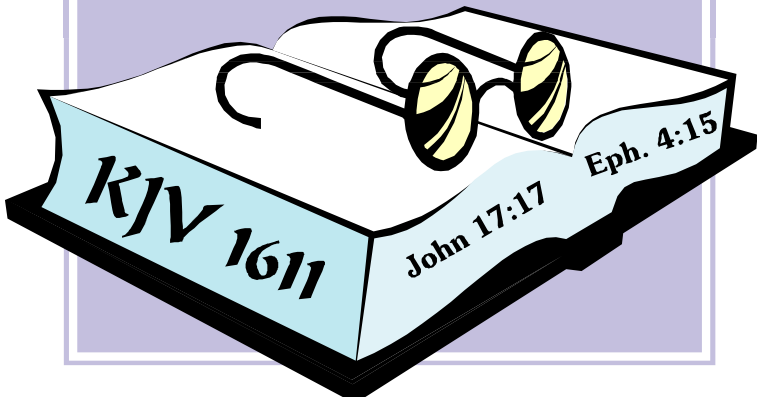


Gloryland's **New Christian Series**

*Doctrinal Studies
for New Believers*



Lesson Six

The Judgment of the Believer

New Christian Series

Doctrinal Studies for New Believers

Lesson Six

The Judgment of the Believer

This Bible course has been prepared and distributed
as a ministry of:

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“A sound and well composed catechism studied well and kept in memory, would be a good measure of knowledge, to ordinary Christians, and make them solid and orderly in their understanding, and in their proceeding to the smaller points, and would prevent a great deal of error and miscarriage, that many by ill teaching are cast upon, to their own and the churches grief! Yea, it were to be wished, that some teachers of late had learnt so much and orderly themselves.” — Richard Baxter (1615-1691)

INTRODUCTION

This is a study of *The Judgment of the Believer*, Lesson #6 in the *New Christian Series*.

The Scripture says:

“Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

— Acts 17:31

William Evans said,¹

“Just as it is ‘appointed unto men once to die,’ so it is appointed unto men to appear before the judgment. There is no more escape from the one than from the other.”

Some teach that there will be only one *general judgment* for all, when God will end this present world, and all who have ever lived will stand before Him, to be judged according to their works. There, it is supposed, we will find out if we will go to Heaven or Hell. That is what all unsaved folks, and many Christian denominations believe— that someday we are going to die, and when we get to Heaven, God is going to weigh all our good works against all our bad works. If our good works outweigh the bad, we will go to Heaven; if our bad works outweigh the good, we will go to Hell. The Catholics go even a bit further, teaching that those whose good and bad works come out even will go to a

¹ Great Doctrines of the Bible, by William Evans • Moody Press • Dr. Evans was formerly the Dean of Education at Moody Bible Institute

place called *purgatory*. Although this doctrine cannot be found anywhere in the word of God, the Roman Catholic church continues to teach this unbiblical fabrication of popery, in order to extort money from her followers. Of course, all of these false doctrines are far from the truth, as we shall see. In the Scriptures there are actually *seven* different judgments.

The Seven Judgments

- 1. The Judgment Of Sinners**— The judgment that took place at Calvary.
- 2. The Judgment Of Sons**— The daily judgment of believers after they are saved.
- 3. The Judgment Of Servants**— The judgment of the believer's works to determine their reward or loss. This judgment will take place in heaven after the rapture.
- 4. The Great White Throne Judgment**— This is the judgment for the unsaved dead before they are cast into the *Lake of Fire*.
- 5. The Judgment of the Nations**— The judgment of the Gentiles for their treatment of the Jew during the *Tribulation*. It takes place after the *Great Tribulation*.
- 6. The Judgment of the Jews**— The judgment on Israel during the *Great Tribulation*.
- 7. The Judgment of Angels**— The judgment of the fallen angels that takes place at the *Great White Throne Judgment* following the millennial kingdom.

JUDGMENT OF THE BELIEVER

In this lesson, we are going to study the three judgments that involve *believers*.

1. Judgment As Sinners

2. Judgment As Sons

3. Judgment As Servants

Each of these judgments takes place at a different time and place. It is very important that we know the time, nature and result of these judgments. Our response to them will determine our eternal destiny, the kind of rewards we will receive in Heaven, and the degree to which we will experience the abundant life in this world.

I. Judgment As Sinners

This was God's judgment upon sin that took place almost two thousand years ago at Calvary. It involved every lost sinner that ever lived (past) or ever will live (future). There, all mankind was found guilty under the *law* and condemned. The attending punishment in Hell fell upon our substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ. As John the Baptist declared, He was "*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*" (John 1:29). By His death, all believers are justified by faith.

"Now is ***the judgment of this world***: now shall the prince of this world [*THE DEVIL*] be cast out.

And I [JESUS, SPEAKING OF HIMSELF], if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

— John 12:31-32

In those verses, the Lord Jesus makes reference to His crucifixion on Calvary's cross, as the *judgment of this world*. He was the *propitiation* for the sins of the whole world.

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

*"And he is the **propitiation** for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world."*

— I John 2:1-2

The Pilgrim Study Bible marginal note for Romans 3:25 says of *propitiation*:

"This word is translated 'mercy seat' in Hebrews 9:5. To understand this, we must go back to Leviticus 16. The entrance of the High Priest into the presence of God once a year was made possible by the blood of the sacrifice which he brought. He sprinkled the blood on the Ark of the Covenant, which pictured the throne of God. That Throne would have been a Throne of judgment, but the blood showed that someone had already been judged, thus the Throne became a Throne of mercy. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself is said to be the place where the believing sinner may meet God."²

The Lord Jesus Christ had to die on the cross, because the judgment of *our* sins was upon Him.

² The Pilgrim Study Bible, Oxford Press, note #4, p. 1472

Speaking of the Lord, Peter says:

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

— I Peter 2:24

To be our propitiation, Christ actually became sin for us:

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

— II Corinthians 5:21

Furthermore, as He hung on that cruel cross, our Saviour literally became cursed for our sake.

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:”

— Galatians 3:13

After dying on the cross, Christ took our place in Hell. He bore the sins of the world on His own soul, and left them there in Hell.

*“He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that **his soul** [THE SOUL OF JESUS] was not left in Hell, neither **his flesh** did see corruption.”*

— Acts 2:31

Acts 2:31 clearly says that “[CHRIST’S] soul... was not left in Hell,” so we know that the innocent soul of Jesus DID go to Hell. (“his flesh” is a reference to His body which remained in the tomb.)

When we believed on Christ two things happened.

1. Our sins were imputed to Him (He took credit for them).
2. At the same moment His righteousness was imputed to us as a free gift (Romans 3:24- 26; and 4:6-8; 5:17-18) (we were credited with His righteousness).

And What about the Wrath of God?

Indeed, the righteousness of Christ is freely available to all who will look to the cross and accept Christ's sacrifice for sin. But the wrath of God *remains* upon every unbeliever unless he accepts the judgment of God against sin as the condemnation of his own sin. He must put his trust in the Saviour's work on the cross for cleansing.

*"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but **the wrath of God abideth on him.**"* — John 3:36

Upon whom does the wrath of God abide? It abides upon all the unsaved (those who do not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ).

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

*"Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were **by nature the children of wrath**, even as others."*

— Ephesians 2:2-3

When we were unsaved, we were "*by nature the children of wrath.*" When a man dies without Christ, he dies with *the wrath of God* upon him. That *wrath* is manifested in the everlasting torment by fire in Hell (Luke 16:19-31). Later, these condemned sinners will come out of Hell to stand before the White Throne Judgment where they will be judged for rejecting Jesus Christ. Then they will be cast into the eternal lake of fire where they will burn forever and ever in everlasting darkness (Jude 13; Revelation 20:11-15).

Because of their sin, all these unsaved sinners have *already* been judged, found guilty, and condemned at Calvary. Unless they submit to this first judgment at Calvary's cross, they will be eternally lost without remedy.

