# Outline 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” (Eph. 2:8, 9). Salvation is received by faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 3:36). Rewards are according to the works of the believer (Matt. 16:27).

## A most revealing Scripture concerning rewards is found in 1 Cor. 3:8 -15. (Read)

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)

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” that is with eternal things; or “wood, hay, straw” –with temporal materials (verse 12) (2 Cor. 4:18).

**The believer who builds on Christ with eternal materials, “gold, silver, precious stones (these are metaphor not literal gold or silver)” 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.

## Rewards are called “crowns” in the New Testament. We will see few examples of crowns that Bible talks about: Let’s not take these crown ‘name’ as literal name and designated to that particular work alone, but let’s examine how rewards are discussed for different situations.

1. The Crown of **Life** (James 1:12)
2. The Crown **Imperishable** (1 Cor. 9:24-27)
3. The Crown of **Rejoicing** (1 Thess. 2:19, 20)
4. The Crown of **Righteousness** (2 Tim. 4:5-8)
5. The Crown of **Glory** (1 Peter 5:2-4)
6. **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:

**James talks about the crown of life for those who love God even in the midst of temptation and suffering, that is 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” (Rom 5:2-5). 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.”

Bible teaches us to be faithful until death to receive the crown of life (Rev 2:10; ESV), We should live for Christ, and endure temptations, in the power of the love of God (1 Cor. 10:13 (Matt 5:12). We must love the Lord more than our own life.

1. **The Crown Imperishable (1 Cor. 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 certainty. 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).

The New Testament teaches us to 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 (Heb. 12:1).
  2. The believer must keep his eyes fixed on Christ, and not look to the right or

the left (Heb. 12:2).

* 1. The believer must find strength in the Lord (Eph. 6:10-18).
  2. The believer must place his all upon the altar of the Lord (Rom. 12:1, 2).
  3. The believer must, by faith, refuse anything that would impede spiritual progress (Heb. 11:24-29).

**Do not be a spiritual spectator (observer/watcher)**. Enter the race and run to win the “imperishable crown.”

1. **The Crown of Rejoicing (1 Thess. 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:

**What a great joy it would be to see all the souls we have won for Christ. Paul takes those souls as his “crown of rejoicing”.** The greatest work you are privileged to do for the Lord is to bring others to knowledge of Christ as personal Savior. We will be honored for all the souls we have won or helped to win, 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 (Prov. 11:30 OT)
  2. It is a work against sin to win souls to Christ (James 5:20)
  3. It is a cause for joy in heaven to win souls to Christ (Luke 15:20)
  4. Every soul winner will shine as the stars forever (Dan. 12:3 OT)

## How can you win souls to Christ:

* + - **Witness with your life**; live that others may see Christ in you (2 Cor. 3:2 and Gal. 2:20)
    - **Witness with your mouth**, trusting the Holy Spirit to give power to the spoken word (2 Cor. 9:6)
    - **Witness with tithes and offerings** that others may preach Christ, and

you will have “fruit (reward) that abounds to your account” (Phil. 4:15 and 2 Cor. 9:6)

God has promised that your labor will not be in vain in the Lord (1Cor. 15:58). The soul winner will not rejoice alone – all of heaven will rejoice with him when he receives the “crown of rejoicing” (John 4:36)

1. **The Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim. 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:

**Paul hopes for the crown for his completed race. He calls it the “crown of righteousness”, the triumph for finishing the race well, for those who fight a good fight and keep their faith. We are saved and made righteous before God only through the blood of Christ, but there is a reward for those who look forward to Christ’s return, living a fruitful life.**

* 1. “**I have fought the good fight**” (verse 7, also 1 Cor. 15:32). He fought a spiritual battle throughout his Christian life, and won. He never surrendered to the enemies of righteousness (Eph. 6:12).
  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). He finished his race with his eyes fixed on Christ (Phil. 1:6)
  3. “**I have kept the faith**.” He preached the “whole counsel of God” – never betraying any of the great doctrines (Acts 20:24-31). 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).

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

## Notes:

**Peter encourages his fellow elders to shepherd the flock of God so that they will receive the “crown of glory” when Christ appears. Peter is specially exhorting the elders to:**

* 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 Tim. 4:2-5).
  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 (Gal. 1:10)
  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 Tim. 5:18). 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.”

**God has called us to take care of others, not under compulsion but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly, not domineering but being examples.** We need to be a good shepherd for the young ones and also support our faithful, God-called pastors and elders by praying for them and encouraging in the work of the Lord; by our tithes and offerings (Mal. 3:10 OT), by giving freely of our time to the service of the Lord.

Our faith rests in Christ’s righteousness instead of our own ([Romans 3:21–26](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%203.21%E2%80%9326)), however, our works would merit reward based on our faithfulness in service to Him ([2 Corinthians 5:10](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Cor%205.10))/(Rev 22:12) Everything we do for Christ will rewards us in heaven; whether we give a cup of water, feed the hungry, visit the prisoner or take care of sick (Mark 9:41/ 1 Cor 3:8). The rewards will show the reality of our sonship ([Galatians 4:7](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal%204.7)) and the justice of God ([Hebrews 6:10](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb%206.10)). God will give rewards in heaven in order to fulfill the law of [sowing and reaping](https://www.gotquestions.org/sowing-and-reaping.html) ([Galatians 6:7–9](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal%206.7%E2%80%939)) and make good on His promise that our labor in the Lord is not in vain ([1 Corinthians 15:58](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor%2015.58)). The rewards in heaven glorify God and provide us with joy, peace, and wonder as we consider God’s work in us and through us.