

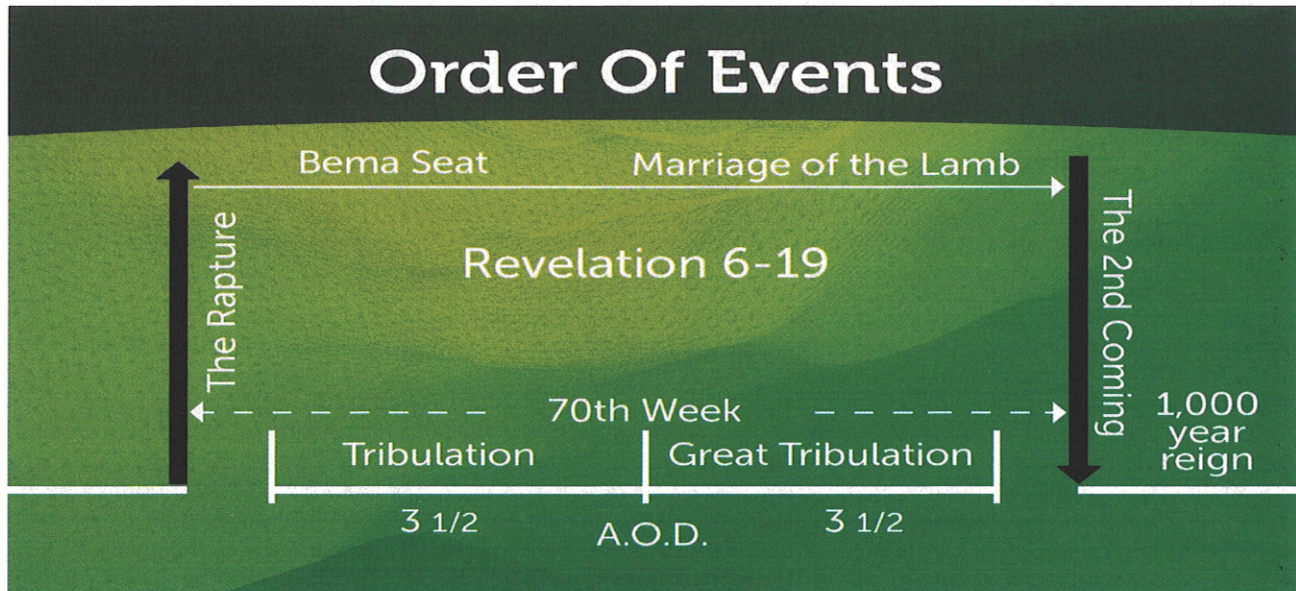
Basic Discipleship

A Course On New Testament Discipleship

Topic #8

#4. There is the crown of life given to those who faithfully endure trials.

1. We have been studying “**the judgment seat of Christ**” (2 Corinthians 5:8) when every true believer will stand before Christ to be _____ (Romans 14:12).
2. This judgment of the saved is not for their sins since believers have already been forgiven through Christ’s sacrifice — but this judgment is for receiving rewards based on our deeds & our faithfulness during our Christian _____ (1 Cor. 4:2).



3. The time of this judgment is after the Church has been raptured from earth and carried to heaven (1 Thessalonians 4:17; Revelation 4:1-4) as diagramed _____.
4. We know this judgment happens after the Church is translated into heaven since an integral part of the Rapture is receiving a resurrected body, and Jesus reveals that the rewards given for service are associated with our _____ resurrection.
5. When Jesus was dining in the home of a Pharisee—who was also a member of the prestigious leadership ground known as the Sanhedrin—He warned about _____.

12 And He also went on to say to the one who had invited Him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, otherwise they may also invite you in return and that will be your repayment.

13 “But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind,
14 and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous” (Luke 14:12–14).

6. In addition—our rewards are associated with “**that day**” speaking of the _____ “**day**” when Christ will come for the Church in order to take us on to heaven:

8 in the future 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 (2 Timothy 4:8).

5 Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God (1 Corinthians 4:5).

7. Both of these passages clearly indicate that the “day” of evaluation is still _____ “the future” specifically—when “the Lord comes” for us (1 Thess. 4:16-18).
8. We also know that this judgment is after the Rapture of the Church & in heaven, sometime during the time of the *Great Tribulation*, because when Jesus returns to earth at His _____ Coming (Zech. 14:4; Acts 1:11)—the evaluation is complete.
9. After the tribulation period is over and Christ returns to the earth—six times over in Revelation chapter 20 — we are told that the length of Jesus’ _____ on the earth will be for “one thousand years” (Revelation 20:2,3,4,5,7).
10. For this reason, when we find Jesus Christ returning to the earth to _____ for “one thousand years” — He is seen as returning with His Bride the Church, that has already been rewarded—this is John’s testimony in Revelation 19:

