**Mystery of the Church, No. 52**

**Colossians 1:25-29**

“The Mystery of the Church,” segment number 52, in Colossians 1:25-29.

There is an old motto which one often sees hanging on the wall of Christian homes on a plaque, which is quite, quite true. It says Only one life to live will soon be pasted. Only what is done for Christ will last. simple little statement. But every time I see it, I pause, and I consider, and I think how true. How true. How true. One of the problems we have in life is that we forget the title of that old movie sequence in the pretelevision days when you used to go to movie theaters and they had a thing called the Movietone, which was news events, and it was a newsreel. And it was always introduced with some trumpet, exciting music and then statement, time marches on. And they would show what time had accomplished in the current new situation. Well, indeed, time marches on and it is important that we remember that we begin young, and we don't stay there. We begin with full capacity, with full ability, and then we move on. The smart Christians remember that the unsmart ones do not. It is for this reason that the word of God has made an incisive statement to us in telling us that as our days, so shall our strength be. And no sadder words have ever been said in the human race than those which describe what might have been.

So all of us look back and we see the lost opportunities. All of us look back when we said not now, another time. Like when the master was appealing telling to certain people to come to follow Him. Well, I have to take care of my aged parents. Well, I have to take care of this problem. I just got married. Well, I have to do this. And Jesus says anybody who doesn't put his hand to the plow now and does not look back is not worthy of me. But, boy, what a price to pay. How we remember the days when we could have done things. Now we can't. How we got sometimes our nose out of joint because somebody put a little demand upon us to rise to standards that we thought was interfering with our freedom and our Grace. We said, you don't tell me what to do and you cut out, never cut into the opportunity of service again. This is very serious business. We live in a world and in a country that is so prosperous and has such a good life that we think that that's what life is all about. We think that that's what Christianity is all about. It is very hard for us to realize that we are all the slaves of the Lord Jesus Christ. And what our life is, is service to God our Heavenly Father. And whatever else we do in life and whatever else financial means, possessions we acquire it simply to do the will of God for which we were born.

This is going to be a lot of sadness at the Judgment Seat of Christ as people look back and they realize my oh, o my, o my, how much of my life is down a rathole. ow much of my life is not ever going to count for eternity? Because after all is said and done, only one life to live twill soon be pasted. Only what's done for Christ will last. That's all you're going to take into eternity with you. Psalms 90:12 has this admonition, “So teach us to number our days that we may present to the heart of wisdom.” We do not recognize that our life is moving on we act dumb. We recognize that there isn't a better day for us to do what needs to be done now. There's not a better day to give God something that needs to be given now because it's needed now. And you have it. You have the ability. There's no better day to invest your time in some act of God service than now. You have the time; you have the capacity. Teach to us to number our days. Remember, you're clicking them off one at a time and every day you're a little weaker and a little less able. Teach us to number our days that we may present to the heart of wisdom. That's what we try to do in these services, convey from the word of God, the mind of God to people so that people are spiritually smart, and they will not fritter away their lives. They will not waste their capacities. Whatever goals, whatever things we're interested in, whatever objectives we have, whatever we look forward to, the bottom line is I am a servant of the most high God, and He will ask me to account.

I am a servant. And we have no less a person to exemplify this than the Lord Jesus himself. Philippians 2:7, “But he”, Christ, “emptied himself, taking the form of the bond servant, a slave and being made in likeness of men.” Here was the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, very God of very God took upon himself a human body, joined it to his humanity and in His humanity He acted the way people are supposed to act. He acted as one of absolute righteousness, fully in tune with God His Father. And therefore, what did he do? It was a servant. He wasn't a good time Charlie. He was a servant. Everything he had, everything he was able to do, everything he was belong to God His Father. And he was the agent of transmission. The day a Christian finally gets hold of the fact that he is the agent of transmission, he begins living. Then he realizes now I have come into my significance. Now I have a reason for taking this next breath. I am performing my job as the God who is entrusted me with the means to do his work. The time, the treasures. Not the least of it, which is the spiritual gift and talent. Only one life to live twill soon be pasted. Only was done for Christ will last.

