

# The Bema Seat (The Believer's Judgment)

## Part 2

### Introduction

In part two of lesson five, we will take into consideration the crowns a believer can receive for their faithful service to the Lord Jesus Christ. After this, we will take up a few closing questions to end this section of study on the Believer's Judgment.

In part two, we are taking up the subject of the wreath-crowns a believer can win for their loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ, for particular areas of service to Him. These are special crowns that might be best thought of like receiving a gold medal in the Olympic Games for competing in individual competitions. For example, if you compete in gymnastics you can win individual gold medals for each event: pommel horse, balance beam, floor exercises, uneven-parallel-bars, etc. Along with the gymnastic team competing for the gold, individual team members who excel in particular events can win medals for those events. This is a similar idea when thinking of the wreath-crowns that will be received by some at the Bema Seat.

All believers receive "eternal rewards" when they trust in, cling to, and rely on Jesus Christ for their salvation. These eternal rewards include: inheriting an eternal home in heaven, glorified bodies, and an eternal relationship with God that allows them to enter freely into the throne room of God. All believers enjoy the blessing of living forever in the new heavens and the new earth, and all believers inherit the blessing of being with their believing loved ones in eternity.<sup>1</sup> These are some of the general rewards that every Christian receives, but beyond these the Bible reveals there are other rewards available to believers and encourages every effort to go after specific rewards known as crowns.

Early in our study we noted the difference between *stephanos* and *diadem* crowns. A *diadem* is a royal-crown, which is what the Lord Jesus wears (Rev. 19:12), and a *stephanos* is a wreath-crown that faithful believers receive from Jesus at the Bema Seat. The Bible speaks of seven different crowns that will be given to believers in this present dispensation of the Church Age for specific works they accomplish. We will now consider each one of these crowns.

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<sup>1</sup> Wall, Joe L., *Going For The Gold*, Chicago, Moody Press, 1991, p.81

1. **The \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Crown** (1 Cor. 9:25) - This crown is for those Christians who live self-controlled and disciplined lives (gaining victory over sin) and obeying the Lord's commands.
  
1. **The Crown of \_\_\_\_\_** (1 Thess. 2:2, 13-14, 19) - This is the soul-winner's crown. It is given to all those who have any part in the salvation of a soul.
  
2. **The Crown of \_\_\_\_\_** (2 Tim. 4:8) - This crown is given to all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ's appearing. It is not about wanting Him to come back to escape trials or adversity, or wanting to be taken out of this world to go to heaven for some personal relief. This crown is the reward for a heart that simply, lovingly desires to see Jesus face-to-face.
  
3. **The Crown of \_\_\_\_\_** (James 1:12; Rev. 2:10) - This crown is given to those who endure temptation and trials and for those who went through persecution for Jesus' sake.
  
4. **The Crown of \_\_\_\_\_** (1 Peter 5:4) - This is the Shepherd's Crown given to faithful leaders who oversaw the local church of God, such as pastors, elders, deacons, and deaconesses.
  
5. **The Crown of \_\_\_\_\_** (Phil. 4:1) - This crown is given to those who had an effect on the character, development, and behavior of believers.

6. **The Crown of \_\_\_\_\_** (Rev. 3:11) - This crown is given to the one who, under pressure of capitulation, guarded The Word of God and refused to deny the name of Christ.
  
7. Should going after rewards be the motivation for Christian service?
  - a. Jesus was motivated to go to the cross by the future reward that awaited Him (Heb. 12:2).
  
  - b. The apostles were motivated by the potential of future rewards:
    - i. Paul (1 Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 3:7-14).
    - ii. Peter (1 Peter 1:6-7; 2 Peter 1:5-11).
    - iii. John (1 John 2:28; 2 John 8).
  
8. How ought a Christian, who has not invested their life to this point in winning crowns, view their future potential of receiving these types of rewards? The apostle Paul gave some good advice to the church at Philippi that helps us to answer this question: “*forget what lies behind and reach for what lies ahead and press on for **the prize***” (Phil. 3:13-14). You can’t change what you did in the past; but as long as you have life, you can change what will happen to you in the future. In other words, it is never too late to go after the “gold medal,” to win a crown (or more than one) at the Bema Seat of Christ Jesus.