8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints (Revelation 19:8).
11. *Literally* it says, “the righteousnesses of the saints” telling us it cannot refer to the the “righteousness” gifted by Christ—but only to “the righteous acts” or “deeds” that have survived examination & have become the _____ of our rewards.
12. At first reading—Revelation 19:8 may seem confusing because all true believers know that the clear testimony of Scripture is that it is impossible for us to stand before a holy _____ in our own “righteous acts” (Is. 64:6; Jas. 2:10; Rom. 3:23).
13. Our righteous purity and radiance must come from God who credits to our account “the righteousness” that He alone can give—based on faith in the finished _____ of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:17; 1 Corinthians 1:30-31).
14. When John described the “fine linen” — that each believer member might _____ when we return with Christ—he uses the words ‘the righteous acts of the saints’ which are in in contradistinction — to what Paul wrote — in Philippians 3:9:

“be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,”

15. “The righteousness which comes from God”—refers to imputed “righteousness” that is gifted to the believer “by grace through faith” (Ephesians 2:8-9)—while “the righteous acts” on our robes are given—for the _____ done as a believer.
16. The “righteousness” given at conversion is **singular**—while our “righteous acts” or “righteousnesses” is **plural** picturing our “deeds” (ESV/NET) —and so these are what fill “the hope chest” of the believer—for those labors done for _____.
17. The _____ which often paraphrases & thus interprets—renders Revelation 19:8:

**8 Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.”
(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)**

18. “The righteous acts of the saints” refer to *the kinds of service* we do for the Lord, while “righteousness” is gifted to us based on Jesus’ _____ (2 Corinthians 5:21).
19. As we have learned—earlier here in Section 8—those “deeds” done in the _____ of the Spirit for the glory of God—or what Paul refers to as—our “working out” what God has “worked in” —for such “deeds” or service—Jesus will reward us.

12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure (Phil 2:12-13).

20. Clearly, these rewards are not credited for just any good works or any righteous “deeds” we may do—because as we have been studying—Scripture is _____ that anything we do that is worth anything is the work of the Holy Spirit through us.
21. “The righteous acts” of the believer—are made possible through the shed _____ of the Groom and by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.
22. And so, while there is no one verse that tells us that “the judgment of the just” happens in heaven while the tribulation is unfolding on the earth—letting the Scripture interpret Scripture—this is the only conclusion that one can _____.
23. If as Luke 14:14 conveys we “will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous,” and if when Christ comes back to the earth — we have already been rewarded then the clear testimony of Scripture is that this all happens after the _____.
24. As we will see, these future rewards will be important to us when we stand before Jesus in heaven—and “the crown of life” — is one of five crowns — given at His reward seat in response to _____ we as Christians responded to suffering.
25. In describing this crown based on how _____ responded to suffering James writes:

2 Consider it all joy, my brothers and sisters, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing . . . 12 **Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him** (James 1:2-4,12).

26. When James states, “**Blessed is the man**” (1:12), he uses the identical word _____ in **Jesus’ Beatitudes** found in “*The Sermon On The Mount*” (Matthew 5:3-12).
27. If you remember—the theme of His Sermon is *two-fold*—to reveal to the religious that they are unable to be religious enough to please God (Matt. 5:20) — but also to reveal to _____ people standards of kingdom “**righteousness**” (Matt. 5:13-16).
28. Jesus is teaching us how it is that we should shine our “**light**” and _____ it is that we should use our “**salt**” — and He starts by giving — a series of beatitudes.
29. The Pharisees taught that you could measure your “**righteousness**” externally by such things as praying, giving, and fasting (Matthew 6:1-18) — whereas Jesus in the Beatitudes describes a “**righteousness**” that comes from the _____ out.
30. Jesus begins His sermon with the word ‘**blessed**’ which comes into the *Latin* Bible as ‘**beatus**’ & so giving us our *English word beatitude*—being a powerful word in the original Greek—in that it communicated a—contentment from _____.
31. The Greek adjective “**makarios**” that the Spirit inspired Matthew with, rendered as “**blessed**,” describes an inner satisfaction _____ dependent on the circumstances around us for our well-being or contentment—which is clear when Jesus stated:

10 **“Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 “Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12 “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you** (Matthew 5:10–12).

32. The only possible way to be “**blessed**” when we are under attack from the outside with persecution—is if our contentment is coming from _____ and not without.
33. Here in the eighth beatitude, as recorded by Matthew, we find that those who are converted are not always, as Christ’s followers, embraced by the world because we are so different from the world which can cause many to _____ against us.
34. God reveals in His word that evil will grow from ‘**bad to worse**’ (2 Ti. 3:13) as we approach the end of the age so we can eventually expect even _____ opposition.

13 **But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.**

1 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. 2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, 4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these . . . 12 Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. 13 But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived (2 Timothy 3:1–5; 12-13).

35. Yet, the ___ beatitude describes an “**inner satisfaction**” that the believer can have that is not dependent — on one’s circumstances — and so it is not surprising that James uses the identical word for “**internal contentment**” when in a “**trial**” (1:12).

12 Blessed (*makarios*) is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

36. The *Beatitudes* are most notably found in the *Sermon on the Mount*—but they also appear in other parts of the Bible like the *Sermon on the Plain* (Luke 6:20-23) and in Revelation (14:13; 19:9; 22:14), letting us know that His _____ is not complete.

37. In those great statements of blessing — the Lord Jesus is not intending to give us a complete list of the only ways we can be “**blessed**” & so—James informs us that we can be “**blessed**” as we endure — or persevere under any “**trials**” we _____.

