

## Christian Life Study Outlines

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### Outline Number Seven

#### REWARDS

**There is a vast difference in the doctrine of salvation for the lost, and the doctrine of rewards for the saved.** Salvation is “the gift of God, not of works”

(Ephesians 2:8, 9 <sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup>not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.)

Salvation is received by faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ

(John 3:36 <sup>36</sup>“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”)

Rewards are according to the works of the believer

(Matthew 16:27 <sup>27</sup>“For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.”)

**A most revealing Scripture concerning rewards is found in**

**1 Corinthians 3:8 -15.** <sup>8</sup>Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. <sup>9</sup>For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. <sup>10</sup>According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. <sup>11</sup>For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup>Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, <sup>13</sup>each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. <sup>14</sup>If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup>If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

First, every believer will be rewarded “according to his own labor” (verse 8). We do not labor for salvation.

Second, “we are God's fellow workers” (verse 9) – not for salvation, but for rewards.

Third, the believer is to build on the Lord Jesus Christ, “for no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (verse 11)

Fourth, the believer has a choice of two kinds of building materials: “gold, silver, precious stones” – this is building with eternal materials; or “wood, hay, straw” – this is building with temporal materials (verse 12)

(2 Corinthians 4:18 <sup>18</sup>while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.)

**The believer who builds on Christ with eternal materials, “gold, silver, precious stones,” shall receive a reward.** Those who build on Christ with temporal materials, “wood, hay, straw,” will receive no reward. The works of “wood, hay, straw” will be destroyed at the “judgment seat of Christ,” and the believer will suffer loss – not the loss of salvation, but the loss of rewards.

**In the first year of my ministry, I set at the bedside of a dying friend.** As we talked of his home going, tears filled his eyes. Being young in the Lord, I thought he was afraid to die, and attempted to speak words of encouragement to him. He said, “I am not afraid to die; I am ashamed to die.” He went on to say that Christ was his Savior, but he had lived for self, and now had to meet the Lord Jesus Christ empty handed. His life loomed up before him as “wood, hay, straw.” He was “saved so as by fire.”

### **Rewards are called “crowns” in the New Testament.**

#### 1 The Crown of Life

(James 1:12 <sup>12</sup>Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.)

#### 2 The Crown Imperishable

(1 Corinthians 9:24-27 <sup>24</sup>Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. <sup>25</sup>Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. <sup>26</sup>Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; <sup>27</sup>but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.)

#### 3 The Crown of Rejoicing

(1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 <sup>19</sup>For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? <sup>20</sup>For you are our glory and joy.)

#### 4 The Crown of Righteousness

(2 Timothy 4:5-8 <sup>5</sup>But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. <sup>6</sup>For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. <sup>7</sup>I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; <sup>8</sup>in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.)

#### 5 The Crown of Glory

(1 Peter 5:2-4 <sup>2</sup>shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; <sup>3</sup>nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be

examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup>And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.)

**1. The Crown of Life (James 1:12): 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.**

Notes: **This reward could be called the lover's crown. Upon examination of the above verse, we discover that the believer finds strength to overcome temptation and endure trials, through the love of God.** Paul said, "We also glory in tribulations." The question is, do we today glory in tribulations? We can, only if the "love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit"

(Romans 5:2-5 <sup>2</sup>through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup>And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; <sup>4</sup>and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; <sup>5</sup>and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.)

Without the love of God in the heart of the believer, trials can cause him to become bitter and critical and lose the "crown of life."

**All believers have eternal life: (John 3:15-16 <sup>15</sup>so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. <sup>16</sup>"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.),**

**but not all believers will be rewarded with the "crown of life."** This crown will be given to those who are "faithful until death"

(Revelation 2:10 <sup>10</sup>Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.)

To receive the "crown of life" the believer must love the Lord more than his own life. "For whoever desires to save his life (live for self) will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's (live for Christ at all cost) will save it"

(Mark 8:35 <sup>35</sup>"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.)

This reward will be given to those who live for Christ, and endure temptations, in the power of the love of God

(1 Corinthians 10:13 <sup>13</sup>No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.)

2. **The Crown Imperishable (1 Corinthians 9:24-27 24) 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.):**

**Notes:** Paul makes use of the Greek games to illustrate the spiritual race of the believer. They ran to win a “perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.” No young man could contend in the games unless he was a Greek citizen, born of Greek parents. No unsaved person can participate in the services of the Lord for rewards; only the born of God are eligible

(John 3:3 <sup>3</sup>Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.")

**Just as the athlete must deny himself many gratifications of he body, so the believer must say “I discipline my body and bring it into subjection” or he will become “disqualified.”** He will not loose his salvation, but he will lose the “imperishable crown.”

**The Greek games had hard and fast rules for all participants.** The New Testament contains the rules for believers who would enter the spiritual race to win the “imperishable crown.”

- (1). The believer must deny self of anything that would weigh him down and hold him back

(Hebrews 12:1 <sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,)

- (2). The believer must keep his eyes fixed on Christ, and not look to the right or the left

(Hebrews 12:2 <sup>2</sup>fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.)

- (3). The believer must find strength in the Lord

(Ephesians 6:10-18 <sup>10</sup>Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. <sup>11</sup>Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup>For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup>Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup>Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, <sup>15</sup>and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; <sup>16</sup>in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup>And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. <sup>18</sup>With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,)

(4). The believer must place his all upon the altar of the Lord

(Romans 12:1, 2 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. <sup>2</sup>And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.)

(5). The believer must, by faith, refuse anything that would impede spiritual progress

(Hebrews 11:24-29 <sup>24</sup>By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, <sup>25</sup>choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, <sup>26</sup>considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. <sup>27</sup>By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen. <sup>28</sup>By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them. <sup>29</sup>By faith they passed through the Red Sea as though they were passing through dry land; and the Egyptians, when they attempted it, were drowned.)