There's another saying that aptly summarizes this idea in another exhortation. Sometimes you see this on the wall. I have one at home. It says, Saved to Serve. That's all of it. Saved to Serve. That's why I saved. What I ever did before that, whatever I was before that, once I'm in the family of God I've been saved for the purpose of serving God my Heavenly Father. You don't have to do it if you don't want to. You will suffer the loss for that. You are a free Grace agent, but if you're obedient to your Father, you will do what He says. And you will not just talk about it. You will do what he asks you to do. Saved to Serve. The purpose of the Christian life is not to accumulate things on this earth, but to accumulate rewards in heaven for service in the will of God. For example, Luke 16:13 is this observation, “No servant can serve two masters for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.” Pretty simple.

You cannot serve two control points. You cannot be controlled by your desire for money or your desire for the will of God. They're mutually exclusive. You go for one or the other. Please notice beginning at Luke 12:15 an extended passage of Scripture well worth reading to remind ourselves that these are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. People who have what are called red leather Bibles, which print the sayings of Christ and red, this is all solid red. It's all the direct statements of Christ himself. Luke 12:15, “And Jesus said to them, beware and be on your guard against every form of greed for not even when one has in abundance does his life consist of his possessions?” See what we are telling you. What you have is not where it's at. It's what's awaiting you in heaven. That's where it's at. Or Luke 12:16-21, “And he told him a parable saying the land of a certain rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself saying, what shall I do since I have no place to store my crops? And he said, This is what I will do. I will tear down my barns and I will the larger ones. And there I will store all my grain and my goods, and I will say to my soul, so you have many goods laid up for many years to come take your ease, eat, drink and be merry. But God said to him, you fool, this very night your soul is required of you.” And now who will own what you have prepared? “So is the man who lays up treasures for himself and is not rich toward God.”

Luke 12:22-32, “And he said to his disciples, For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life as to what you should eat, nor your body as to what you should put on. For life is more than food in the body than clothing. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, and they have no store, room nor barn, and yet God feeds them. How much more valuable you are than the birds, and which of you, by being anxious, can add a single cubit to his lifespan. If you then cannot do even a very little thing, why are you anxious about other matters? Consider the lilies how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. But I tell you, even Solomon, in all his glory, did not clothe himself like one of these. But God so raised the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow it is thrown into the furnace. How much more will he clothe you? Oh, men of little Faith. And do not seek what you shall eat, what you shall drink and do not keep worrying for all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek. And your Father knows that you need these things but seek for his kingdom, these things shall be added to you.” Is that a deal or is that a deal. You go about the Lord's business and logistical Grace the things you need will always be there. “Do not be afraid of the flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom, sell your possessions, give to charity, make yourself purchase with which do not wear out and unfailing treasure in heaven.”

Your purse is on earth are always going to have holes in it. Somebody is going to be cutting a hole in your purse. Jesus says put your purse in heaven nobody to get at that. Matthew 6:19-12, “That were no thief comes near nor moth destroys for where your treasure is there will your heart be also.” There it is. There is Grace all the way. You do not have to force people to do right when their treasure orientation's in the right place, with their lives, with their time, with what they possess. Revelation 22:12 closes the Bible and it is a perceptive statement near the end of the Scripture says, “Behold I'm coming quickly, and my reward is with me to render to every man according to what he has done.” That is how Faithful you have been in serving me as my bond slave with what I have given you of your spiritual gifts, the time of your life and of your possessions. I Timothy 6:17, “Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.” See, the rich man made the big mistake of placing his hope on the riches he had accumulated for himself. Jesus says don't trust that. That's uncertain. Trust on the riches which God has promised. His logistical Grace will carry you through. The supplies will be there. You can trust him. I Timothy 6:18-19 says, “Rich people instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasures of a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.” You want to live then live in the generosity of Grace. And that's the way God would treat you in eternity, in the generosity of his Grace for your Faithfulness.

