

10. “Any and everything” is often not a laughing matter, but the believer who has acquired a stabilized mentality is able to cope with any exigency life presents.
11. Orientation and adjustment is the process. Orientation must consider that what has happened is a part of past history. The event was obviously in the divine decree. Jesus Christ controls history and God knew of all events of history in eternity past.
12. The event may have been the result of events associated with the Angelic Conflict or from decisions made by self, others, or a combination of circumstances.
13. It now sits as a circumstance which you must manage with whatever inventory of ideas you possess. The greater the inventory of biblical principles the more efficiently you will be to orient and adjust.
14. Emotions that respond to circumstances are legitimate, but may not have significant impact in the decision-making process. What is done is done. What needs to be done next is the objective of restoring order in your soul and assisting others to do so if possible.
15. Prayers without doubting must cover the circumstance beginning with those who are affected by the event, followed by self, and with thanksgiving and gratitude for divine guidance and sustenance.
16. Any believer who is able to manage a situation, be it a crisis or a hiccup, the means of doing so is indicated by the present active indicative of the verb **ὑπομένω** (*hupoménō*): “To remain under, to persevere, endure, sustain, bear up under, suffer adversities, persecutions or provocations with faith.”<sup>3</sup>
17. The present tense is durative or retroactive denoting that which has begun in the past and continues into the present.
18. The active voice indicates the believer maintains endurance from his inventory of ideas that sustains his ability to remain copacetic under pressure.

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<sup>3</sup> Spiros Zodhiates, gen. ed. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 1424.

19. The indicative mood indicates this is a statement of fact regarding an advanced believer functioning in the sophisticated spiritual life.
20. The happiness introduced here has to do with a period associated with unpleasant circumstances through which such a person must endure “testing,” the noun **πειρασμός** (*peirasmós*): “to be put to the test” is the idea.
21. This noun’s definition implies a trial under pressure for the purpose of approval. If you are going to be **(1)** an effective ambassador for Christ, **(2)** a combat-trained soldier who does not flag under pressure, and **(3)** one who uses resident doctrine as divine ordinance to overcome adversity, then you will continue to “press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14).
22. The “prize” refers to one’s successful advance in problem solving. This is a process which God allows the believer to endure over time. He learns the effectiveness and reliability of God’s grace in action which he learns to rely upon in every situation.
23. The principle is, never retire from the battle, but orient and adjust after every failure and be encouraged by every victory.
24. Becoming a battle-tested warrior means you have relied on the power of the Word of God to resolve those things that test your mettle.
25. At some point, the application of biblical principles will result in divine approval of being a “good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:3).
26. This promotion comes up next in the verse, “for once he has been approved,” which is the word, **δοκιμος** (*dókimos*): “to be approved as acceptable in the furnace of adversity.”
27. The crucible that is indicated in this context is not concentrated entirely on personal problems or encounters with thought, system, and people testing.

28. Also included is the vast array of challenges that are presented in life where you are confronted with opportunities, the option to “take a chance,” or make an important decision that will alter your current status quo.
29. Some people are afraid to pull the volition trigger when faced with opportunities. Take as an example the option almost every young man has, beginning at age 18 or later, to enter into the armed forces of this country.
30. It is simply the willingness to go to a recruiting center and sign up in one of the branches of our military. But each of these branches has options to become an elite warrior.
31. These options include Army Green Berets and Rangers, Navy SEALs, Marine Corps Special Forces, and Air Force Special Tactics to name a few.
32. In the early '70s, Bobby Thieme served in the Army and opted to go to Fort Benning, Georgia, with the hope of becoming an Army Ranger. During Bobby's time in that endeavor the Colonel quoted one commanding officer's description of what it took to pass Ranger training:  

**It's designed to see what you're like at the point at which you would be cracking up; no sleep, going mile after mile, pushed to your physical limit, pushed to your mental limit, pushed to your psychological limit and still enduring it, still thinking, still able to give a five paragraph field order, able to still see the grids on the map, and so on.**
33. There's even more to it than this brief synopsis and other elite forces also have their trials of fire, each asserting theirs is more demanding than those of others. Nevertheless, every person who decides to advance to the next level is challenged to endure the test. Not all are able to do so. Many may be called but few are chosen.
34. And that's the point of our examples in James 1:12. Just because a person places his personal faith in Jesus Christ does not mean he will become an effective warrior for our Lord in the Angelic Conflict.
35. To do so he must engage the enemy, which often times is himself. Volition can be a very fickle thing; endurance has its limits; stick-to-itiveness is a mental imperative.