The Scriptures plainly declare:

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”
— John 3:18

Thinking their trial is yet to come, the self-righteous believe that if they have been kind to their neighbor, and kept the *Golden Rule* they *might* get past the judgment of God. But they are wrong: the trial for their sin is over. They are already condemned and have the wrath of God abiding on them. The only way they can escape the wrath of God is to submit to the judgment of sin at Calvary and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour. As we saw in lesson number one, (*Three Things Every Christian Should Know*), Jesus took upon Himself the wrath of God that was meant for us. He went to Hell for you and me (I Peter 3:18). In the future judgment, none will have a suitable answer to the question from God, “*Why did you trust your own righteousness when you could have had the righteousness of My Son?*”

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

— I Peter 3:18

Here we see that Jesus has already suffered the torment of Hell for us. Do you remember what Jesus said as He hung upon the cross? He said, “*I thirst*” (John 19:28). Those words came forth from His lips as He felt the nearness of the very flames of Hell.

What a paradox, that today those who do not know the love of God talk about it so much. They err in thinking that God loves this world today and *all* the people in it. That is not true. Indeed, John said “*God... **loved** the world,*” but that is in the *past tense*. If we search the Bible for references of God’s love for the world, we will find that they are *always* in the past tense, like that famous verse in John 3.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” — John 3:16

- Certainly, it is true that God did manifest his great love for the world at Calvary, by giving His only begotten Son to die on the cross as a sacrifice for our sin.

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” — I John 4:9

- But God does not love *wicked, Christ-rejecting* sinners.

“The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity.” — Psalm 5:5

“God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.” — Psalm 7:11

Furthermore, as we just read in John 3:36, “*the wrath of God*” remains upon those who refuse to believe on Jesus Christ. And John 3:18 says that they are *condemned already*. The great love of God was revealed at Calvary for the world to see, and it is available for all who will receive it. But, if a man wants to have the wrath of God taken off him, he has to accept the judgment of sin at Calvary. God wants all men to be saved, and He draws all men to Himself. Moreover, He will turn none away who come unto Him (John 6:37), and He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). The Holy Spirit convicts men of sin, and draws them to Himself; but they must *choose* whether they will reject or accept Christ as their Saviour.

Jesus said,

*“And I, **if I be lifted up** from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”* — John 12:32

☞ He was lifted up before the whole world at Calvary.

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

“That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

— John 3:14-15

John is making reference to Numbers 21.

“Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

“And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.”

— Numbers 21:7-9

From this passage of Scripture comes that wonderful old song “Look and Live.”

‘I’ve a message from the Lord, hallelujah!
The message unto you I’ll give:
‘Tis recorded in His word, hallelujah!
It is only that you ‘look and live.’

I will tell you how I came, hallelujah!
To Jesus when He made me whole
‘Twas believing on His name, hallelujah!
I trusted and He saved my soul.”

As the Lord Jesus Christ said:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” — John 5:24

The only way we can get to Heaven is by trusting the Lord Jesus Christ and what God did *for* us. If a man wants to go to Hell, all he has to do is trust anything or anybody else. For example, he can trust the Pope instead of Jesus— that is a sure way to go to Hell. He can trust the sacraments, water baptism, or the *Ten Commandments* (although the Bible says no man ever kept them). He can trust the golden rule, church membership, the Masons, himself, or his religion. If he wants to go to Hell, he can trust anything *he* wants to trust; but if he wants to go to Heaven, he must trust in the Saviour of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is necessary that we grasp the meaning of this first judgment, so we can understand how *God* looks at things. Then we can have assurance that our sins have been taken away and that we need no longer fear Hell. The believer's *salvation* rests in God's hands, being based upon the *finished work* of the Lord Jesus Christ at the Cross. Jesus has *already* taken the believer's sins away and he is as good as in Heaven now, with the door shut. The knowledge of this glorious work of God *for* us should generate within each of us a deeper love for our Saviour that will make us want to serve Him and work for Him. Any man trying to merit salvation by his own works must place all his trust and confidence in himself. However, because *we know* that our salvation is complete in Jesus, we can work heartily for Him, being compelled by love. We don't work to *get* saved— we work because *we are* saved.

II. Judgment As Sons

We have seen that our JUDGMENT AS SINNERS deals with our *eternal state*, while our JUDGMENT AS SONS deals with our

temporary state. This second judgment takes place in the believer's everyday life.

At Calvary, all were found guilty and the judgment for our sin fell upon the blessed Saviour. Now, however, sinners who have trusted in Christ's work for them have been adopted into the family of God— they have become *the sons of God*. Yet, even after we become one of God's sons, we are still apt to sin.

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”
— I John 1:8

Paul, one of the greatest Christians that ever lived, said:

“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

— Romans 7:18, 24

Because God knows our flesh is still prone to serve sin after we are saved, He gave us instruction for judging and confessing our sins daily.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

— I John 1:9

Confession of our sins affects our fellowship with the Lord. To illustrate, let's say a man's son completely wrecked the family car, the boy being wholly at fault. If his son never apologized and never offered to make restitution in any way, the father would be angry, to say the least. But that boy would still be the man's son — nothing could change that. Our relationship with the Lord works the same way. I am sure the Lord is often displeased with us, but if we have been born into the family of God, we are His sons forever: nothing can change that. Now, confessing our sins to God won't get us to Heaven. We can only get to Heaven by

submitting to *the first judgment* and trusting the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour. However, we stay in *fellowship* with God by judging and confessing our sins moment by moment. God is holy and He will not fellowship with an unclean vessel.

John makes this clear.

“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

“If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

— I John 1:5-7

What do you suppose God does to His sons when they do wrong? The same thing we *should* do to our children when they do wrong— He chastens (rebukes, corrects and instructs) them. This all has to do with judgment number two, our Judgment as a Son in this present life.

We read about this chastisement in Hebrews.

“And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

“If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”

— Hebrews 12:5-7

It says that He chastens *every* son, so our relationship with the Lord is like that of a father and son. Now, when we don't judge ourselves like we're supposed to, the Lord is going to chasten us.

“For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

“For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

“But when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world.”

— *I Corinthians 11:30-32*

In the context, the word “*sleep*” means “*death*.” (Comparing Scripture with Scripture we find a clear reference to this in John 11:11-14). Now in this passage, why is it that “*many are weak and sickly... and many sleep*”? It is because they would not judge themselves for sin. “*We are chastened*” is a reference to the judgment as sons which they received because they would not judge themselves (Hebrews 12).

All the world is condemned at judgment number one, because the wrath of God remains upon those who won't repent of their sin. But it is different for the believer, because he has *confessed* his sin to Him and received forgiveness. Because Jesus paid for our sin, we are no longer under its condemnation. However, we are still subject to judgment number two, and we will be chastened as a son if we don't judge our own sins and confess them. If God has to, He may well take us home rather than to let us continue as a stumblingblock to others— many sleep, brethren! Now let's look at some passages in the Bible where He does just that.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

— *Romans 8:1*

By this we know that if we believe on Christ, we will not be condemned. That isn't a reference to our *eternal state*, which was settled at the cross, but to our *temporary state* and our daily walk. (Notice this stipulation: “*who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*.”) We know this is the right application because of what verse 13 says:

“For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die [GOD WILL KILL US], but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” — Romans 8:13

Notice also I Corinthians 3:16 and 17:

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”

“If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”

— I Corinthians 3:16-17

This passage of Scripture is clearly aimed at the believer in the body of Christ. The temple Paul is talking about is the Christian's body. If he defiles that temple, what will God do? He will destroy him. A real life illustration of this can be found in I Corinthians chapter five.

“It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

“And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.

“For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,

“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,

“To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”

— I Corinthians 5:1-5

There was a born again Christian man in this church at Corinth, who was committing fornication with his own father's wife. Paul prayed that the man would be delivered unto Satan "*for the destruction of the flesh.*" (In plainer words, he asked God to kill the man.) In like manner today, the Lord might take any Christian home to glory, who continues in sin and becomes a stumbling-block to other believers. As a child of God, a believer in such a case would not go to Hell. However, even if things did go that far, a believer in sin would lose his fellowship with his heavenly Father; not to mention his joy and part of his inheritance. Still, regardless of the great loss he might suffer, the believer would be dealt with as a SON, who already had a home in Heaven, and is part of the body of Christ, NOW. Once a sinner settles accounts with God at judgment number one, he is a son forever, because he has been born of the Spirit of God.