One more Hebrews 6:10 says, “For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward his name. And having ministered and instilled ministering to the Saints.” There is no finer, no more noble action that any Christian human being can have than to be using what we have, what we are, what we're able to do to minister to the people of God. At the heart of the Christian life, lived in the will of God and the service of God is this quality of personal holiness that we've been looking at. A spiritual maturity structure that exists in the soul and is functioning. Holiness is the separation from the lifestyle and the self-centered objectives of satan's world. It is being separated to the specific plan of God for one's life in divine good works. That is a problem for every Christian, the victory that he must win. He is in a world that draws him like a magnet to the things that are trivial and temporary and draws him away from the things of God. Ephesians 2:10 says, “For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in.” You were saved, and God said, assigned this job as a life ministry of Sam Jones of Susie Brown. And there it is recorded in heaven. That's the life ministry. And when they come up here, we'll get the records out and see how well they fulfilled their assignment. Beginning at II Corinthians 6:14 listen carefully, “Do not be bound together with unbelievers for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness or what fellowship has light and darkness, or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?” Nothing so says a Christian who is at home in this world and who is at home in the lifestyle of this world and who does not see himself as a pilgrim and a stranger passing through, carrying out a divine purpose. II Corinthians 6:16-18, “Or what agreement has a temple of God with idols for we are the temple of the living God. Just as God said, I will dwell in them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from their midst and be separate, says the Lord, and do not touch what is unclean and I will welcome you. And I will be a Father to you. And you shall be my sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.” Then here's the clincher. II Corinthians 7:1, “Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh”, the old sin nature and spirit, “perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” We are called to be a people who are separate holy onto the Lord. And those who take that business of being a holy person, life in the will of God, life as a slave of God, life and the good times and the bad times, but always loyal and always Faithful. And always with our eyes looking above, always on him and never on people or things. There is a special recognition that God has provided to be distributed at the Judgment Seat of Christ following the Rapture of the Church. It is a series of crowns and the particular crown related to holiness is called the Crown of Righteousness.

It is described for us in II Timothy 4:7-8 this is an important passage of scripture to be acquainted with says, I Paul, coming now to the end of his life, “I fought the good fight. I finished the course. I've kept the Faith. In the future there's 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.” The crown of righteousness is given to certain Christians to recognize a Church age believer who maintained a superior level of experiential sanctification in his lifetime. That is an exceptional life of holiness. An exceptional life of walking in the will of God. An exceptional life of separation from the world system, separation unto the Lord God and his work. That sounds awful much like the job of a preacher. No, there's no difference. Every Christian is going to be accountable for how much time was spent in this position of holiness. It is to honor a life of exceptional and consistent separation under God. A life which is lived for a maximum amount of time in temporal fellowship with God the Father. You're not out of fellowship. You're in that inner circle of fellowship with the

Father. It is the status of godliness of the spiritual Christian in the inner circle where we are filled with the Spirit.

It is a place where I John 1:9 has placed us because when we have sinned and stepped out of that holiness circle, we confess, and we come right back in. There is no reason that we should not go through most of the day in the inner circle. It is a great mistake for us to think that this is beyond us. We can't be that good. Yes, you can. The Jew couldn’t. But because you are filled with the Holy Spirit, because you have the capacity of God himself to live your life, you will do it right. You can live in that inner circle. And if you cross the line, He will call your attention to it, just like that. And all you have to say my mistake, and you confess and all as well.

The problem is that some preachers got some sense about the word of God. Some spiritual insight gives you some caution and warning in the teaching ministry. And you don't like it. You don't realize that the Holy Spirit is saying, hey, hey, you stepped across the line, you're getting out of the inner circle, bad business. I want you to fix this and get back in when you stop fighting. What I want you to do is to stop fighting with the will of God is for you. That's not going to get you anywhere. It’s going to be very costly someday and you don't want to do that.

It is a status of godliness, the place of the spiritual Christian in the inner circle of our diagram. The holiness which characterizes the spiritually mature Christian is going to be given special recognition by God the Father is a Judgment Seat of Christ and rightly so. While it is possible, it is obvious that if you say that's it for me. I'm going to be in that inner circle. I'm saved, came in there to the cross Jesus Christ. I'm in that inner circle of fellowship and that's where I want to live. Yeah, but I'm not going to be in the world then. And you're not going to be able to do all those things in the world. And it's amazing how the Christians just long to be in there. They don't like to get out here. This is the carnal area. Here's a spiritual area you have to confess to come back here. Here's what God, the Holy Spirit is working. There's an attraction of the world system. I attended the concert at the Meyerson because somebody gave me a free ticket. It was a concert of a Christian group and a very famous master ceremony on TV was the leader. And this was an exaltation of Jesus. It had a sign just like that where Jesus up and down, they would light it up. And in the Meyerson because of its acoustics they don't use any PA system when you sing because it just resonates no matter how high up you are. It turns out the people running this operation had the PA system blaring away. Very hard to hear the words, but it didn't matter. The whole thing was to have fun, to be like the world, to be out here in the entertainment.

