

Why Live For God?: Future Rewards For Faithful Followers (Part 2)

I. CROWNS

The Nature of the Crowns:

1 Cor 9:24-27 ...Now they [do it] to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable [crown]. (Earned by behavior; Eternal in quality)

The Identity of the Crowns:

1. The Crown of Righteousness

2 Tim 4:7-8⁸ Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

- a. Rewarded Behavior: Righteous living focused on the return of the Lord.
- b. Key Words: "Looking Ahead" (anticipation)

2. The Crown of Life

James 1:12 Blessed [is] the man who endures temptation: for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

- a. Rewarded Behavior: Enduring temptation out of love for the Lord.
- b. Key Words: "Keeping On" (endurance)

3. The Crown of Glory

1 Pet 5:1-4² Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³ nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴ and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

- a. Rewarded Behavior: Shepherding God's people God's way.
- b. Key Word: "Caring Carefully"

II. A BETTER RESURRECTION (9 Reasons Why)

1. Sacrifice Now for Later (Possible and Preferred)

Heb 11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again. And others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

2. Present Incentive of Future Judgment and Reward (& Loss)

1 Cor 3:12-15¹² Now if anyone builds on this foundation [with] gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If anyone's work which he has built on [it] endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. (Rom 14:10-12; 2 Cor 5:8-10)

Matt 16:27 For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

Rev 22:12 And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward [is] with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

3. Repayment at the Resurrection

Luke 14:12-14¹² Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. ¹³ "But when you give a feast, invite [the] poor, [the] maimed, [the] lame, [the] blind. ¹⁴ "And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."

4. Rewards that Last and Multiply

Matt 25:14-29¹⁹ "After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' ²¹ "His lord said to him, 'Well [done], good and faithful servant: you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' ²² "He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' ²³ "His lord said to him, 'Well [done], good and faithful servant: you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

5. Inheritance Indicates Permanence – What You Get You Keep

Rev 21:7-8⁷ "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸ "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

6. Future Greatness

Luke 9:46-48⁴⁶ Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. ⁴⁷ And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, ⁴⁸ and said to them, "Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great." (cp Matt 20:20-28)

7. Lasting Title and Honor

Matt 5:19 "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches [them], he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

8. Future Great Reward

Luke 6:27-36³⁵ "But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Luke 6:22-23²² Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile [you], and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake. ²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward [is] great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.

9. Lasting Rewards

Heb 11:24-26²⁴ By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, ²⁶ esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he looked to the reward.

Matt 6:19-20¹⁹ "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

1 Tim 6:18-19¹⁸ [Let them] do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.