See what John says:

*"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin for **his seed** remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."*
— I John 3:9

☞ That's the new inner man created inside us by God's seed.

Furthermore, Peter says:

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
— I Peter 1:23

In America, the law regarding adoption says that if we were to adopt a child, giving him our name and taking him into our family, we could never disown him. God works the same way with His sons.

That's what Jesus is talking about in John 6:

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

“For I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

“And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

— John 6:37-39

In another place Jesus says:

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

“My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my Father are one.”

— John 10:27-29

III. Judgment as a Servant

Remember, we are judged at the cross for sin; then we are judged day by day as sons; and finally, after death, we stand face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ to be judged as servants.

The Scriptures say:

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:”

— Hebrews 9:27

This judgment has not taken place yet, but will take place in the future. Now, as children of God, we have escaped the judgment of Hell— thank God for that! However, we can’t escape judgment as sons and we can’t escape Christ’s judgment of us as servants.

“But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

“For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

“So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

— *Romans 14:10-12*

At this judgment, we will receive rewards for what we did for the Lord Jesus Christ after we were saved.

It is a blessing to know that when we trusted Christ, our past life (as children of disobedience and wrath) was put under the blood. Our past sins were wiped away, and God no longer remembers anything of our old life. But God continues to keep records, and one day we will have to give an account of our lives as *servants* of Jesus Christ. That will take place at the judgment seat of Christ, following the rapture of the church, and only saved people will be there.

The judgment seat of Christ has a twofold purpose:

- First of all, it is to cleanse the Church (the bride of Christ) so she can be presented without blemish to the bridegroom (the Lord Jesus Christ) in Heaven (cf. Revelation 19:7-9; II Corinthians 11:1-2; Ephesians 5:25-27).
- Secondly, it is to reward the Christian for the way he lived his Christian life on earth. (That is what this lesson is about.)

We should praise God that we are saved and headed for Heaven, but we must not take the *Judgment Seat of Christ* lightly; it is a serious matter. Paul warns that it is a time to be soberly considered in the light of our failure to serve the Lord with all our might.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

*“Knowing therefore **the terror of the Lord, we persuade men**; but we are made manifested unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”*

— II Corinthians 5:10-11

There we will have to give an account of the things we have done as servants, whether good or bad. We will have to answer for the sins of *omission* as well as the sins of *commission*. Why does Paul say that he persuades men? —because of the “*terror of the Lord*.” He isn’t persuading the lost to get saved in this passage; he is persuading *believers* to serve God while there is still time. The Bible tells us why this judgment is spoken of as a *terror*.

Jesus said:

“But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

“For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

— Matthew 12:36-37

Every minute *detail* of our lives is being recorded for the judgment day. Every *word* we have ever spoken that didn’t glorify Jesus Christ and exalt His name; all the vain conversation we had with others—we will give account for them on the day of judgment. It will not be a picnic.

“For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”

— Ecclesiastes 12:14

Even the things we think only we and God know about, will be brought out at the judgment seat of Christ before all.

“In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.” — Romans 2:16

Everything is going to come out in the open on that day, except for sins that have been confessed and put under the blood.

The Lord Himself said:

“For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither anything hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.”
— Luke 8:17

The Psalmist says:

“Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.”
— Psalm 90:8

The Lord knows even our “secret sins” and they too will be brought out at the *Judgment Seat of Christ*. The Psalms give us a hint of what the Lord knows about us.

*“O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me.
“Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.
“Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.
“For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.”*
— Psalm 139:1-4

- ☞ God knows every word that ever passed through our lips as well as the thoughts and intents of our heart that were never spoken. The *Judgment Seat of Christ* is spoken of as “*the terror of the Lord*” because there our works will be seen for what they were.

In the Old Testament, Job says of the Lord:

*“For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.
“There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.”*
— Job 34:21-22

He sees all and He knows all:

“A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.

“Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?” — Proverbs 20:8-9

- ☞ That is the *Judgment Seat of Christ*, with Jesus sitting on the throne.

We read more about this in I Corinthians 3:

“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

“Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.”

— I Corinthians 3:11-13

In the context of *works and rewards*, Paul says the Lord Jesus Christ is the foundation God has laid for us. If we build upon any other foundation we are like the foolish man who built upon the sand. His labor established nothing permanent— it was just a waste of time.

*“And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto **a foolish man**, which built his house upon the sand:*

“And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.”

— Matthew 7:26-27

- ☞ Jesus Christ is the only foundation that is steadfast and secure. We must build on Him if we are to succeed.

Jesus said,

“[I] am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” — John 14:6

Paul continues in I Corinthians 3 by saying that if we have begun with the right foundation, our works will be made known, because the trial of fire will reveal what sort they are (gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or stubble). That is, if we are saved, our works in Christ will show up at the Judgment Seat of Christ to be weighed and evaluated, and our reward determined. You see, the Bible teaches that we can lay up literal treasures in Heaven. *We will be rewarded* for the way that we lived our Christian life. *We will reap* what we have sown.

Speaking of these treasures, Jesus said:

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

“But lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

— Matthew 6:19-21

How foolish to spend a lifetime laboring for nothing but the pleasures of this world when there are *eternal* rewards to be gained. According to I Corinthians 3, these are literal treasures of gold, silver and precious stones. Let's take a look now at these treasures, and make some appropriate spiritual applications to the body of Christ.

First of all, let's look at GOLD

Gold is one of the most valuable minerals on earth. In the Old Testament, we find that all the articles of furniture in the Tabernacle were overlaid with gold. In Revelation 21, we find that the

streets of New Jerusalem are made of gold. We find that the whole city of New Jerusalem is transparent gold. Gold evidently represents things of the highest value in Heaven. Do you know what the highest thing in Heaven is? — it's the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name.”

— *Philippians 2:9*

Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh.

“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” — *1 Timothy 3:16*

Spiritually speaking, we can lay up some gold in Heaven by exalting the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as God. The Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims and Mormons don't believe that Christ really is God. Because we do believe, we can lay up some gold by exalting His name and telling men that Jesus is the one true and living God. Furthermore, we can worship Jesus Christ as God by putting Him first in our lives above our family, above our friends, and even above ourselves— putting Him first.

That is one of the qualifications for being a disciple.

“If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

“And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”

— *Luke 14:26-27*

Secondly, let's look at SILVER.

In the Old Testament, *silver* was the price of redemption. (Christ was sold for thirty pieces of silver.) Men going into battle redeemed their souls with silver shekels (Exodus 30:12-15;

Numbers 3:46-49). Before going into battle, Israel sounded an alarm with silver trumpets and God would save them from their enemies (Numbers 10:1-2,9). After the death of Christ, the New Testament was established, and His precious blood replaced silver as the price of our redemption.

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

“But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

— *I Peter 1:18-19*

So, spiritually speaking, when we tell a person how to be redeemed by the blood, we are laying up silver in Heaven. Proverbs 11:30 says *“He that winneth souls is wise.”* So, if we are wise we will seek to lay up some silver by telling people about the Lord Jesus Christ’s wonderful plan of redemption.

Thirdly, PRECIOUS STONES.

☞ In the Bible, “Precious stones” represent saved people.

Look at this verse in the book of Malachi:

“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

“And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”

— *Malachi 3:16-17*

Notice there is a “book of remembrance” written for “them that feared the Lord.” In this book, God put the names of them that feared Him (and maybe even their words). God said that He

was going to make up His jewels from those believers. God's people are represented here by jewels and precious stones.

Zechariah speaks of the saints as precious stones.

“And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.”

— Zechariah 9:16

Notice that Daniel 12 speaks of believers as stars. He speaks as if each star was a precious stone, representing a Christian.

“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”

— Daniel 12:2-3

“Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”

— Matthew 13:46

The “*pearl*” is a precious stone representing *the church* (the body of Christ). It is made up of all the saints of God, who are redeemed by Christ's own blood.

“To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious.

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

— I Peter 2:4-5

It appears that *precious stones* are earned by winning souls to Christ. *Gold, silver, and precious stones* are all connected with

exalting the Lord, witnessing for Him, and winning souls for Him. A believer's main job is to lead others to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

See how important this is to God.

“Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.”

— Luke 15:10

The apostle Luke continues:

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me...”

— Acts 1:8a

You see, we are all to be witnesses— every believer is given the ministry of reconciliation.³

“Jesus Christ... hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

“To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.”

— II Corinthians 5:18-20

We are to go to others and try to reconcile them to God through the Lord Jesus Christ. The pursuit of this ministry can include church visitation, street witnessing, or tract ministries. Distributing tracts is an excellent way to begin, because anyone can leave a tract at the checkout counter or send tracts through the mail. They may easily be given to close friends and strangers we come in contact with in the daily course of life. This is an effective way of sowing the *seed*, although much of the results will not be known until we get to Heaven. In this way we can also have a

³ New Christian Series — Bible Study Course — Lesson 4, p. 12

part in the harvest brought in by others. Even if the person who receives a gospel tract does not get saved at that time, he may get saved later on. Another witness may come along later and lead the man to Christ, but because we helped plant the seed in his heart, we will also share in the reward. Distributing gospel tracts is something everyone of us can do.

Paul the apostle recognized this in his day.

"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

"So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

"Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."

— I Corinthians 3:6-9

Paul likens soul-winning to a *harvest*. He implies that we are planting seed when we witness, although another may come along later and water it. Even though the second party is actually the one to win that person to the Lord, we will share in the reward for our part.

Our Final Reward

The Bible says we will receive rewards for the works we have done while serving the Lord upon the earth, but it also says we shall suffer loss for the fleshly works we do. Like wood, hay and stubble, fleshly works are dead.

In Hebrews we read about dead works.

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

— Hebrews 9:14

This passage of Scripture really refers to the dead works of the unsaved, but the believer can have dead works as well. Wood is nothing but a dead tree; hay is dead grass; and stubble is just dead wheat. These are dead works that God will not accept.

As you will remember from our previous studies, God considers the believer's body to be dead. Furthermore, we are told to consider it dead also (Romans 6:1-11). Therefore, any works originating from these dead bodies (the flesh), are **dead works**—nothing but wood, hay and stubble. But works originating from the Holy Spirit and done by faith are the proper sort. For these we shall receive our due reward. Our works will be judged by quality, not quantity.

Paul tells us that fire shall try every man's work.

“Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

“If any man's work abide [after the fire] which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

“If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: [of reward] but he himself [his soul] shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”

— I Corinthians 3:13-15

One day, when all believers get to Heaven, some will stand by great heaps of *their* works. But after they pass through the fire, there may be only a handful of ashes left after all the dead works have been consumed. “*But Lord,*” one may say, “*I did all this for you.*” Then the Lord may reply, “*But I never told you to do that.*” You see, it isn't all the things that *we do for Him*, but the things *He does through us* that are important. The Lord isn't interested in *how much* work we have done, but of *what sort* it is. He wants to know the motive for the work (why we did it); He wants to know the manner of the work (whose will it was to do it); and He wants to know the medium in which we worked (by whose strength we accomplished it).

- ☞ The only **pure motive** for our work is *love*.
- ☞ The only **prescribed manner** of our work is *faith*.
- ☞ And the only **proper medium** for our work is the *Holy Spirit*.

Of **LOVE**, the Bible says:

*“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and **labour of love**, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.”*

— Hebrews 6:10

“Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;”

— I Thessalonians 1:3

“[F]aith... worketh by love.”

— Galatians 5:6

Of the **SPIRIT**, the Bible says:

*“[N]ot by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the **LORD** of hosts.”*

— Zechariah 4:6

Of **FAITH**, the Bible says:

“[W]ithout faith it is impossible to please him... and he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

— Hebrews 11:6

And again:

“[W]hatsoever is not of faith is sin.” — Romans 14:23

Faith is based upon the revealed will of God— we must first know what He wants us to do. Then we must yield to Him in that matter (Romans 6:13,19), agreeing that what He wants is right

and what we want is wrong. Then alone can we please Him, as we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us. One man may give a thousand dollars to missions, *by faith*. Another man may say to himself, *“I have a thousand dollars, I can do that too.”* Then the second man falls on hard times and wonders why God didn’t bless him because of the money he gave. *“But,”* he argues, *“I did it to exalt Christ.”* The difference is that the first man gave *by faith* as he was led by the Spirit of God, while the second man gave *out of a fleshly desire* to make an outward show of being spiritual, with no leading of the Holy Spirit.

It’s like the story of Ananias and Sapphira:

“And Joses...

“Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.

“But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

“And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.

“But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

“Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

“And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.”

— Acts 4:36-5:5

We all know that Ananias and his wife lied to the church about the amount of the gift they brought, but they had already lied before when they insinuated that it was God who had led them to do it. You see, Joses gave his gift in love, by faith, being led of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, Ananias’ plan was to

make a good show before his peers by bringing a part of the price of the land and giving it as if it were all he had received. He sought only the praise of men. It was a plan conceived in his own heart and inspired by Satan. We won't get rewards for doing *what we want* to do for God. We will get rewards for doing *what He wants* to do *through* us. So, we can see that the way we live and work (holiness) is connected with our eternal reward.

Tried By Fire

Looking again at I Corinthians 3:13-15, we see that all the things we have laid up in Heaven will pass through a supernatural fire. Hopefully we all have some gold, silver and precious stones set aside. It is just as certain, though, that we have plenty of wood, hay and stubble. So when our heavenly deposits pass through the fire, all that are dead works will be burned up. If there be any gold, silver, or precious stones, they will remain, forever. Everything else will go up in a puff of smoke, but praise God, we will receive rewards according to what is left.

- The treasure we have laid up in Heaven will determine how we will be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ. We will receive our due rewards, but it will be no little grief to us to suffer the loss of rewards before God and all the saints.
- The principle lesson we want to learn from all this is that the believer's **dead works** will burn up and be lost. However, the believer will not be lost.

LET'S REVIEW

Judgment of the Believer (pp. 3-4)

1. List the three judgments that involve believers.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

Judgment as Sinners (pp. 3-10)

Use the references below to answer the questions following.

Ephesians 2:2,3

John 1:29

Psalm 7:11

Revelation 20:11-15

I John 4:9

Acts 2:31

John 12:31,32

I Peter 2:24

John 3:16

Galatians 3:13

John 3:36

Psalm 5:5

II Corinthians 5:21

Luke 16:19-31

John 3:18

1. _____ John the Baptist tells why Jesus came to earth.
2. _____ In these verses Jesus makes reference to his crucifixion as being the judgment of the world.
3. _____ This verse shows that the judgment of OUR sins was upon Christ.

4. _____ This verse tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ became SIN, so that we could be righteous.
5. _____ Christ was cursed for our sakes.
6. _____ When He died, Jesus' own soul went to Hell to suffer for our sins. But He did not stay there.
7. _____ The wrath of God remains upon every unbeliever.
8. _____ All the lost are still under the wrath of God, just as all born again believers used to be.
9. _____ God's wrath is manifested in the everlasting torment of hell fire.
10. _____ God's eternal wrath is manifested in the Lake of Fire where the lost will burn forever.
11. _____ The unbeliever is already condemned because he does not believe on Christ.
12. _____ God *loved* the world enough to send Jesus. He does NOT *love* ALL the people in the world.
13. _____ God manifested his love at Calvary.
14. _____ God hates workers of iniquity.
15. _____ God is always angry at lost sinners.
16. What two things happen to a person when he gets saved?
(p.5)
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

Judgment as Sons (pp. 10-15)

Fill in the blanks

1. The believer's judgment as a SINNER deals with his _____ state while his judgment as a SON deals with his _____ state.
2. I John 1:8 tells us that it is possible for Christians to still _____.
3. According to Romans 7:18, "no good thing" still dwells in the _____ of every believer.
4. According to I John 1:9, we are to _____ our sins.
5. Confession of sins should take place _____.
6. Believers stay in _____ with God by judging and confessing their sins moment by moment.
7. According to Hebrews 12:5-7, God _____ his children when they sin.
8. List three things in I Corinthians 11:30-32 that may happen to a Christian who does not judge and confess his own sins.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
9. The Lord may take a Christian _____ to _____ if he continues to sin and become a stumbling block to others.