One girl came out in little slacks and her blouse, and her microphone and she was singing a solo to Jesus. And she was kicking and often and I was worried because she looked too old to be doing that as far as she's going to hurt herself. But she was bouncing all around that stage and swinging and swaying. And I said Mrs. Danish you know that time we visited Las Vegas and went into one of the casinos, that's exactly what they were doing there. It was loud. It was boisterous. It was a big thumping beat. And this was to praise Jesus. They sang several songs in the Carl Group, and they had the audience sing. It was very easy. All I had all you had to do is remember the word hallelujah. And you repeated it four hundred and three times. I counted it. What was the program? Just all appealing to the old sin nature exactly the way to do it in Las Vegas to the sin nature. And they were really full of themselves from one act to the other. All of a sudden, somebody who messed up the programing injected a song, the one we shall sing tonight at the end of the Lord's Supper. Christ We do all adore. And all of a sudden in this magnificent Meyerson, there was a dignity and there was a glory to God as these voices, these people had talent, were singing a magnificent praise to God. In that one moment there was an expression of the Holy Spirit. And soon as they got through with that, they went back to jump in and jiving. And all of this to do what? It was to get people to exalt God. That was not the Spirit of God that was being exalted. It was the spirit of the world appealing to the spirit of the old sin nature. And that's what we were hearing. And that's why the loudness. That's why the boisterousness. And there was not the dignity of the God man, Jesus Christ anywhere in it. People get confused on what is holy. Those poor folks thought that was a very holy expression. It was anything but holy and it never got better. The last number was the Hallelujah Chorus, and a couple of us said, this one will be good. They botched it up too. They jived and jumped on that one too. Can you imagine? And I thought I heard something rolling in the background. I think it was the composer in his grave rolling this magnificent thing that he had written a Hallelujah Chorus to honor the Lord God. Well this business of godliness, this business of holiness is something that the devil hates.

He doesn't want you to be like that. He doesn't want you to be a fanatic for Jesus Christ. He doesn't want you to wake up in the morning and think you belong to God. He doesn't want you to think that your time belongs to God, and you have to count to him from what you use for yourself and how much you use for him. What you do with the time for your family, what you do with your abilities, what you do with your possessions, what you do with your treasures. You don't want to think that way the devil says. After all, Grace, you have freedom. Yep that's what the Corinthians said to Paul. Paul says you yo yos. You know what the Grace of God is, and you taken and used it for license. Grace has become your vehicle for sinning, not for holiness.

The marks of holiness, please notice these II Timothy 4:7 again. First of all, the first mark, “I fought the good fight”. Fighting the good fight in the angelic warfare in two ways in scripture. First, as God's soldier. We are all engaged, whether you want to face up to it or not, in the angelic conflict. You are part of the daily warfare between the Angels of God and the Angels of satan. Please notice Ephesians 6:11-13, “Put on the full armor of God that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against rulers, against the powers, against the world force of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly in heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God that you may be able to resist in the evil day and have done everything to stand.” You don't have to be defeated as a soldier of Jesus Christ in the angelic warfare. You don't have to become a greedy God type for material things, fame, and pleasure, so that at the end of life there is nothing. Why do you think the rich and the famous blow their brains out? After a while, they realize there's nothing. Worse of all, there's no future. Paul says fighting the good fight of Jesus Christ as a good soldier means you stand up against the world and you recognize that this is the spirit world. It's very real world. Without the help of God, you can't beat them. Then there's I Timothy 6:12 Apostle Paul says, “Fight the good fight of Faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.” You didn't even want that eternal life. God said, I want you in and that's why you're in. You were called to it, “And you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.” Some of our people will be making a good confession in the presence of you witnesses this afternoon at the baptism service.

Fight the good fight of Faith. What is he talking about. Let's talk about the good fight of Faith. Learn doctrine. Live by it. And recognize what the scriptures say, you are not your own. So stop acting like it. Jesus says you're not your own. You've been bought with a price. The blood of Christ. You are his II Timothy 2:3-4, “Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus”. Yeah, the Christian life is the hardship and more and more in American society everybody is respected, everybody esteemed. Everybody is treated nice except the Christians. “For no soldier in active service entangle themselves in the affairs of everyday life. So he may please the one who has enlisted him as a soldier.” So here again, Scripture says fight the good fight of Faith as a soldier of Jesus Christ. That is a military operation. And if and what is it do? In military operation calls for great devotion to duty. In the scriptures there is also another expression of fighting the good fight, the idea of competition, and that is the Bible compares this to being an athlete. There is II Timothy 2:5 says, “And also, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.” O Boy, how I'd like to make that clear to people who are going to send it to Judgment Seat of Christ and be surprised how little they have and reward.

