

The Five Bema Seat Rewards for Faithful Believers



CROWN OF LIFE

The “crown of life” is **NOT** salvation (James 1:12 & Rev. 2:10). Salvation is not a reward for faithful service to Christ. Salvation is the salvation of our souls “by grace through faith.” The “crown of life” is the crown for living the Christ-life. The “crown of life” is Christ’s reward to the believer for being “salt” and “light” by living the *Christ-life* “by grace through faith” by yielding his/her body to the indwelling Holy Spirit. Therefore the “crown of life” is the Crown of the *Christ-life* habitually lived through the life of the yielded believer as described in Galatians 2:20. The “crown of life” is Christ’s reward to the faithful believer for the salvation of our *lives* (not our souls) by yielding our ambitions, abilities, and resources to the cause of Christ in evangelizing the world and in bringing glory to God.



THE INCORRUPTIBLE CROWN

The “incorruptible crown” (I Corinthians 9:24-27) is an eternal crown because it is not given for one race. The “incorruptible crown” is given to a Christian based upon Christ’s evaluation of a believer’s whole life. The key to this reward are the words “temperate in all things” (I Corinthians 9:25). God does not leave us guessing about what constitutes intemperance or the failure in the self-control of the “flesh.” In Galatians chapter five, God tells us exactly how intemperance will manifest itself through a person’s life (Galatians 5:13-21). Intemperance is what the Word of God refers to as *carnality* or the “works of the flesh” (i.e., fallen nature).



THE CROWN OF JOY OR REJOICING (THE DISCIPLE MAKER’S CROWN)

This “crown” is often referred to as the Soul Winner’s Crown (I Thessalonians 2:17-20). However, I like to refer to it as the Disciple Maker’s Crown because there are *three phases* in the evangelization of a soul. These *three phases* (or *steps*, because they must follow in *order* or *succession* to one another) of evangelism are detailed in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) given by Christ to His Church (all “born again” believers). The three phases are: (1.) Preaching/proclaiming the gospel of salvation through faith in Christ’s “finished” work of redemption. (2.) Baptizing those “born again” of the Spirit of God as a public testimony of commitment to live the Christ-life. (3.) Teaching those saved and baptized by immersion to “observe” or live according to the Word of God. This Crown is actually the believers that are discipled (Philippians 4:1 & I Thessalonians 2:19-20).



THE CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS (THE CROWN FOR KEEPING “THE FAITH”)

The local church (made up of individual believers saved by “grace through faith,” discipled, and “perfect[ed] for the work of the ministry”) is the “pillar and ground of the Truth.” Every local church and every individual believer will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ according to two criteria regarding how we *kept* “the faith” (II Timothy 4:1-8): (1.) The effort we put into learning the Word of God and the effort we made to teach the Word of God to others. (2.) The effort we made to translate the Word of God into the *language of living* (“be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only”). The *Crown of Righteousness* is for learning, living, and teaching the Word of God to others so that they might do the same (creating a continuum of “the faith”). Living the Word of God cannot be separated from teaching the doctrine of Grace, because no one can live the Word of God (be righteous) apart from the supernatural inner workings of the indwelling Spirit of God.



THE CROWN OF GLORY (THE FAITHFUL PASTOR’S CROWN)

The Crown of Glory (I Peter 5:1-4) is possibly the highest ranking crown of all. Rewards are given for faithfulness according to levels of responsibility of ministry given to people by the Lord. We must remember that Pastor’s will be held accountable for the lives under their ministry if they have not taught people properly and/or administrated the local church under their charge according to the directives given to us in the Word by the Chief Shepherd (Hebrews 13:7-17). This has to do with faithfulness regarding teaching the “whole counsel of God” and administration of the local church righteously without respect of persons.