10. The new, inner man created in us by God's seed cannot _____.
11. Once a person has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior, he can _____ lose his salvation.

Judgment as a Servant (pp. 15-29)

Fill in the blanks.

1. At the believer's judgment as a servant, each believer will receive _____ for his service for the Lord Jesus Christ after becoming a child of God.
2. What is the twofold purpose of the Judgment Seat of Christ?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
3. According to II Corinthians 5:10-11 the Judgment Seat of Christ is not to be taken lightly. It is a _____ matter.
4. Believers will answer for sins of _____ as well as for sins of _____.
5. According to Matthew 12:36-37 every _____ we speak is being recorded for the judgment day.
6. According to Ecclesiastes 12:14, Romans 2:16, and Luke 8:17 even those things that are _____ will be brought out at the judgment.

7. Paul speaks of The Judgment Seat of Christ as the
 “_____ *of the Lord*” because there the true
 motive for our works will be known.
8. According to I Corinthians 3:11-13 _____ is the
 foundation laid for a believer to build upon.
9. The Bible teaches that we can lay up literal _____
 in Heaven.
10. _____ represents things of the highest
 value in Heaven.
11. The highest thing in Heaven is _____.
12. A believer can lay up gold in Heaven by exalting the name
 of _____ as God.
13. _____ was the price of redemption.
14. After the death of Christ, his _____
 replaced silver as the price of our redemption.
15. When we tell a person how to be redeemed by the blood, we
 are laying up _____ in Heaven.
16. According to Malachi 3:16 and Zechariah 9:16, God’s peo-
 ple are represented as _____ and precious _____.
17. According to Matthew 13:46, the pearl is a precious stone
 which represents the _____.
18. Precious stones are earned by winning _____
 to Christ.

19. In I Corinthians 3:6-9 Paul likens soulwinning to a _____ .
20. Believers will receive rewards for their good works, but they will also suffer _____ for their fleshly works.
21. Works originating from our dead bodies are _____ .
22. Works originating from the Holy Spirit and done by _____ are the proper sort. For these we shall receive our due _____ .
23. Our works will be judged by quality, not by quantity, because the Lord wants to know the _____ for the work.
24. The only pure *motive* for work is _____ .
25. The only prescribed *manner* of our work is _____ .
26. The only proper *medium* for our work is the _____ .
27. The treasure we have laid up in Heaven will determine how we will be _____ at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
28. A believer's dead works will _____ at this judgment but the man himself will not be lost.

THE CROWNING DAY

As we read through the New Testament, we discover that there are five different crowns a Christian can earn. These may also become part of our heavenly reward and can be earned by living a holy life in faith and obedience to God. Just as gold, silver and precious stones seem to be connected with our exalting the Lord Jesus Christ and being His witnesses, apparently these crowns are also connected with the way the Christian conducts himself in this life.

I. The Crown Of Righteousness

This “*crown of righteousness*” is found in II Timothy 4.

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: [the judgment seat of Christ] and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

— II Timothy 4:7-8

In this passage of Scripture, near the end of his life, Paul speaks of the crown the Lord will give him at the *Judgment Seat of Christ*. This *crown of righteousness* will also be awarded to all believers who earnestly look for Christ, and love His appearing (the rapture, I Thessalonians 4:13-17).

Concluding with verse 18, he says:

“Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

— I Thessalonians 4:18

Verses 13-17 tell about the time of the rapture of the church. In verse 18, Paul says that those words should be a source of comfort for those of us who look forward to that glorious day. Some believers may well find they have lost this crown, because they attended churches which did not put a proper emphasis on the second coming of Christ in their preaching and teaching. In the book of Revelation, Jesus himself warns us not to let this happen.

“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” — Revelation 3:11

This verse suggests that we can lose our crowns, and that there are those who would take them from us. If the Lord wants us to have it, then we should want to receive it. Don't let some false teacher take your crown; hold fast what is rightfully yours.

Look what Paul says about this in his epistle to the Colossians:

“Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.” — Colossians 2:18

There are more than 900 verses in the Old Testament and at least 100 more in the New Testament teaching about the second coming of our Lord. From these passages, we also learn that we are not to get tied down with things of the world.

“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” — II Timothy 2:4

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” — Colossians 3:2

John also instructs in the same manner:

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world...” — I John 2:15

- ☞ We will receive this crown of righteousness if we have a genuine longing for the Lord Jesus Christ to come back and take us out of this world. We will have this longing *only* if we have set *our affections* on things above, and we will not do this unless we have *our treasures* there.

If we love the things in this world, we will soon begin to lose our love for the things in the next world. If we have great treasures here, we will surely lose the longing for the place where we have our heavenly treasures. If Jesus Christ came back right now, would we be ready to leave all the things of this world without a second thought? Or would we be like Lot's wife? Even while she barely escaped the destruction of Sodom, she stopped to look back one more time. All her treasures lay in her earthly possessions, and where her treasures were, there was her heart also. Even in the light of God's judgment, she yearned for those carnal possessions more than divine deliverance. Would we really be joyously excited if our Saviour came back today, or are we so involved with the things in this life that it would grieve us to leave, even for Heaven? Is our mind on earthly things or heavenly things? Do we think more of our earthly treasures or our heavenly treasures? Have our temporal pleasures come between us and Him? Jesus knows our hearts, beloved. We can fool people with our words, but He looks inside our heart— He knows what's in there. He knows if we truly love Him and He knows whether or not we look expectantly for His return. He knows if our hearts and minds are upon Him and Heavenly things, or upon our the world and earthly possessions. *He knows!* That should cause us to think about the way we live and where our desires really lie.

II. The Incorruptible Crown

This second crown is called the “*incorruptible*” crown.

In I Corinthians 9, Paul says:

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

*“And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an **incorruptible**.*

“I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

“But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

— I Corinthians 9:24-27

- We can win this crown if we keep our bodies under subjection and run a good race. We must get the victory over our flesh and maintain a good testimony of the crucified life.

A. Running the Race

The Bible teaches that as Christians, we are in a race.

*“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, **let us lay aside every weight, and the sin** which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience **the race that is set before us**.*

*“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for **the joy that was set before him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

— Hebrews 12:1-2

Before a race, every runner lays aside any weight that might hinder his performance. He begins by emptying his pockets (It would benefit Christians to empty *their* pockets as well.) The runner can be easily identified by the clothes he wears. So also, every believer should consider his mode of dress— it should not be a hindrance to the testimony of a holy life. In living the Christian life, we are to follow the runner's example and lay aside anything that hinders us in our service for Christ. Every one of us has some special weakness that we wrestle with in our lives— a

besetting sin. We can be sure that Satan knows exactly what it is, and that he will try to use it against us. Admitting that weakness, and overcoming it will usually take care of a lot of other sins in our lives. Be encouraged, dearly beloved, the Lord Jesus has started us on this race of life and He's waiting at the finish line to receive us at the end. In this race we should always strive to keep the faith, and obey God's word.

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"

— II Timothy 4:6-7

B. Bringing Our Bodies Under Subjection

We notice that Hebrews 12:2 speaks of *"the joy that was set before him."* You see, the Lord had a race to run too, but His race was to win a victory over death, Hell, and the grave. He saw the pain and sorrow ahead of Him; but because He also saw the prize to be won, He faced the cross with the joy of knowing the great prize would be His if He was faithful to the end.

