

Imperishable Crowns (02)

Request: "Would you do a study on Crowns that Church Age Believer can receive?"

In (1 Cor.9:24-27), Paul compared church age crowns with the Greek national athletic crowns.

The Greeks had four national athlete games with spiritual crowns. Each Greek game had its own perishable crown given in honor to a specific god.

- **Olympian games:**
 - The victor was awarded a crown of wild olive in honor of the Greek god Zeus
- **Nemean games:**
 - The victor was awarded a crown of celery or parsley in honor of the Greek god Zeus.
- **Pythian games:**
 - The victor was awarded a crown of laurel in honor of the Greek god Apollos.
- **Isthmian games:**
 - The victor was awarded a crown of pine in honor of the Greek god Neptune (Poseidon)

This lesson will study four aspects of Paul's comparison of the Imperishable Crown of the church age to the Perishable Crown of the Greek games.

1. We will begin by examining our text by the following four homiletic points entitled, "Run in such a way".

(1 Cor.9:24-25) Contest / why? [brabeion] and (1 Cor.9:26-37) Contestant / why? [adokimos].

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|------------------------------|--------------|--|
| • Prize | (1 Cor.9:24) | Run to win |
| • Perishable or imperishable | (1 Cor.9:25) | Crown (stephanos) |
| • Purpose | (1 Cor.9:26) | Not without aim (ouk adelos) [adverb of uncertainty] |
| • Peril | (1 Cor.9:27) | Disqualification |

2. In the Greek language of (1 Cor.9:25), Paul compares the perishable crowns of the Greek games with the Imperishable Crowns of the church age.

(1 Cor.9:25) "And everyone who complete in the game exercises self-control in all things. They (**ekeinos**) [**demonstrative pronoun**] indeed (**men**) [**affirmative conjunction**] then do it to receive a **perishable wreath** (phthartos stephanos), **but (de)** [**adversative conjunction**] and **we (hemeis)** [**personal pronoun**] **an imperishable** (aphthartos) [Incorruptible]."

Paul has established a **comparative sequence (men and de)** by Greek grammar. He is comparing the Greek games perishable crowns to church age perishable crowns.

Paul compared the highest honor of the Greek game attributed to a specific god by a specific perishable wreath to an imperishable crown to the Son of the Most High God.

3. The crown (stephanos) was the prize for winning in a specific contest or game.

(1 Cor.9:24) “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives (lambano / p.a.ind.3ps) **the prize (to brabeion)**? Run (trecho / p.a.impv.2pl) in such a way that (hina) [purpose or aim] you may win (katalambano / a.a.subj) [receive the prize].”

Paul used **brabeuo** (verb) as rule in (Col.3:15) “And let the peace of Christ rule (**p.a.impv.3ps**) in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.”

Brabeus was an umpire who enforced the rules of a contest.

Paul warned the Church Age Believer to not let anyone rob him of his prize (Col.2:18) **katabrabeuo** (p.a.impv.3ps) [Umpire ruling against you to disqualify] (legalists / Col.2:16-18).

4. In (Phil.3:13-14), Paul used **prize (to brabeion)** as a reason to run the race.

(Phil.3:13-14) “Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; **but one thing I do; forgetting** (epilanthanomai / p.m.ptc.nsm) what lies behind and **reaching forward** (epekteinomai / p.m.ptc.nsm) to what lies ahead. **I press** (dioko / p.a.ind.1ps) on towards the goal (kata skopos / asm) of **the prize** of the upward call of God in Christ.”

Forgetting (Phil.3:1-7) (Eph.4:22) and reaching forward (Phil.3:8-16) (Eph.4:23-24) show the effort of pressing on towards the goal and the prize. This is true of all four crowns contests.

The prize is given to those Church Age Believers (CABs) who stayed focused and motivated on the goal of the prize and cross the finish line (2 Tim.4:7-8).

(Phil.3:15) “Let us therefore, as many as be perfect (teleios/ spiritual maturity), have this attitude (phroneo / p.a.subj.1pl); and if (1cc) [true] in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you.”

Each believer who runs the race set before them run according to the standard set by God for the race (**upward call of God in Christ**) (Heb.12:1-2).

The Four Church Age Crowns

- **Crown of righteousness** (diakaisune) (2 Tim.4:7-8)
 - **Contest:** To faithfully reach and maintain your spiritual maturity until death or Rapture (the finish line).
- **Crown of Life** (zoe) (James 1:12; Rev.2:10)
 - **Contest:** To faithfully endure undeserved suffering until dying grace or Rapture (the finish line).
- **Crown of boasting** (kauchesis) (1 Thess.2:19-20; Phil.4:1; 1 Pet.2:2)
 - **Contest:** To be faithful ambassadors and evangelists sharing the gospel of grace salvation until dying grace or Rapture (the finish line) (2 Cor.5:18-21).
- **Crown of glory** (doxa) (1 Pet.5:4) Unfading (amarantinos) [amaranth flower / pigweed]
 - **Contest:** To be a faithful teacher, shepherd, and overseer of the spiritual growth maturity of the body of Christ until dying grace or Rapture (the finish line) (Heb.5:13-14).