36. *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* defines the latter term as “unwavering pertinacity,” the latter word meaning in our context, “Holding tenaciously to a purpose, opinion, or course of action. Extremely persistent or unyielding.”
37. Those who stay the course will be rewarded. There are numerous Latin proverbs that address this truth:  
“Boldness increases through trial,” Pliny the Younger.  
“The gladiator makes up his mind in the arena,” Lucius Seneca.  
“Nothing is rightly taught or learned without examples,” Lucius Columella.  
“Courage increases in dangerous circumstances,” Marcus Lucan.  
“The end crowns the work,” medieval.<sup>4</sup>
38. This last bromide sums up the objective of the verse introduced by the future middle indicative of the verb **λαμβάνω** (*lambánō*): “to receive what is given or imparted, imposed, or obtained.” It is the latter that is in view here.
39. The future tense is predictive of an event which is expected to occur in future time. If the believer is approved, *dókimos*, just noted, then at some point in the future he will receive something.
40. The middle voice is deponent thus active in meaning. The believer who perseveres will ultimately be approved and receive a reward.
41. The indicative mood indicates this conclusion is a confirmed fact.
42. The thing to be received is the noun **στέφανος** (*stéphanos*): “crown.” The category of crown is indicated by the descriptive noun, **ζωή** (*zōé*): “life.” There are three “crown” rewards indicated in Scripture: crown of righteousness, crown of life, and crow of glory.

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<sup>4</sup> Waldo E. Sweet, *Latin Proverbs: Wisdom from Ancient to Modern Times* (Wauconda, Ill.: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2002), passim.

43. To fully understand rewards, which include the three crowns, we must stop and study the:

## Doctrine of Crowns

### A. Time Factors Leading up to the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ.

1. Since the end of the Church Age may occur at any moment, the anticipation of the Rapture can be a distraction from the principle of one day at a time.
2. The Rapture may occur on any given day, but it also may not occur until after our life on this earth is completed.
3. The description of the Rapture is found in several passages of Scripture, one of the most detailed being 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 where the order of the resurrections is noted:

**1 Thessalonians 4:16** - For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout [ voice commands to the archangel and the trumpeter angel ], with the voice of the archangel [ to those still in human bodies ] and with the trumpet of God [ to those in interim bodies ], and the dead in Christ will rise first [ those returning with Christ will rise first ].

**v. 17** Then we who are alive and remain [ those who were alive at the Rapture ] will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. (NASB)

4. After exiting the universe and after entering the third haven, the royal family will collectively genuflect in veneration of Jesus:

**Philippians 2:10** in the presence of the person of Jesus every knee of heaven shall bow [ genuflection ], both the ones on earth [ believers alive at the Rapture ] and the ones under the earth [ believers who died before the Rapture occurred ],

**v. 11** and every tongue shall acknowledge that Jesus is the Lord [ veneration ], resulting in the glory of God the Father. (EXT)

5. Next on the agenda is the Judgment Seat of Christ which is referenced in:

**2 Corinthians 5:10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat [ βῆμα (*béma*): more commonly a tribunal, especially for a judge<sup>5</sup> ] of Christ.

6. Only two categories of believers exist at this point: winners and losers. The difference is determined by each person's use of logistical grace support from salvation to physical death.
7. The potential rewards include the seven categories of Nike Awards and Escrow Blessings which are dispensed in 13 categories among which is the crown of life.

#### **B. Roman Crowns Illustrate Biblical Crowns.**

1. The Bible must be interpreted in the time in which it was written. In the New Testament, the crowns of the Roman Empire are the pattern including the three types that are mentioned.
2. **Στέφανος (*stéphanos*):** crown. Rewarded for winning in battle and in athletics. Believers will wear these in eternity for advance to the copacetic spiritual life.
3. **Διάδημα (*diádēma*):** a crown for a king. Used for the second highest decoration in the Roman army. Not used for believers since so very few will rule with Christ in the Millennium. Jesus is described as having “many diadems” on his head in Revelation 19:12b.
4. A third general designation is the adjective “royal” and the nouns, “king” and “monarch.” The noun forms describe a sovereign ruler of people. Jesus as Messiah is often called “King,” “King of Israel,” or “King of the Jews” (Matthew 2:2; 21:5; 24:34, 40; Luke 19:38; John 1:49; 12:13, 15).
5. In Scripture, Jesus is associated with three crowns of royalty. By virtue of His deity, He wears the *diádēma* of His deity.

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<sup>5</sup> “It is evident from the context of Romans 14:1–13; 2 Corinthians 5:1–11 that this is the judgment of the believers connected with the *parousia* (Rapture), the coming presence of the Lord Jesus. This concerns the evaluation of our life on earth and its character and works (see especially 2 Corinthians 5:10)” (Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, 334).