When an Olympic champion runs in a grueling competition, what do you think his body says? Maybe it complains, *"Oh, my arms, my legs— the pain— I'm so tired. Can't we just stop and sit down for a minute? I'm so thirsty— this isn't what I want to do."* Maybe so, but he has to say what any real athlete says to himself, *"Body, you're going to do what I tell you to do."* A good athlete must bring his body under *subjection*— he must discipline it to perform as he demands. He does not think about the temporary pain, but has his mind set on the prize before him. If he is going to run a good race, he cannot let his body control him; he controls it. A good athlete doesn't smoke, drink, overeat or do things that are harmful to his body. He takes care of his body. Notice that I emphasized a *good athlete*. There are plenty today who have great ability, but are really poor athletes, because they take drugs etc. These usually don't last long, but if they do they pay a great price for it in the end.

For example, a few years ago I read about a man on the streets of one of our major cities who had stopped a passer-by and begged for some money for food. Getting no results, he offered to sell his ring. The stranger was surprised to see that it was one of the rings awarded to each player participating in a super bowl football game. “*Where did a bum like you get a ring like this?*” the man asked. “*I won it— I used to be a professional football player— my name is Mercury Morris,*” he replied. Seeing the man’s unbelief, he showed him his driver’s license, some newspaper clippings and other identification, and a passing policeman verified that he was indeed the former fleet-footed football star. With tears in his eyes, the black man told the story of his great success and riches that had turned to broken health and poverty because of the use of drugs. He had been at the top, but because he had not kept his body under subjection he lost everything in the end.

Yes, a good athlete must bring his body under subjection, but he does it to attain a corruptible crown. It’s called a “*corruptible crown*” because it can’t be taken with him when he dies. It will stay here on earth and become tarnished and rusty. For example, look at Cassius Clay (alias Muhammed Ali), who once held the world championship heavyweight boxing title. That boxing title and his former fame won’t mean a thing when he has to face the *Judgment Seat of Christ*. He might try to appeal to one of the angels that he was “*the king,*” of boxing, as he called himself. But the angels will just shrug their shoulders and say “*Boxing, what is boxing?— we don’t have that up here, and the only ‘king’ up here is Jesus.*” In that day, Ali will be just like any other sinner, and his “*corruptible crown*” will have been left behind and forgotten. How much more wonderful is the incorruptible crown that believers can earn! It will be ours for eternity in a place where thieves cannot steal it and rust will not corrupt it (Matthew 6:19-21)! We can win this eternal crown if we are careful to control our bodies and its attending desires.

We have a much higher reason for bringing our bodies under subjection than the athlete does— we have an eternal purpose.

- ☞ First of all, the believer's body is the holy temple of God. As such we are to take care not to defile it.

See these Scriptures:

*“What? know ye not that **your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost** which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”*

*“For **ye are bought with a price**: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”*

— I Corinthians 6:19-20

*“Know ye not that **ye are the temple of God**, and that **the Spirit of God dwelleth in you**?”*

*“If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for **the temple of God is holy**, which temple ye are.”*

— I Corinthians 3:16-17

As believers, we are not to do anything in our bodies that will dishonor the Lord Jesus Christ or bring reproach upon His precious name. On the contrary, we are to endeavor to glorify Him with our bodies. Now, how can we glorify God in our bodies? We can sing praises to Him with **our lips**— we can testify with upraised **hands**— we can listen to the preaching and teaching of His word with **our ears**— we can read His word with **our eyes**—we can watch to see that **our feet** take us to the right places— we can set **our hearts and minds** on Him, and we can live according to His will. We can glorify Him in **our manner of dress** (modest) and the way we carry out **our labors** (honestly and with all our might). What other ways can you think of to glorify Him in our bodies?

- ☞ Secondly, we are to maintain a testimony of moderation before the lost, as well as the saved (cf. I Corinthians 9:27).

Paul means that we should bring our bodies into subjection to demonstrate to others the new life that is in us— the born again believer is a different person.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”
— II Corinthians 5:17

We are not to allow our fleshly desires to control us, otherwise those to whom we preach and testify will look at our lives and think, *“Why are they preaching to us? They do the same things we do— they talk about the same things we talk about— read the same things we read— love the same things we love— want the same things we want— dress the same way we dress— listen to the same music we listen to— tell the same jokes we tell— do business the same way we do— so what’s the difference?”* Having preached the gospel of the grace of God to others, Paul didn’t want his message to be rejected because of a poor testimony. If Paul the apostle was concerned about this, we should be much more concerned about our lives, as we have fallen far short of his example. You see, Paul knew that if his life didn’t testify to the grace of God in him, his message would have been rejected and he would have become a castaway. We must maintain a good testimony before the unsaved world, and before other Christians, so they will be encouraged to seek God, and strengthened to do His will. How tragic it would be to reach the *Judgment Seat of Christ* and find that while we spoke to others of the marvelous grace of God, we caused them to reject it because of the life we lived. When we hinder others from hearing and believing God’s word, we cause them to stumble in their walk with the Lord. This is a sin Paul warns the believer about, in his epistle to the Romans.

“Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way.” — Romans 14:13

Rather than pointing out the sins of others, we should be careful that we are not the ones who *cause* them to sin. When our life is not pure, we cause others to stumble. Recently I saw a group of kindergartners performing in a program for their parents.

Each had their hands on the hips of the child in front of them. They went forward across the stage, stopped and began to cross it again backwards. All went well until one of the children at the end of the line fell. Then, one after the other, each of the other children stumbled and fell over the other just like dominos. Similarly, when we present a poor testimony before men, we cause many to stumble.

You see, what Paul said is true:

“For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.”
— Romans 14:7

Every one of us has an influence on those who live and work around us. People are watching us when we are at church and on the job. At home our own families are watching us. I’ve heard people say about sin, *“Well, I’m not hurting anybody but myself.”* That is not true. None of us lives or dies without affecting the lives of those around us (Romans 14:7). Each of us affects the lives of many others, and when we leave this earth, they are going to remember the testimony we leave behind. That testimony could actually be a determining factor in a man’s acceptance or rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“But take heed lest by any means this liberty of your’s become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

“For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

“And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

*“But **when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.**”*

— I Corinthians 8:9-12

We are saved by grace through faith, having been set free from the bondage of sin. We are no longer under the

condemnation of the Law— we are under liberty, but Paul warns us not to let our liberty become a stumblingblock to other believers that are weak. He then gives us an example of what he means. Back in Paul's day many idolaters sacrificed animals to their false gods while worshipping at their heathen temples. Afterward the meat was used to prepare a meal for anyone who wanted to eat. Sometimes believers would go to these temples to eat meat also. There was nothing wrong with a Christian eating that meat, because an idol is nothing to a Christian (I Corinthians 8:4), but since it was offered to those false idols, some of the weaker Christian brothers were offended. Maybe some of them had offered sacrifices themselves at these same temples before they were saved. They couldn't imagine going back to these places and eating before the gods they used to worship, and it would have been wrong for these weaker brethren to eat there, according to Romans 14:23. Now, notice carefully what I Corinthians 8:12 says. When we sin against the brethren and wound their weak conscience; when we do something that causes them to stumble and fall; we not only sin against them, but also against Jesus Christ our Saviour. You see, those weaker brethren are in the body of Christ just like we are, and when we sin against them, we sin against the body of Christ. Therefore, it is a sin against Jesus Christ himself.

Paul felt so strongly about this that he concluded:

“Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.”
— I Corinthians 8:13

An example would be the unclean habit of cigarette smoking. Suppose there was a young Christian, recently saved, who is trying to clean his life up and give up smoking (thank God). If he sees an older Christian, who has been saved for 10 or 12 years, but still smokes cigarettes, it's going to be a bad testimony and a stumblingblock to that young Christian. The smoker wounds that young Christian's conscience and in so doing, he sins against the

Lord Jesus Christ. This shows the importance of keeping our bodies in subjection as a testimony to our fellow man.

Paul speaks more of this in I Corinthians 6.