**Do not be spiritual spectator.** Enter the race and run to win the “imperishable crown.”

**3. The Crown of Rejoicing (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 19) For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?):**

Notes: **The “crown of rejoicing” is the soul winner’s crown.** The greatest work you are privileged to do for the Lord is to bring others to knowledge of Christ as personal Savior. The degree of your joy in heaven will be determined by the souls you have had a part in bringing to Christ. Paul tells the Thessalonian believers that they are his “hope, or joy or crown of rejoicing” now and when Jesus comes.

(1). It is wise to win souls to Christ

(Proverbs 11:30 OT <sup>30</sup>The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who is wise wins souls.)

(2). It is a work against sin to win souls to Christ

(James 5:20 <sup>20</sup>let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.)

(3). It is a cause for joy in heaven to win souls to Christ

(Luke 15:20 <sup>20</sup>So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.)

(4). Every soul winner will shine as the stars forever

(Daniel 12:3 OT <sup>3</sup>Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.)

#### How can you win souls to Christ:

- **Witness with your life;** live that others may see Christ in you

(2 Corinthians 3:2 <sup>2</sup>You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men;

and

Galatians 2:20 <sup>20</sup>"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.)

- **Witness with your mouth,** trusting the Holy Spirit to give power to the spoken word

(2 Corinthians 9:6 <sup>6</sup>Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.)

- **Witness with tithes and offerings** that others may preach Christ, and you will have "fruit (reward) that abounds to your account"

(Philippians 4:15 <sup>15</sup>You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;

and

2 Corinthians 9:6 <sup>6</sup>Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.)

God has promised that your labor will not be in vain in the Lord

(1Corinthians 15:58 <sup>58</sup>Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.)

The soul winner will not rejoice alone – all of heaven will rejoice with him when he receives the "crown of rejoicing"

(John 4:36 <sup>36</sup>Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.)

4. **The Crown of Righteousness (2 Timothy 4:5-8 5) But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. 6) For I am already being poured out as a drink offering and my departure is at hand. 7) I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. 8 ) 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.):**

**Notes: The “crown of righteousness” is a reward, and it is not to be confused with the “righteousness of God” which the believer receives when he becomes a Christian; for at that time, the believer is to “become the righteousness of God in Him”**

2 Corinthians 5:21 <sup>21</sup>He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.).

This saving righteousness is a gift to be accepted by the lost. The “crown of righteousness” is a reward to be earned by the saved. If the believer looks for, and loves the doctrine of the second coming of Christ, it will affect his whole life. Look at the dynamic impact this truth had on the life of the apostle Paul. He could say:

(1) **“I have fought the good fight”**

(verse 7,

also

1 Corinthians 15:32 <sup>32</sup>If from human motives I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, what does it profit me? If the dead are not raised, LET US EAT AND DRINK, FOR TOMORROW WE DIE.).

He fought a spiritual battle throughout his Christian life, and won. He never surrendered to the enemies of righteousness

(Ephesians 6:12 <sup>12</sup>For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.).

(2) **“I have finished the race.”** He had a race to run. And he did not detour the hard places; neither did he look back

(Luke 9:61, 62 <sup>61</sup>Another also said, "I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home." <sup>62</sup>But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.").

He finished his race with his eyes fixed on Christ

(Philippians 1:6 <sup>6</sup>For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.)

(3) **“I have kept the faith.”** He preached the “whole counsel of God” – never betraying any of the great doctrines

(Acts 20:24-31 <sup>24</sup>“But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God. <sup>25</sup>“And now, behold, I know that all

of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will no longer see my face. <sup>26</sup>"Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. <sup>27</sup>"For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. <sup>28</sup>"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. <sup>29</sup>"I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; <sup>30</sup>and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. <sup>31</sup>"Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.).

The apostle looked ahead to the "judgment seat of Christ" where the "crown of righteousness" will be given to those "who have loved His appearing." How important it is for the believer to look with a heart of love for the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that he may receive the "crown righteousness"

(verse 8).

**5. The Crown of Glory (1 Peter 5:2-4) and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive crown of glory that does not fade away.):**

Notes: The "crown of glory" is a special reward for the faithful, obedient, God-called pastor. He will receive this reward when the "Chief Shepherd appears." It is eternal; it "does not fade away." Every believer may share in the pastor's "crown of glory." He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward"

(Matthew 10:41 <sup>41</sup>"He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.).

Support your faithful, God-called pastor by praying for him and encouraging him in the work of the Lord. Under gird his ministry with God's tithes and your offerings

(Malachi 3:10 OT <sup>10</sup>"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the LORD of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.)

giving freely of your time to the service of the Lord. And God will reward you for supporting His chosen servant by allowing you to share in your pastor's reward. The pastor will earn this "crown of glory by:

(1) **Feeding the church.** He is to proclaim the Word of God without fear or favor; and, when necessary, he will "convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching"

2 Timothy 4:2-5 <sup>2</sup>preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. <sup>3</sup>For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, <sup>4</sup>and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. <sup>5</sup>But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.).



(2) **Taking spiritual oversight of the church.** The pastor is responsible to God for the message preached to his people. No pastor should preach to please the people; he is to please this Lord

(Galatians 1:10 <sup>10</sup>For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.)

(3) **Being an example to the church.** He is not to serve for the reward of money. Yet, the church is responsible to care for his every material need

(1 Timothy 5:18 <sup>18</sup>For the Scripture says, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages.").

He is the spiritual leader, and not a dictator. He is to walk with God by faith. "And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away."