

# The Five crowns

Crown is a special headgear used to symbolize a person's high status and authority. But the word used for "crown" is *stephanos*, which can also refer to a "reward".

What two Persons in the Bible were described as wearing crowns;

**Vashti** (Esther 1:11 to bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing her royal crown, in order to show her beauty to the people and the officials, for she was beautiful to behold.)

**Esther** (Esther 2:17 The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti). The High priest and the King in the early history of the nation of Israel also apparently wore crowns as a mark of their office and authority (Leviticus 8:9 And he put the turban on his head. Also on the turban, on its front, he put the golden plate, the holy crown, as the Lord had commanded Moses. 2 Samuel 1:10 So I stood over him and killed him, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord).

The Book of Revelation portrays Christ with many crowns on His head, signifying His Kingly authority (Revelation 19:12 His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.)

We deserve crowns because we are Priest. 1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

There are five crowns...

1. Crown of Life
2. Incorruptible Crown
3. The Crown of Righteousness
4. Crown of Glory
5. Crown of Rejoicing

So, each of the crowns represents a reward for some particular special act of service or perseverance within the Kingdom of God.

None of the crowns are equivalent to eternal life itself. That is, while eternal life is the absolutely free gift of God to anyone who simply believes in Jesus for it (John 3:16; 5:24; 6:47), the various crowns are rewards that are given to Christians who complete certain tasks and practice certain behaviors.

**The Crown of Life** is referred to in 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.

The Crown of Life is special reward for a special act of service and dedication to the King.

So, if you are experiencing severe temptation, trials, or persecution, be encouraged and persevere through them.

Just as a runner perseveres through the difficulties of the race so that he reaches the finish line and receives the reward, so also Jesus wants to put the Crown of Life upon your head when you reach the finish line after persevering through pain, trials, and persecution.

It will probably not be an actual crown or ring of leaves, but will be some sort of special blessing, honor, privilege, or recognition in the future, eternal reign of Jesus.

Revelation 3:11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. But in Revelation 2:10 Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Jesus warns the Christians in Smyrna that the devil is coming to accuse and test them. Some of them will be thrown into prison, and they may even lose their lives. But Jesus says that if they remain faithful, He will bless and honor them with the crown of life when they stand before Him in the resurrection.

**The Incorruptible Crown** is also known as the Imperishable crown.

Paul writes to consider this crown "imperishable" in order "to contrast it with the temporal awards Paul's contemporaries pursued". It is therefore given to those individuals who demonstrate "self-denial and perseverance".

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus, I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

The crown won at the games was most coveted honor in the Greek world. If these athletes would strive and discipline themselves for something so unenduring as a leafy wreath, how much harder should Christians be willing to strive for a prize that is incorruptible or lasts forever. To achieve this prize, you must discipline yourself in all things.

**The Crown of Righteousness** 2 Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

This crown is promised to "those who love and anticipate" the Second Coming of Christ. These Christians desire intimacy with God. It is a crown that awaits us. Henceforth (loipon, already) It is "laid up," (apokeitai, reserved or set aside). At that day," we will receive our crowns from the Lord Himself. "That day" is a reference to the judgment seat of Christ, which will take place following the Rapture when all who belong to Jesus (both dead and alive) will be bodily resurrected.

All Christians will stand before Jesus at His judgment seat:

1 Corinthians 3:13-15 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 which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Our works will be judged and rewards given. However, the "crown of righteousness" is not a crown based on our works, but on Jesus' work for us. Therefore, every Christian will receive the crown of righteousness for Paul said the crown would be given to all who "love His appearing." The Lord's appearing will be at the Rapture, and all who are Christ's will certainly rejoice in His coming. It will be a day of a journey to Heaven, a bodily resurrection for all who died in Christ, and a body and soul resurrection for those still alive in Christ at His coming.

**The Crown of Glory** 1 Peter 5:4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Peter spoke of Christ, the chief shepherd, in the way that recognized the elders as under shepherds. When He shall appear (phaneronthentos, be made manifest) at His second coming, the Chief Shepherd will reward His faithful under shepherds with a crown, like the Greeks who bestowed crowns on victorious athletes. However, the Greeks had crowns made of oak or ivy leaves which would fade, whereas the elders will receive a crown of "glory" (doxes, honor, radiant splendor) that "fadeth not away" (amarantinon, fadeless like the amaranth, a flower that would not wither quickly like other flowers. The amaranth would revive if moistened with water, so it became a symbol of immortality.

The Crown of Glory is awarded to pastors and elders, who have been faithful ministers of the Gospel. The Crown of Glory is for all those who are called of God, who have obeyed God in their calling and who have faithfully served His people.

Ephesians 4:11-13 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

God has called some people to be in full-time ministry. He has called others to serve in a "ministry of helps" capacity.

1 Corinthians 12:28 KJV - And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

The crown of glory is a reference to holding wisdom in high esteem. A person who recognizes that wisdom, true wisdom comes from God alone. That person will be rewarded by God. God will honor him with the knowledge of the Lord which will lead to eternal life.

Proverbs 16:31 The silver-haired head is a crown of glory, If it is found in the way of righteousness.

Isaiah 62:3 Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

**The Crown of Rejoicing** 1 Thessalonians 2:19 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?

In the **New Testament**, Paul earns this **crown** after winning the Thessalonians to faith in Jesus. Because the Thessalonian believers meant everything to Paul. They were his hope, his joy, his victor's crown of rejoicing.

To those who faithfully are witnesses to the saving grace of God and leads souls to Jesus. This crown has also been named the soul winner's crown. It indicates here that God will be giving a crown to those who have witnessed to others and leading people to Christ. Telling others about the grace of God, telling others about Jesus, is the greatest thing that you can do for someone while here on this earth. When you help someone to be led to the Lord, you have just been used as a vessel of God.

Philippians 4:1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. The Philippian saints consisted of Paul's permanent joy and crown, or reward for his labors in Philippi.