“All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” — I Corinthians 6:12

We are under grace, but we must be careful how we conduct ourselves *under* this grace and this liberty God has given to us. Paul said that, while he knew all things were lawful for him, he would not let himself get *hooked* on anything. Have any of us been brought under the power of cigarettes, soft drinks, TV, food, sports, pornography, or some other thing? Is there something in our lives that has become such a habit that we are actually brought under its power, so much so that we are compelled to indulge in it. Tell the truth now! —if so, it is sin. Even though, in some cases there may be nothing wrong with the thing itself, it may be wrong because it controls us or because it appears to be evil to others and has become a stumblingblock to them.

Paul even goes so far as to say we are to:

“Abstain from all appearance of evil.”

— I Thessalonians 5:22

That just about takes care of it doesn't it? If it is questionable, leave it alone— that is Paul's outlook on Christian liberty. He knew he was not under bondage to a set of rules, but under liberty. Still, he was looking out for his fellow man, and by doing this he was earning that incorruptible crown. If we want to earn that incorruptible crown, that's how we're going to have to do it. Carnal Christians don't get away with living a carnal Christian life. True, they are saved by grace through faith and they are going to Heaven, but if they don't live a life pleasing to the Lord Jesus Christ, they will *not* get away with it. They will lose rewards they could have enjoyed for eternity.

This *incorruptible crown* is not easy to secure. To win it we must **crucify the flesh**, and also **walk in the Spirit** (Romans 6; Galatians 5:24-25). This is not easy to do.

We must be able to say with Paul:

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” — Galatians 2:20

To determine if we meet the requirements for this incorruptible crown we must examine ourselves: Is our flesh *hooked* on smoking, drinking, eating, sleeping or the like? When those dirty shows come on TV, do we go ahead and watch them or do we turn the thing off? What do we give the most time to— watching TV, or reading and studying our Bible? When we get angry, does our flesh take over, or do we allow the Lord to control our temper? Do we gossip about people when they're not around, or do we pray for them instead? Do we lay around and relax when we should be studying, or working or witnessing? Do we come to church, or do we sleep and watch TV at home? Are we excited enough about church to get up and be there on time, or do we just drag around and get there when we get there? If our hearts and minds are on Jesus Christ, we will love the church and love fellowship with the saints. But, if our minds are on the pleasures of this world, we will find our love for Jesus becoming lukewarm, and our desire for preaching and the fellowship of the saints less than compelling. We will come to the place where we can take it or leave it.

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” — James 4:4

I never met a man who wanted to be classified as the enemy of God. But if the truth were known— and it will be one day— many would find themselves to be just that.

This incorruptible crown is given to some of God's special people, like Paul, who gave their lives in service to Him— that's a tough example to follow. But the Lord has an incorruptible crown for us too, if we will work for it. After all, He wouldn't offer it if it could not be earned. The right attitude we must have in striving to win this crown is shown in the following verses:

“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.”
— Matthew 22:37

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”
— Philippians 4:13

Now, that is the right way to look at this thing.

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;”

— II Corinthians 10:3-5

In this passage from his letter to the Corinthian church, Paul instructs believers not to walk after the flesh. He continues by saying that *“the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.”* Prayer is one of our weapons, and the word of God is another (I Peter 3:12; Ephesians 6:17-18).

III. The Crown Of Life

The third crown is called the *“crown of life.”*

*“Blessed is the man that **endureth temptation**: for when he is tried, he shall receive the **crown of life**, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”*

— James 1:12

- ☛ We will receive this crown if we remain faithful through suffering, endure temptation, and earnestly love our blessed Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. This crown is also given to those that are faithful unto death as Christian martyrs. We find it mentioned in this way in the book of Revelation.

*“Fear none of those things which thou shalt **suffer**: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be **tried**; and ye shall have **tribulation** ten days; be thou **faithful unto death**, and I will give thee a **crown of life**.”*
— Revelation 2:10

The Bible does **not** say that the Lord will give *eternal life* as a reward for being faithful, but rather a *crown of life*. (Eternal life is the free gift to all that believe, but the crown of life is an earned reward.)

Verse 10 (above) exhorts us to be “*faithful unto death*” during our trials and temptations in order to win this crown. (For those who must endure temptation, I Corinthians 10:13 has been a wonderful help. It has been a comfort for believers around the world as they were tempted by the devil to be unfaithful to Christ.)

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”
— I Corinthians 10:13

I can't tell you how many times the Holy Spirit has brought that verse to my mind, and on every occasion it has strengthened me to resist temptation. Yes, temptation will come, but the Lord Jesus Christ has already made a way for us to escape without sinning if we'll just claim the scriptures. When temptation comes, look for that *way of escape* the Lord has promised to provide.

James chapter 4 gives us more instruction about facing trials. These verses will be needed again and again during our Christian life, and should be committed to *memory*.

*“But he giveth more grace, Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the **humble**.*

*“**Submit** yourselves therefore to God. **Resist** the devil, and he will flee from you.”*

— James 4:6-7

The key to this passage of Scripture is *humility*. *Pride is sin*. We must not be proud! In the passage of Scripture above, James says that God *resists* the proud, and Job says that Satan is “a king over all the children of pride.” (cf. Job 41:34). So God resists the proud, and God resists Satan— even so, *we* must resist Satan. Now, that word “*resist*” is the opposite of “*yield*.” It doesn’t mean that we are to simply say *no* to the devil, because he won’t take *no* for an answer. It is an aggressive word— we are not to yield to Satan’s devices, but aggressively resist, making a counterattack— we are to fight back, but not in our own strength. You see, it is useless to attempt to resist Satan if we don’t proceed to *obey* God, because temptation is really an attempt by Satan to get us to *disobey* God’s will. In Matthew 4, how did Jesus resist Satan’s temptation in the wilderness? He quoted the Scriptures concerning the will of God, that were contrary to Satan’s temptations. Notice Jesus not only quoted what the Bible said *not* to do, but also what He *would* do.

Everyone will not be privileged to *really* suffer, or face death for the Lord Jesus Christ, but every one of us should love Him enough that we would suffer and even die for him if necessary (Matthew 22:37). Jesus knows our hearts and He knows if we really love Him or not. If we really do love Jesus, we will try to endure temptation and find that way of escape, that we might please Him.

Let’s ask ourselves some questions regarding the requirements for this crown. When suffering comes, do we bear it with grace, giving thanks for it, even if we don’t understand it?

I once heard evangelist Lester Roloff recite the following poem, and it has always been precious to me. It is simple, but profound.

*"I walked a mile with Pleasure,
She chattered all the way;
But left me none the wiser,
For all she had to say.*

*I walked a mile with Sorrow,
And ne'er a word said she;
But, oh, the things I learned from her,
When Sorrow walked with me."*

When temptation comes, do we ask the Lord to show us a way of escape, or do we try to fight it on our own? If we try to resist it in our own strength, we will lose out to the flesh every time because the flesh is just too weak. We must have the help of the Holy Spirit to be victorious.

Read what L.E. Maxwell says:⁴

"We cannot better close this chapter than by quoting from that bed-ridden saint and soldier of India, Miss Amy Carmichael. She has known the pathway of suffering. She bears in her body the marks of the Lord Jesus:

"We who follow the Crucified are not here to make a pleasant thing of life; we are called to suffering for the sake of a suffering, sinful world. The Lord forgive us our shameful evasions and hesitations. His brow was crowned with thorns; do we seek rose-buds for our crowning? His hands were pierced with nails; are our hands ringed with jewels? His feet were bare and bound; do our feet walk delicately? What do we know

⁴ Born Crucified by L.E. Maxwell, Moody Press

of travail? of tears that scald before they fall? of heart-break? of being scorned? God forgive us our love of ease. God forgive us that so often we turn our faces from a life that is even remotely like His. Forgive us that we all but worship comfort, the delight of the presence of loved ones, possessions, treasure on earth. Far, far from our prayers too often is any thought of prayer for a love which will lead us to give one whom we love to follow our Lord to Gethsemane, to Calvary— perhaps because we have never been there ourselves.’

