

7. These types got all pumped up and strutted about like wannabe Greek gods but we not mentally focused on the preparation required to successfully compete. These reflect believers who are unable to concentrate on serious study of the Word.
8. Those oriented to strict athletic discipline were motivated to train for all the events' games no matter their primary focus. Serious students of the Word of God are interested in studying all eleven categories of systematic theology.
9. All athletes did the same exercises under the exercise master. All were rubbed down with oil by the PT (physical trainer). All had the same strict diet. Believers must submit to the authority of the pastor by concentrating on the study of Bible doctrine. All absorb the same information taught by the P-T (pastor-teacher).
10. Also involved was the **γυμνάσιάρχ** (*gumnásiarch*), the superintendent of athletic training. Anyone caught disobeying any rules or violating any of the requirements was disqualified. Jesus grants or withholds rewards at His *Béma*.
11. After successfully completing the 10-month course, the athlete was qualified to compete in the games.
12. At the games, the winner of each event was awarded a **στέφανος** (*stéphanos*), a crown of leaves. An olive crown at Olympia, laurel at Délfhī, pine branches and later sellery [*sic*] at Isthmus, and green celery at Némēa. The Roman Capitolia awarded a crown of oak leaves.³
13. To the victor belong the spoils.⁴ And those who advance in the plan of God by maxing out the sophisticated spiritual life will receive the crown of life at the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ.

³ "Ancient Olympics: Crowns," <http://ancientolympics.arts.kuleuven.be/eng/TD012EN.html>, accessed March 03, 2017.

⁴ "The winner gets everything," (Christine Ammer, *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms* [New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1977], 673).

14. After returning home the victor received many additional awards: (1) A victory crown in the temple of his home town, (2) a financial reward; Sólon offered 500 drachmas⁵ for victors at the Olympic games and 100 drachmas⁶ for those at the Isthmian games, (3) free meals for life at city hall, (4) front seats at the theater, (5) festive and ceremonial entrance in the city, (6) some were awarded with, statues, poems, or inscriptions, (7) exemption from different kinds of taxes, and (8) entitlement to pensions.⁷
15. Solon's monetary rewards in 2015, U.S. dollars amounted to \$23,250 for all winners at Olympia and \$4,650 for those at Némēa.
16. By observing the details of those that received crowns in athletic competition, we acquire insight into the meaning of the biblical "crown of life."
17. The life of the believer is replete with ongoing tests designed to make a winner out of the individual.
18. Various situations, circumstances, and even intimidations from the Dark Side are allowed to confront the advancing believer.
19. Their purpose is to determine if the individual will rely on the promises, doctrines, and dependability of God's Word or not.
20. Those who advance through grace orientation and doctrinal orientation will progress with confidence by reliance on divine integrity.

⁵ "Drachma, silver coin of ancient Greece. From the 5th century BC, Athens gained commercial preeminence, and the Athenian drachma became the foremost currency. As a result of the conquests of Alexander the Great, the Athenian drachma came to be the monetary unit of the Hellenistic world" (*The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2010), 4:207)

⁶ "It is difficult to estimate comparative exchange rates with modern currency because the range of products produced by economies of centuries gone by were different from today, which makes purchasing power parity calculations very difficult; however, some historians and economists have estimated that in the 5th century BC a drachma had a rough value of 46.50 US dollars in 2015" (Greek Drachma, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_drachma, accessed March 03, 2017)

⁷ "Ancient Olympics: Rewards at the Home Town, <http://ancientolympics.arts.kuleuven.be/eng/TD012EN.html>," accessed March 03, 2017.

21. Just as the athlete has to commit his body to the limit of physical endurance in preparation to compete in the games, so also the believer must commit his mind and body to confront, endure, and overcome the challenges of cosmos diabolicus.
22. The situations that are common to man confront us all. They are allowed so that we might take up the challenge to sharpen our sword, “which is the Word of God” (Ephesians 6:17*b*).
23. It is with doctrinal insight, dogged perseverance, and faith motivation that we take our stand by dependence upon the power of the Word.
24. These illustrations and their comparisons to the Invisible War plus confronting personal challenges define the life of the mature believer.
25. The crown of life is awarded to those who endure great sufferings for the sake of truth:

Philippians 4: 8 Finally brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

v. 9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. (NASB)

26. The crown of life is related to the invisible hero’s production from his spiritual gift, his ambassadorship, and his royal priesthood.
27. The crown of life is awarded for consistent filling of the Holy Spirit, consistent perception of divine truth, and consistent use of the problem-solving devices.
28. Historical impact also includes the Spirit-filled believer’s personal, historical, international, angelic, and heritage impact.

(End JAS1-23. See JAS1-24 for continuation of study at p. 231.)



29. Those who take a stand for God and country at the peril of life and limb, those who accept great personal injury and pain in defense of truth, or those who suffer physical death to the point of martyrdom receive this crown of life.

30. Let's sum this up with some Latin proverbs:

Crescit sub pondere virtus: Virtue increases beneath oppression.

Vincit qui patitur: He who endures conquers.

Qui non proficit deficit: He who does not advance falls behind.

Corruptio optimi pessima: Corruption of the best is the worst of all.

Magna est veritas et praevalabit: Truth is mighty and will prevail.

31. The crown of life is mentioned among the Nike Awards in the Lord's message to the church at Smyrna:

Revelation 2:10 "Do not fear what you are about to suffer: note that the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, in order that you may be tested; and you will have special persecution ten times. Keep on becoming faithful inside the bubble until death, and I will give you the crown of life. (EXT)

III. The Crown of Glory:

1. This crown is awarded to pastors who faithfully study and communicate the Word of God to their congregations.
2. There are four categories of pastors in the Church Age: **(1)** Cosmic (*planáō*: "to lead astray"), **(2)** Child (*paidíon*), **(3)** Adolescent (*nianískos*), and **(4)** mature (*anér*).
3. The **cosmic pastor** is a fake. He functions in both cosmic 1 and 2, covers his apostasy with human good and evil, and involves his flock in social action, crusader arrogance, and Progressive causes.

4. Personally, he is cocky, arrogant, and self-righteous. He is disinterested in the study of the Bible although he will quote verses out of context to lead his congregation into false applications.
5. The **baby pastor** (*paidíon*) emphasizes his own personality while deemphasizing the teaching of the Word of God.
6. His ignorance of Scripture is exposed by his constant emphasis on evangelism, often with an erroneous or confusing gospel.
7. His unpreparedness is also evident by his propensity to present moral lectures backed by biblical passages that, if properly applied, would have no relationship to his message.
8. The **adolescent pastor** (*nianískos*) teaches some doctrine, but is distracted by numerous distractions that supersede preparation for the message.
9. The **mature pastor** (*anér*) emphasizes doctrine, is a prepared person academically, and knows where he stands theologically. His focus is on the message, not issues that are best left to the Board of Deacons and the spiritual gifts of the congregation.
10. The mandate to pastors is found in:
1 Peter 5:2 Shepherd God's flock among you, exercising oversight not merely as a duty but willingly under God's direction, not for shameful profit but eagerly.
v. 3 And do not lord it over those entrusted, but be examples to the flock.
v. 4 Then when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory [δόξα (*dóxa*)] that never fades away. (NET)
11. The noun δόξα is assigned both to Jesus Christ and to the pastors who fulfill the obligations mentioned in 1 Peter 5:2–4.
12. Paul comments on this crown in: