

Crowns conclusion

Rewards

Based on Swindoll p37 "Imagine having a week like this: On Monday, you awake to find a yellow rose on your dressing table and a note that reads, "you're the greatest!" On Tuesday, a friend smiles and says, "Thanks for caring". On Wednesday, your neighbour brings you a plate of warm chocolate chip cookies. On Thursday you receive a hand written thank you note for some voluntary work you have done. On Friday your best friend surprises you with an evening on the town "because you deserve it". On Saturday, you work hard to clean the house, and all the family notices! Finally, on Sunday, the youngest member at the dinner table presents you with a portrait drawn in crayon and says I love you. What a week that would be! Your load of responsibility would not have been any lighter, but the drudgery would have turned to delight and weariness into strength, because you have been appreciated. Being appreciated is what heavenly rewards are all about. Jesus has not forgotten or ignored all that you do for Him, and someday He will tangibly show His appreciation with tangible rewards -crowns."

We live in a reward-oriented society.

Even many church hymns speak of heavenly rewards and crowns.

Most rewards will be received in heaven, not on earth. We are trained to look for our rewards in the present rather than in the future. So it's easy for us to get caught in the trap of wanting our rewards immediately. But this expectation unbiblical. Many of our rewards will be revealed to us in heaven when we stand before Christ. Then He will test our works with fire to determine their value. All that remains after this testing will warrant a reward.

All rewards are based on quality, not quantity. We are often impressed with the size and physical appearance of a group, church, or individual ministry. But God does not judge a ministry on the basis of quantity. Instead, His assessment is founded on the motives and reasons behind any given ministry or act of service. And because He is omniscient, His knowledge of these things is complete and infallible

Not a single act done in His name and power will go unrewarded, no matter how uncelebrated or obscure it might be. And even though we may get anxious and want our rewards now, we can be assured that our Lord will keep His promise to reward us for our faithful service, though He may wait until we reach heaven to do so.

Question

What do you want out of life - what do you want out of the after-life?

Proverbs 30:8-9 - ... Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the LORD?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonour the name of my God."

Give us this day our daily bread" and "do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"

Luke 18:22 - Jesus heard this, he said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have **treasure in heaven**. Then come, follow me."

Treasure in heaven is something worth wanting and getting.

Mathew 6:19- 21 Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

And so to judgement

Christians should not be anxious about the judgement seat of Christ. For them, judgement will be a time of receiving rewards.

The word "crown", in one form or another is used over 70 times. Sometimes, "crown" means the official headgear of a king or a priest. In other places, "crown" refers to the victor's wreath in Greek-or Roman athletic games, or more generally to a special honour or cause for rejoicing.

In all relevant passages in the New Testament the Greek word used IS "STEPHANOS". The basic meaning here is not the diadem of a king, but the athlete's wreath of victory.

1 Corinthians 3:10-15 (reward) When Jesus returns and calls us before his *bema*, it will be to reward us rather than to punish us! 1 Rewards, God intends to reward believers when Jesus returns. In giving us rewards, God will be more than fair. For the sins we've committed there will be no praise-but there will be forgiveness! For the good we do there will be rewards, and the heartfelt and joyous "Well done!" of our God.

The rewards reserved for believers are called "crowns. These crowns are a gift. ~~The reward should not be the goal of service, but may be the gauge of Christian living.~~

What is the incentive, then, for doing the best we can?
What is the incentive for "going all out for Christ?"
What is the incentive for abiding by the rules of God (the game)?

What is the incentive for striving lawfully? The crowns.

Do we really want to get to the Judgement Seat of Christ and say, "I didn't think a crown was that important. I didn't really care whether I got a crown or not. If I just get there, that is all I cared about."

The 5 crowns

- 1 For those who **WALK** in obedience and holiness there will be the **EVERLASTING, IMPERISHABLE, INCORRUPTIBLE, CROWN** 1 Corinthians 9:25 Those who pursue holiness and avoid compromise laying aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us. So we can run with endurance the race that is set before us. Victory belongs to the self-disciplined.
2. For those who are **WATCHING** for Jesus return there is the **CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** literally translated is "a crown for doing right."The crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me (Paul) on that day-and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing." 2 Timothy 4:8 The more eagerly we look ahead to Jesus' return, the less likely we are to be attracted by sin.
3. James (1:12) writes "Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test or has been approved, he will receive the **CROWN OF LIFE** that God has promised to those who love him." For those who love and **WORSHIP** Him regardless of cost, for faithfulness in testing, for perseverance in the Christian life despite persecution. Remaining true to the Lord is evidence of our love for the Lord and not seeking a hundred reasons to justify opting out. Christians who worship the Lord in sacrificial ways will receive the Crown of life. God will honour your faithfulness with the crown of life when He comes. The highest form of

worship is to be willing to give up one's life and that is why some call this the martyrs crown (see Revelation 2:10)

4. Crown of Joy Philippians 4:1, 1 Thesalonians 2:19 The '**CROWN OF JOY**' is given for faithful **WITNESSING** leading the lost to Christ or building them up.

5 The crown of glory for those faithfully **WORKING** in shepherding the flock (1 Peter 5:2-4) those who serve God gladly, not because they must but out of a simple eagerness to serve. People need feeding; they need tending. There are broken hearts that need to be bound up. There are individuals who are bearing burdens that are too heavy for them and you and I as shepherds have the privilege of bearing one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Losing crowns

Revelation 3:11 I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

Look at that word "take." It is a translation of the Greek word that can be translated "receive." It also involves the idea of taking something that does not belong to you. It involves the idea of defrauding.

Col 2:18 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions.

Don't let anyone rob you of your crown by getting you mixed up in things which are not true teachings of the Word of God—teachings that do not hold Christ as the sole Head of the Church. See where the danger lies. It does not lie in the temptation to go off and do something evil and wicked and immoral. It lies in getting involved in things that detract from the

grace of God and keep you from growing in your Christian experience as you should. Consequently, you lose your reward.

What to do with crowns

These rewards are not given to you with the intent that you carry them with you throughout all eternity.

That is indicated in the use of the word. There are two words in Greek for the word "crown." one of them is the word from which we get our word "diadem" and it refers to a crown which is lasting. The other is the word which is used in the texts. It refers to a little garland of wreaths-a wreath of leaves-which was never meant to last. It was just something to indicate approval; it was something to indicate that you had run a race well and it was not meant for permanence. The Holy Spirit has very wisely chosen the word for crowns that are available to all believers. Since they were never meant to last, what in the world are you supposed to do with them then?

Revelation 4:8-11 Day and night they (the four living creatures) never stop saying:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

I am inclined to agree with Chuck Swindoll who writes "In John's vision, this group probably represents the universal church, including all Christians throughout time" (page 38) We

will get into the spirit of the activity and I suggest that we also will cast our crowns before the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We will cry out as they did, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, and for they pleasure they are and were created." Just as we want to give of our best to those we love, we will glorify Jesus by giving him our most precious possessions - our crowns. For he is worthy to receive glory and honour and power so I don't think we will be wearing our crowns throughout all eternity to show how many you have received.

We will cast them all before the feet of the Saviour almost as soon as we get them and we will be praising Him for His wonder and His glory. Our carnal nature will have been eradicated by this time, and there will be no room for envy.

Anyone looking forward to the party in heaven now?

Thou art worthy

Unless otherwise identified scripture references are from the New International Version
© Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society.

Note: I use many sources in preparation. If unacknowledged material has been used, I apologise. Please let me know (via contact tab) and I will add the acknowledgment when updating this material.