‘Lord, when I am weary with toiling,
 And burdensome seem Thy commands,
 If my load should lead to complaining,
 Lord, show me **Thy Hands**—

Thy nail-pierced Hands, Thy cross-torn Hands,
 My Saviour, show me **Thy Hands**.
 Christ, if ever my footsteps should falter,
 And I be prepared for retreat,
 If desert or thorn cause lamenting,
 Lord, show me **Thy Feet**—
 Thy bleeding Feet, Thy nail-scarred Feet,—
 My Jesus, show me **Thy Feet**.
 O God, dare I show Thee
 MY hands and MY feet?

— Brenton Thoburn Badley.’”

IV. The Crown Of Glory

The next crown is the “crown of glory.”

“**The elders** which are among you I exhort, whom am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

“Feed the flock of God which is among you, **taking the oversight** thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre but of a ready mind;

“Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but **being ensamples to the flock.**

“And when the chief Shepherd shall appear ye shall receive a **crown of glory** that fadeth not away.”

— I Peter 5:1-4

- ☛ This crown can be earned by faithful elders (pastors and deacons) who,
 1. “Feed the flock of God” the bread of life (God’s word)
 2. Take “oversight” (leadership) of the flock (Hebrews 13:17)
 3. Live exemplary lives before the flock (II Thessalonians 3:7-9)

The term elder is used again in I Timothy 5.

“Let the **elders that rule well** be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”

— I Timothy 5:17

We may assume that word “elder,” as mentioned in I Peter 5 and I Timothy 5, refers to an *ordained* elder, since the verses speak of taking oversight and ruling. Oh, how we need faithful elders in the church of God today. Unfortunately we see a multitude of *hirelings* (John 10:11-13) who have chosen the ministry as a profession just as one would chose the legal field as a profession. There are also those who would be lords and dictators over the flock rather than shepherds. (A true shepherd does not drive the flock, but *leads* them.) There are so few today who live exemplary lives. It seems the hirelings love to *overemphasize* that believers can still sin even after they are saved, so that less attention will be given to their own sins, and they tell their flocks, “do

as I say, *not as I do.*” What we need today is holy men of God who can lead us to God and give us the example of brokenness and meekness.

Elders are not to teach for their own glory. They should give all the praise and glory to God— they should teach *for* Him and *by* His power. They are not to teach the word of God simply for *filthy lucre* (monetary gain) or for their own glory. In following these guidelines, an elder can earn the *crown of glory*.

V. The Crown Of Rejoicing

The last crown is called the “*crown of rejoicing.*”

“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?”

“For ye are our glory and joy.”

— *I Thessalonians 2:19-20*

This is the soul-winners crown, gained by winning men and women to Christ.

Paul says about his converts:

“Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.”

— *Philippians 4:1*

We read in Luke 15:10 that there’s joy in Heaven when one sinner repents. At the Judgment Seat of Christ, the souls we won to Christ will be with us. Regrettably, many saved church members will be tragically surprised to discover that they all their joy came from parties, church bazaars, and bingo get-togethers, rather than from winning souls. They got their rewards on earth instead of eternal rewards in Heaven. The question we want to ask ourselves here is this:

Are we ashamed of Jesus?

“For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”
— Romans 10:11

Are we ashamed of the gospel?

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...”
— Romans 1:16

Do you care if people go to Hell? Do you care enough to give out tracts when you have opportunity? Do you take part in visitation with your church? Soulwinning is like fishing. You won't catch many fish sitting at home in front of the TV; neither will you win souls unless you launch out into the deep and labor to bring them in.

CONCLUSION

The Bible indicates that the crowns we have studied will be *literal* crowns awarded to believers at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

In the book of Revelation we find the elders casting their crowns before the throne in worship, and praising Him who is worthy to receive all glory and honor and power.

*“The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and **cast their crowns before the throne**, saying,*

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”

— Revelation 4:10-11

And in Revelation 5:9 we find that these elders are believers that have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, just like we have.

“And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;”

— Revelation 5:9

It will be the highest honor in the universe to kneel before Jesus in that day and receive the crowns we have earned in our service for Him, as He speaks those blessed words, *“Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”* Then, we shall honor Him by casting our crowns before Him. But, many Christians will receive

nothing; they'll just be standing there watching with nothing to show for their life here on this earth. These will be ashamed when the Lord returns.

Again, it is John who advises us:

*“And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be **ashamed** before him at his coming.”* — I John 2:28

Furthermore, Jesus will be ashamed of them as well.

*“Whosoever therefore shall be **ashamed** of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be **ashamed**, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”*

— Mark 8:38

- Many Christians will lose their millennial inheritance and become like Esau whom we read about in the book of Hebrews.

“Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birth-right.

“For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”

— Hebrews 12:16-17

In that day, when we finally stand before our blessed Saviour at the Judgment Seat of Christ, it will be too late to go back and do anything for Christ. We will be in glorified, perfect, sinless bodies that can't suffer anymore. Beloved, will we receive a full reward then, or will we be among those who, in tears and sorrow, find that they have wasted their lives and misplaced their affections? Some may think that it will be enough just to be in Heaven, and that these things won't really matter; but in that day

we will all have *the mind of Christ* and will esteem those things of greatest value that He esteems of greatest value. We have the Scriptures, to warn us about this grave error. Consider the life you are living. Would others say that you are really hungering and thirsting after the things of God? Are you a living testimony of the grace of God, or are you just living a lie?

John warns us:

“Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.”
— II John 8

☞ We are to bear crosses now, so we can have crowns later
— **no cross, no crown** (or as the world puts it, **no pain, no gain**).

A believer *cannot* lose his salvation, but listed below are seven things he *can* lose:

1. Assurance— I John 2:3-5
2. Testimony— I Corinthians 15:33-34; I Corinthians 9:27; Romans 14:7, 13
3. Joy— Psalms 51:11, 12; John 15:11
4. Health— I Corinthians 11:30
5. Life— I Corinthians 11:30
6. Rewards— I Corinthians 3:13-15
7. Inheritance— Luke 19:15-26; Colossians 3: 24

Dear friend, let's labor with all our might to receive our full reward and bring honor and glory to the King of kings and Lord of lords— He that is called Faithful and True, the Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

LET'S REVIEW

The Crowning Day (pp. 37-55)

1. A Christian can earn _____ different crowns.
2. II Timothy 4:7,8 speaks of the crown of _____.
3. Believers will receive this crown if they earnestly _____
for Christ and _____ his appearing at the
second advent.
4. A Christian can have this love only if he sets his affections on
things _____ and lays up his _____ there.
5. I Corinthians 9:24-27 speaks of an _____
crown.
6. A believer can earn this crown if he keeps his body under
_____.
7. I Corinthians 6:19-20 teaches us that the believer's body is
the holy _____ of God.
8. In I Corinthians 3:16-17 we learn that we are not to
_____ it.
9. We are to maintain a testimony of _____
before all people and not allow our fleshly _____
to control us.

10. To earn the incorruptible crown we must _____
the flesh and _____ in the Spirit.
11. James 1:12 speaks of the crown of _____.
12. A Christian receives this crown of life if he remains faithful
through _____, endures _____,
and earnestly _____ our blessed Redeemer.
13. Revelation 2:10 says this crown is also given to
_____ who die for Christ.
14. While eternal life is a free gift, the *crown of life* is an earned
_____.
15. According to I Corinthians 10:13, God will not allow a
believer to be _____ beyond that he is able
to bear and He always makes a way to _____.
16. I Peter 5:1-4 speaks of the crown of _____.
17. This crown can be earned by faithful _____.
18. Elders are to _____ the flock of God
from the _____.
19. They are to take _____ (leadership).
20. They are to live _____ lives.
21. I Thessalonians 2:19-20 speaks of the crown of
_____.
22. This crown is for _____.

23. Luke 15:10 says that there is _____ in Heaven when one sinner repents.

Conclusion (pp. 57-59)

1. There will be _____ crowns awarded to believers at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
2. Many Christians will receive _____ because they have done nothing for the Lord.
3. Many will lose their _____ inheritance.
4. We are to bear _____ now, so we can have _____ later.
5. A believer can NOT lose his salvation. List the seven things that he can lose.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
 - f. _____
 - g. _____

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