

Crowns Down

'Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved' (St. Peter, Acts 4:12).

Three kings bowed down before the Infant King, subjecting their royalty to the Lord of Life. No power on earth gave them certainty except the ground of Jesus. Before Him they bowed low, crowns down. They realized what St. Louis Anjou articulated 1300 years later. Born of a queen with a brother who became a king, Louis discovered 'Jesus is my Kingdom. If I do not have Him, I lose everything.'

Americans eschewed authentic royalty from the start; instead, we crafted the cult of celebrity and made idols out of fragile creative people amplified on concert stages and big screens. Last year, we lost Prince, the androgynous pop innovator, and Star Wars' Princess Leia. The frenzy that followed suggested Queen Elizabeth had been killed. Yet today's frenzy will morph fast into tomorrow's fresh flesh. In the glow of new images clamoring for our devotion, we forget old idols.

In truth, we have been seduced by media manipulations of persons who live risky lifestyles and who may well have drunk the Cool-Aid themselves, believing their own press rather than casting their crowns at the feet of Jesus. We drive the mess. As the protagonist of 'La La Land' says about the Hollywood machine, 'We worship everything and value nothing.'

Especially poignant to me in these celebrity deaths was the exclusion of any reference to Jesus. Had the Prince and Princess made peace with Him? Does anyone care? Carrie Fisher's (Princess Leia) mother, Debbie Reynolds, grew up a devout Christian and in her early career was outspoken about King Jesus. Yet in the face of her daughter's untimely end, the 84-year-old said that she wanted only to be with her daughter in the afterlife, and gave up the ghost. Understandable, but shaky ground. Our loved ones aren't the gate-keepers. Jesus is. Jesus alone. The only sure way to prepare for death is by calling on His name and repenting of every star we have worshiped or sought to become ourselves.

Death awaits all of us. And Jesus is the ground of heaven, our sole path to a happy eternity. Jesus commissions us, His faithful ones, to do everything in our power to love our friends and family into faith in His Name. Like the Magi, let us lay down our crowns and worship the One. Let us then arise and make Him known.