

The Crown of Life

[Jas 1:12 ESV] 12 Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

I. Intro

- A. Can I get an AMEN? (Terry Horton last week)
- B. Back to James!!!!
- C. Today we unpack verse 1:12, you might want to get the notes off the internet, or sharpen your pencil.

II. Text

- A. Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial
 1. Only by the power of God
 2. God may have sent the trial to refine you
 3. The Trial may be from the hand of the enemy to discourage you
 4. But, the trial is allowed, and there is strength to overcome
- B. Stood the test
 1. Stand firm in the word, and not in the flesh
 2. Do not trust your own strength to gain anything, but Christ alone.
- C. Receive the crown of life
 1. Crown:
 - a) Greek word: stephenos,
 - b) a crown
 - (1) a mark of royal or (in general) exalted rank
 - (2) the wreath or garland which was given as a prize to victors in public games
 - c) Used during the ancient Greek games, it referred to a wreath or garland of leaves placed on a victor's head as a reward for winning an athletic contest. As such, this word is used figuratively in the New Testament of the rewards of heaven God promises those who are faithful.
 2. Stephen
 - a) The first martyr: Acts 6-7
 - b) His name was derived from this word, and He fulfilled it as if it were prophetic
 3. Let this be an example of living for the crown
- D. Promised from God
 1. God is in the promise business
 2. God is also in the fulfillment business

III. Point

- A. Trial
 1. Trials will come
 2. Illustration: Traveling Trials
 3. Jesus is in the trial, and in the victory
 4. [Psa 46:1-7 ESV] 1 To the choirmaster. Of the Sons of Korah. According to Alamoth. A Song. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah 4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. 5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. 6 The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. 7 The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah
 5. Trials teach us to trust the Lord
- B. Crown
 1. The Crown concept in scripture is a challenge for me.
 - a) Do we desire the commendation from God?

- b) Or do we serve selflessly?
 - c) Both is ok.
2. Kingly crown v victors crown
- a) Diadema v stephanos
 - b) One is a mark for a ruler, one is a mark for a victor
 - c) Diadema used in revelation to describe the head coverings of the images John saw and described:
 - (1) [Rev 12:1 ESV] 1 And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.
 - (2) [Rev 13:1 ESV] 1 And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads.
3. The 5 Crowns mentioned in the text
- a) The Imperishable Crown
 - b) [1Co 9:24-27 ESV] 24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. 25 Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 26 So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. 27 But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.
 - c) The Crown of Rejoicing
 - d) [1Th 2:17-20 ESV] 17 But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face, 18 because we wanted to come to you--I, Paul, again and again--but Satan hindered us. 19 For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? 20 For you are our glory and joy.
 - e) The Crown of Righteousness
 - f) [2Ti 4:6-8 ESV] 6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Henceforth 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.
 - g) The Crown of Glory
 - h) [1Pe 5:1-4 ESV] 1 So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; 3 not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
 - i) The Crown of Life
 - j) [Rev 2:8-11 ESV] 8 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life. 9 "'I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.'
4. By the Way: all these crowns generally refer to the same thing, victory in Jesus
- C. Victory

1. Our promise is victory.
2. Our promise was fulfilled in Christ. Victory in Jesus!
3. Our victory is not from ourself, but Christ.
4. We will respond appropriately: [Rev 4:9-11 ESV] 9 And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

IV. Close

- A. We lay our life down and receive the crown
- B. We lay our crown down, and experience life
- C. Revelation 19:12: Jesus returns with many crowns...but this time DIADEMS...King Jesus...The only eternal kingly crown!
- D. [Rev 19:11-13 ESV] 11 Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. 13 He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God.