And they thought they were doing so much. You didn't compete according to the rules. Don't play the game according to the rules. You played it according to the rules you made up and said this is the way it is. And you can do that. When Jesus Christ is the judge, the referee on the field, you're not going to get away with it. Also, if anyone does not compete as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules. And Bible doctrine spells out the lifestyle of the rules and the ministry of the believer. I Corinthians 9:24-25, “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run but only one receives the prize run in such a way that you may win. And everyone who competes in the Games exercise of self-control and all the things, they then do it to receive a perishable wreath but we an imperishable.” The athlete is on the field of competition, he's there running the race, he has to do it according to the rules. I Corinthians 9:26-27 says, “Therefore, I run in such a way as not without aim. I box in such a way as not beating the air. But I buffet my body and I make it my slave so possibly after I preach to others, I myself should be disqualified.” The Apostle Paul says it would grieve me terribly to set at the Judgment Seat of Christ and see that I get a little bitty piece of reward because I didn't live the Christian life. I didn't fight the good fight of Faith by the rules. I made up my own imaginations, my own rules, and my own evaluations. And it was all bunco.

Until you understand that you are not your own, you've been bought with a price, the blood of Christ, therefore it's all His. And when He needs something, don't stand around. Look over your shoulder for some other Christian to come and do it. You have it, you do it. And I guarantee you the time will come when you won't be able to. You will not have the physical strength; you're not going to be able to do that. You'll not have the freedom of time; you won't be able to do that. You not had the means available. You won't be able to do that.

Now is the appointed time. And the Bible is right about that of course. Then II Timothy 4:7 the second mark of holiness. The First mark of a holy Christian as he fights the good fight in the angelic warfare. He does not stand around cheering others.

Secondly, II Timothy 4:7 is, “I have finished the course. I have finished the course”, fulfilling one's mission of specific divine good works. These people come up out of the water is a baptism this afternoon they're going to be telling us and all the world the Lord God and the angels that about them, that they have risen to newness of life and that they have a life whose course they intend to finish.

That's what they're coming up out of that water from the symbol of death, Ephesians 2:10 “For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” God has a mission. He has a purpose for which you were born. He has a works for you to execute. When you come up out of those waters of baptism, you're saying, here I am, Lord, for the rest of my life I'm going to do your job. Acts 20:24 Paul says, “But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus to testify solemnly of the Gospel of the Grace of God.” That's what we're all about. All of us are testifying to the Gospel of the Grace of God in one way or another, whether it's through summer camp, through the youth clubs, through the ministry, through the Sunday school, through the training union, through all these agencies. That's the bottom line. The Gospel of the Grace of God. That is what we're testifying to. That is what we're making possible for that testimony to go out with all we have and all that we are.

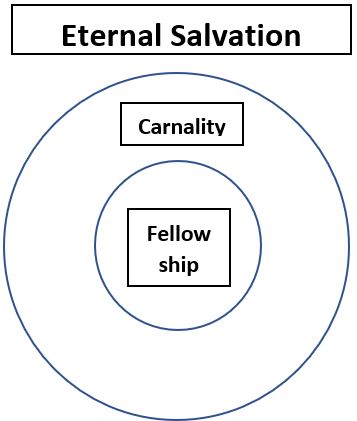
So why are we standing around on the sideline? Paul says my life isn't worth anything. I can live it. I'll crank out the time. And then I'll get it for God, and he said the lights coming on with all the computation of the rewards. It'll be nothing because I trivialize my days. I wasted them instead of invested them. The Apostle Paul says not I. I'm not doing it that way. A picture of a runner who's on the track, is going to the finish line. He's not going to drop out and Christian service duties if he's a holy mature Christian. The sign of the mature Christian is he's always there to do the job that needs to be done. The holy Christian, he has the means. He's going to do it. Not going to stand around. He's not going to go and ponder where the God wants him to do this. Or if he has a means, he's going to do this. Because if it's not the will of God. God will shut it off. You will redirect. You don't have to worry about that.

Then there's a third one, II Timothy chapter four the third mark of the Holy Christian. You fight the good fight; you don't drop out. You keep serving from the days of your youth on. And number three Paul says I've kept the Faith, kept the Faith. Obedience to doctrinal principles as God has revealed the truth. And how fortunate the people of this congregation are because they have the truth available. James 1:22, “But prove yourselves doers of the word and not merely hearers who delude themselves.” Who delude themselves. I've seen years of Christians who compliment and delude themselves that they're doing something that God says, No you're not. It's nothing. Because I always match up over against what you could do. I don't consider what you give, I consider what you left over and didn't give. That's the big issue. And you don't have to do it, you are free to do your own thing, but the Lord God is going to make the evaluation. You can count on that.

