, not my feet.

490

(what a wit!; with a sigh)

You're right, Rachel, I won't forget.

(rhythmically)

The wounds from my sins are healed,

(painfully) ☹️

495

but the scars remain. And every scar will be a reminder of who Jesus was—and is—and what He expects me to be.

SONG: "HE IS LORD OF ALL"**PETER & CHOIR**

At cutoff, p56, lights fade on choir, but remain up on drama area.

500

Peter and Rachel embrace after cutoff. Rachel turns UL to tend to her pot of stew, leaving Peter alone DC.

PETER*(it's finally sinking in)*

505

I've had it all wrong from the beginning.

RACHEL*(not looking up from her work)*

I could have told you that.

510 **PETER**
(with playful sternness)

Hush!

(seriously)

I shouldn't be so occupied with my weaknesses; I have them—they're a part of me. But Jesus is also a part of me—

515 *(crescendoing as it sinks in)*

and the weaker I am, the stronger I'll be in His power. Rachel!

RACHEL

(simply)

Have some more stew.

520 **PETER**

Rachel, don't you see? ☹

Rachel gazes at Peter with slightly exaggerated innocence.

525 **PETER**

Rachel, Jesus is back with the Father. This was just part of it—a beginning. He'll continue working—but now through us. Through me—through you. I don't have to be confused.

RACHEL

530 *(after a beat; "yes, dear...")*

Have some stew.

PETER

(not even hearing her)

535 He's up there now, with the Father. He hasn't left us behind—He's just completed His work among us. Jesus lived, and died, and lived again, and all my sins—all my weaknesses—have been forgiven. It's only the beginning. Now He lives with His Father—the God we've worshipped for centuries. And now we'll worship Jesus. He's paid the price, Rachel. He's completed the task God gave Him.

540 *(soberly)*

He's earned our praise. If we were perfect, then we'd receive the glory.
But we're not. There's only one God, and Jesus Christ is His Son.

Lights go out on drama area, as lights up on choir.

545 **SONG: WORTHY "IS THE LAMB"** **CHOIR**

Let Trax roll un-paused into "All We Like Sheep" reprise.

SONG: "ALL WE LIKE SHEEP" (REPRISE) **CHOIR**

550 *At cutoff, p74, up Houselights.*
Spoken remarks and invitation by Pastor. (DC)
At his cue, cue Trax to "Who Shall Ascend."
Pastor steps down from stage.

SONG: "WHO SHALL ASCEND" **CHOIR (DURING INVITATION PERIOD)**

555 *Closing remarks by Pastor.*
At his cue, down Houselights, cue Trax to "Crown Him with Glory."

SONG: "CROWN HIM WITH GLORY" (REPRISE): CHOIR

560 *At cutoff, p80, up Houselights.*

NOTES

- 565
1. Hebrews 1:1-3.
 2. John 1:1-3.
 3. Isaiah 9:6; 25:8.
 4. Matthew 27:51-53.
 5. Mark 16:19.
- 570
6. The precise set is left up to Director's discretion. In the original production, the set consisted of a small framework suggesting a room, with virtually all dialogue and action taking place just in front of (DC) this framework.
 7. This play (and any production, for that matter) benefits greatly by the realism of actually eating and drinking when the script calls for it.
 8. Depending on the set design and lighting capabilities, Peter and Rachel could exit between scenes, move back into the shadows, or freeze in place.
- 575
9. A suggested interpretation from the Writer/Director/Actor : One's first reaction might be to block this long speech with Peter moving about the stage, using his entire body for dramatic impact. In the original production, we felt there was greater dramatic impact in having Peter stand in one place and keep his arms and hands pretty much at his sides. All emotional turmoil: anger, frustration, anguish, loneliness, etc. were expressed by only the voice and face.
- 580
10. John 3:14-16, 18.
 11. Matthew 16:16.

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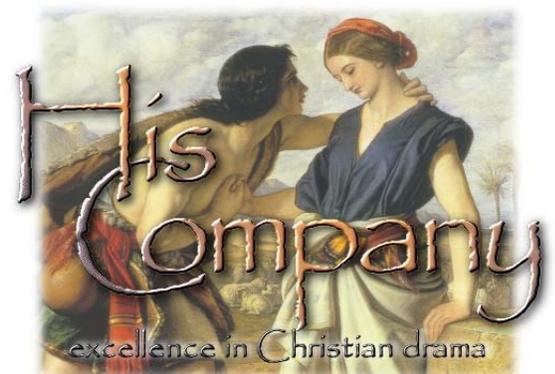
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