38. James does not teach “**Blessed is the man**” who is never tested—nor does he teach — “**Blessed is the man**” who finds all testing _____ to handle.

39. Instead—the promise of blessing is given to the believer who “**perseveres**” or “**endures**” (KJV)—or as _____ translate it “**remains steadfast**” (ESV).

12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved,

40. James’ stated purpose for God allowing a “**trial**” — is specifically so that we might be — “**approved**” — that is to say that — through the given “**trial**” we would be revealed—as genuine & as strong in our _____.

41. He is teaching us that it is for our benefit to look to God, so that we can persevere and endure ‘**under**’ any given ‘**trial**,’ because He promises that when we do so ___ ‘**will receive the crown of life**’ which He ‘**has promised to those who love Him.**’

42. By the way, when James says, “**Blessed is a man**” he is not expressing a _____ meaning — “**I hope you will be blessed**” or “**I hope you will be satisfied.**”

43. James is expressing a verdict—that is to say—you are “**blessed**” and you are satisfied both _____ & later on when you receive “**the crown of life.**”
44. To the careless reader, it may appear that “**the crown of life**” refers to eternal life, but we know that cannot be the case because that would contradict many other Scriptures that teach eternal life comes by faith alone in Christ _____.

9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity (2 Timothy 1:9).

45. Unlike salvation, this “**crown**” is earned by the saved believer & so it is given in Heaven at Christ’s “**judgment seat**”—and it is given to those who suffered _____ “**joy**” which is only possible by relying on the Spirit’s power in us (1 Pet. 1:5-7).
46. Jesus _____ a similar attestation—when He promises the church in Smyrna:

8 “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: 9 ‘I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the slander by those who say 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, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life (Revelation 2:8–10).

47. The “**church in Smyrna**” like the “**church in Philadelphia,**” (3:7-13)—was *just* one of two churches for which the Lord — *had no corrective rebuke* — but only praise, and so He says nothing bad, but goes straight to all the things they are doing _____.
48. The trials this church faced came on _____ levels—“**tribulation**” & “**poverty**” (2:8).
49. “**Tribulation**” refers to a _____ of “**trial**” that would fit under the Apostle James’ admonition to “**count it all joy when you encounter various trials**” (James 1:2).
50. The Greek word (*thilipsis*)—literally means “**pressure**” and in the New Testament it refers specifically to “**the opposition & persecution**” of unbelievers towards _____.
51. By the time the Revelation is written, the Emperor Domitian who was the Caesar of the Roman emperor—viewed himself as a ‘**deity**’ such that the worship of him had become mandatory—with Smyrna being an important center—of this _____.
52. Unless, just once a year, you were willing to bow down and say, “**Caesar is Lord,**” you were met with “**tribulation**” or persecution from the unbelievers in the _____.

53. It was not as much an act of religion, as it was an act of loyalty & good citizenship such that — you actually received a certificate good standing from their _____.
54. After you did this annually—you were _____ to go back to worship & to sacrifice to the “**god**” of your choice—but a refusal to do so—resulted in “**poverty**” (2:9).
55. The Greek word — translated in Revelation 2:8 as “**poverty**” (*ptōchos*) speaks of being absolutely destitute—of possessing virtually nothing—meaning they had very little of this world’s goods because of their relationship with _____.
56. In a city that was known for its wealth — and seemingly possessed everything, they would have been denied _____ & promotions because of their testimony.
57. The **Lord Jesus** prophesies—that the “**prince of the power of the air,**” called here “**the devil**” who is “**now working in the sons of disobedience**” — will see to it that “_____” of these believers will be thrown “**into prison**” for “**ten days**” (2:10).
58. While telling them the bad news—He also gives them *the good news* that this trial, like most ‘**trials**’ in life, are just temporary & would last only for a matter of ____.
59. We may feel like the “**trial**” we are in will never end—especially if it feels intense, but “**trials**” do eventually come to an end—which is why the Apostle James admonishes us to persevere in a “**trial**” until it _____ (James 1:12).
60. As Christians—we should be encouraged because the **Lord** sets limits to our “**trials**” such that—the test will _____ last longer than we can endure.
61. Jesus, like James gives His people the assurance that when the **trial** does end, that something better will follow—even “**death**” means that we go to Heaven _____.
62. This is why Jesus tells this church to “**be faithful until death**” — which _____ to “**be faithful**” — even if it means — they put you to “**death**” for being “**faithful.**”
63. Most of us—will probably never see that kind of “**trial**”—but all of us can die to our plans & our ambitions & to this world’s values by choosing to live for _____.
64. This “**crown**” will be given to those who successfully endure trials & suffering, and who bravely confront persecution for Jesus—even to the point of _____.
65. While we cannot choose our “**trials**” — we can choose our responses to _____.
66. And if the pattern of our life — is to choose with “**joy**” & “**faith**” & “**wisdom**” & “**prayer**” when in the midst of a “**trial**” (James 1:4-5)—then someday we will be rewarded _____ the Lord Himself with “**the crown of life**” (Revelation 2:10).