And being obedient to principles of doctrine, nothing is more important, which is the great tragedy in the religious system of today that so few Christians get a chance to be taught. I Timothy 6:20 says, “O, Timothy guard what has been entrusted to you avoiding worldly and impure chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called knowledge.” All of our young people had to say, you know, I was taught the right thing. I was given the insights of sound doctrine. I was given the perspective of spiritual thinking, not emotional thinking of the old sin nature, but real spiritual thinking. And Paul says Timothy don't let anybody take away the doctoral insight that you have received. Don't listen to their empty, stupid chatter, their talk, their opposing arguments. There's false knowledge that they like to portray.

You've got the knowledge. So when we see you, we want people to see you Timothy is a great man of God. We don't want you to look like a ding a ling like the world so that everybody says, well, there's so-and-so, another wimp, just like the rest of the world. No man hood, no manliness who had to stand up there imitating Jesus Christ and imitating somebody here on this earth. Can you do that, sure, if you want to. II Timothy 1:9, “Who saved us and called us with a holy calling God who saved us and called us for the holy calling, not according to our works to save us, but according to his own purpose and Grace, which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.” Oh, God, why did you save me? I don't know. I just wanted you. I just decided I wanted you. So now here's the living God who saved you because he particularly wanted you and his family, you turn your back, and you walk your life minding the things below and butting him out. I Peter 3:15, “But sanctify set apart Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense. Everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you. Yet with gentleness and reverence.” The Holy Christian keeps the Faith. He defends doctrine and a spiritual world of indifference, ignorance, and rejection.

So the crown of righteousness is a victory honor which awaits the Church age believer who's ready to exploit the potential for personal holiness and thus for spiritual maturity through doctrinal thinking and doctrinal practice. Every one of us can enjoy the honor of the crown in our heads for all eternity. Of the fact that we decided to walk the God life. To live in sync with the holiness of God. Titus 2:11-17, “For the Grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires, and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for himself a people for his own possessions, zealous for good deeds, the good deeds that God is allotted for your life. These things speak and extort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.” I'm telling you, folks, you're going to be a lot of shocking at the Judgment Seat of Christ of Christians who let their nose get bent out of shape. And they walked off from a Christian service many, maybe many years ago and never got back to it. And all this time God said, that's where I wanted you. I wanted you. And it's Sunday school class. I wanted you in that trading union group. I wanted you in that particular place of service. Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for himself or people of his own possession, zealous for good deeds, the things that God has selected.



Stay out of that outer circle of carnality. Staying out of the out of temporal fellowship. Staying away from the life of the Spirit of God where God is not in charge. This is a crown reserved for those who choose to laud maximum time of their lives and holiness the holiness of the inner circle, spiritual maturity status. The crown goes right there and no place else.

There are other crowns of scripture. I mentioned them in passing. The crown of rejoicing given for knowing and using one’s spiritual gifts and God's service. Philippians 4:1, I Thessalonians 2:19-20. Some Christians are going to get the crown of rejoicing because they took their spiritual gift, and they used it. They didn’t pretended it, they didn't talk about it. They did it. If you have a spiritual gift and God gives you the means to use it to by the way. There's the crown of life for building a spiritual maturity structure all the way Super Grace level to maintain it for most of one's life, for victory and spiritual combat and beating temptation and suffering in the world. You walk through the world, you take the hits, you do not break down and become a hypocrite.

You do not succumb to temptation. You don't break the rules of morality. That's the crown of life that's spiritual maturity. James 1:12 and Revelations 2:10. For Christians who live that kind of godliness, there's a crown. And then an exclusive crown only goes to pastor-teacher, it’s called the crown of glory for the pastor-teacher who faithfully, consistently performs his duty of feeding the flock. The doctrines of the word of God, the spiritual food of doctrine, I Peter 5:1-4, Peter says, “Whether they're willing to listen to it, whether they welcome it, whether think you're a good guy for telling it, you say it and then you leave it there. I let them do what they choose.

Dear God, we thank you for the word of God. It's alive and powerful. And once more we've been called to a better life than the one we're living in Jesus name. Amen.