

THE VICTOR'S CROWN

Request: You mentioned talking to Luke Hughes about the Crown of Life regarding his sickness. I went through my categorical notebook and couldn't find a lesson on ALL the crowns. Would you please do a study on them?

I chose 2 Tim.2:5 as our lesson text because Paul encourages church age believers to "play according to the rules" in order to "win the prize (stephanos / crown)."

"And also **if** (3cc / volitional) anyone competes (athleo / p.a.subj) as an athlete, **he does not (ouk) win the prize (stephanos / p.p.ind/ victor's crown), unless** (3cc; me / except) he competes (athleo / a.a.subj) according to the rules (nomimos)." (2 Tim.2:5)

"I press on towards the goal to win the prize (brabeion / the bestowing of the prize)." (Phil.3:14)

Each Victor Crown has its category of rules to be obeyed in order to win the crown. A specific stephanos wreath or crown was given to victor of each of the four Greek games [Olympian, Nemean, Pythian, and Isthmian].

Paul used the Greek word stephanos for the four Victor Crowns that are available to all church age believers who are willing to engage in the angelic conflict and play according to the rules ascribed to each crown.

The following two Greek words are used for crowns in the Bible: diadema and stephanos.

- Diadema refers to the crown worn by kings. It symbolizes royalty. Jesus will wear it at the Second Coming (Rev.19:12).
- Stephanos refers to the crown worn by a winning athlete. It symbolizes victory. It will be worn by all church believers who compete in specific categories of the angelic conflict and play according to its rules and win (2Tim.2:5).

This lesson will study SIX aspects of the four Crowns that will be awarded to those church age believers who have competed in specific categories of the angelic conflict according to the rules and won.

- 1. Every church age believer is entered into the angelic conflict contest as a result of salvation – "I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one." (John 17:15)**

"We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." (1 John 5:19) "Greater is He (Holy Spirit) who is in you than he (devil) who is in the world." (1 John 4:4)

The spiritual advancing believer has to trained in the word of God in order to be placed in whatever race the Lord may choose for him to run - "Do you not know that those who run in the race all run, but only one receives the prize (brabeion / awardee of prize) (yes, you do know)? Run in such a way that you may win. Any everyone who competes (agonizomai / p.m.ptc) in the games exercises self-control (egkrateuomai / p.m.ind) in all things. They do it to receive a perishable **wreath (stephanos)**, but we an **imperishable (aphthartos)**. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim (ouk adelos / to run a race with a definite plan designed to reach a definite goal)." (1 Cor.9:24-26)

How we run in each race will determine whether we receive the Victor's Crown of that contest (2 Tim.2:5; Phil.3:14)

2. We run to the finish or to complete whatever contest the Lord assigns us to run – “I have finished the course.” (2 Tim.4:7)

The only way to lose the victor’s crown is to not finish the race in phase II – “I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown.” (Rev.3:11)

“Therefore, since we have so great cloud of witnesses surrounding us, (1) let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and (2) the sin which so easily entangles us, and (3) let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, (4) 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 sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb.12:1-2)

3. The world placed the stephanos wreath of thorns upon the head of Jesus on the cross. Is God not wonderful to give this visual aid of victory to His Only Begotten Son! (Gen.3:17-19/ AOS)

“And after weaving a crown (stephanos) of thorns, they put it on His head, and in His right hand; and they kneeled down before Him and mocked Him, saying, ‘Hail, king of the Jews!’” (Matt.27:29)

“But we see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus (Matt.1:21), because of the suffering of death crowned (stephanos) with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.” (Heb.2:9) God turns cursing to blessings.

When Jesus returned to heaven, He was given the diadema crown of a king (Rev.19:12).

4. Each Victor’s Crown will be the reflected glory of faithful service to the Lord Jesus Christ in the angelic conflict of the CWL (phase II of the plan of God).

“So that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

(1 Pet.4:11b)

Victor Crowns are won in phase II and awarded and worn in phase III (believer in eternity). They are imperishable (aphthartos) crowns worn on imperishable bodies (1 Cor.9:25; 15:52-54).

5. The Victor’s Crowns will be awarded church age believers at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” (2 Cor.5:10; Rom.14:10-12)

Victor Crowns will last through out eternity and will never lose their glory in phase III (imperishable).

6. The following four races of the angelic conflict award Victor Crowns. Each Victor’s Crown is unique to each race [righteousness, life, joy, and glory].

- **Crown of Righteousness** is awarded to those faithful servants who reach and maintain spiritual maturity until dying grace (2 Tim.4:6-8)
- **Crown of Life** is awarded to those who faithfully endure undeserved suffering until dying grace (James 1:12; Rev.2:10)
- **Crown of Joy** is awarded to the faithful ambassador who shares the gospel of grace salvation until dying grace (2 Cor.5:18-21). This has a special reward associated with it in time (1 Thess.2:19-20; Phil.4:1)
- **Crown of Glory** is awarded to the faithful spiritually gifted communicator of God’s word (John 21) (1 Pet.5:4) unfading is amarantinos / amaranth flowers / pigweed) (God’s sense of holy humor for me!).