

Basic Discipleship

A Course On New Testament Discipleship

Topic #8

#2. There is the crown of exultation given to believers who seek to win people to Christ.

1. The very fact that Jesus plainly said — “**For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost**” (Luke 19:10) should serve as a gripping reminder that since we have been commanded to do the same that He will reward us for doing ___.
2. One of the crowns mentioned in the New Testament teaches that faithful believers ___ receive—is called “**the crown of exultation**” (NASB), also called “**the crown of pride**” (2020), “**the crown of boasting**” (ESV) & “**the crown of rejoicing**” (KJV).

13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you **received the word of God** which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe. 14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews, 15 who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men, 16 hindering us from **speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved**; with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them to the utmost. 17 But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short while—in person, not in spirit—were all the more eager with great desire to see your face.

18 For we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, more than once—and yet Satan hindered us.

19 For who is our hope or joy or **crown of exultation**? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? (*1 Thessalonians 2:13–19*)

3. This “**crown of boasting**” or “**rejoicing**” or “**pride**” concerns those people that God brings to Himself—through faithful servants willing to _____ the gospel.
4. This “**crown**” contextually understood, refers to specific people that the Apostle taught and converted as they “**received the word of God**” (2:13) as he sought to _____ Christ with “**the Gentiles so that they might be saved**” (2:15).
5. Every Christian can & should be an instrument in the hands of God that He might use us for winning precious _____ to a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
6. As we covered earlier in this handout, sharing the gospel with the lost ought to be the endeavor of every believer—as we are _____ recipients of someone else’s labor.

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 13 for “**WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.**” 14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? 15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “**HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!**” (*Ro. 10:12–15*)

7. In Matthew 28:18-19 and Mark 16:15 we have a clear mandate from the Lord Jesus to share **“the gospel”** — because **good news** is _____ to be hidden but is to be shared.
8. While it is true that only the Lord can do the work of saving (Ephesians 2:8), rescuing (Colossians 1:13) & forgiving (Isaiah 43:25; Luke 5:21; 7:49)—yet He chooses to use us—that Jesus may be introduced to those who are _____.
9. To ___ someone **“lost”** (Luke 19:10) —involves bringing a spiritually **“dead”** person (Eph. 2:1) under the message of **“the gospel”** that they might be saved (Rom. 1:16).
10. To win a person is to **“catch”** that person for the Lord (Luke 5:10) — such that he or she is **“added”** to the universal church (Acts 5:14) — that they might be added to the local church—all accomplished by the regenerating _____ of the Spirit (John 16:8).

19 And He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19).

8 “And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment (John 16:8–10).

11. In the truest sense, every person is won by God Himself (Jn 6:44), and yet He uses us and has made Himself is dependent upon ___ for the accomplishment of His purposes.

44 “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day (John 6:44).

21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe (1 Corinthians 1:21).

13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:13).

12. While in ourselves we might feel timid or reluctant to share Christ, the Holy Spirit is our **Helper** (Jn. 14:26) & He will give us wisdom in sharing the gospel (Lk. 12:11-12), _____ to mention the needed **“confidence”** (Acts 4:13) & **“boldness”** (Acts 4:31).

13 Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus . . . 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness (Acts 4:13; Acts 4:13).

13. In achieving what is sometimes called **“the crown of evangelism”** — we have Christ’s wonderful promises — that we will have His power — and that we will know His presence (Matt. 28:18-20 cf. Acts 1:8) in order to _____ effective evangelism.

14. God used the Apostle Paul to plant the church in Thessalonica during his second missionary journey—as recorded in Acts 16&17—a journey that included many other cities—and countless trials as he shared Christ with all who would ____.
15. Here in 1 Thessalonians chapter 2, Paul has just indicated that he desperately ____ to see the Thessalonian believers—as he did not leave voluntarily but was prevented through intense spiritual battle, that Paul saw being rooted in Satanic interference:

17 But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short while—in person, not in spirit—were all the more eager with great desire to see your face. 18 For we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, more than once—and yet Satan hindered us (1 Thessalonians 2:17–18).

16. Paul is expressing his deep affection for the Thessalonian Christians—feeling like he had been “**orphaned**” from them (1 Thes. 2:17) since he was their spiritual “**mother**” and “**father**” (1 Thessalonians 2:7, 11) having ____ shared the gospel in their city.
17. Here in 1 Thessalonian chapter 2, Paul has just indicated that he desperately wants to see the Thessalonian Christians — as he did not leave voluntarily — but he was prevented through intense spiritual battle that ____ authored (1 Thess. 2:18).

18 For we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, more than once—and yet Satan hindered us.

18. Looking forward to seeing “**Jesus at His coming**”—which is something we should all anticipate (2:19 cf. 1 John 3:3)—as Paul looks at the end of his ministry, he said that he would ____ the greatest “**pride**” in these believers whom he introduced to Christ.

19 For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? (1 Thessalonians 2:19)

19. I find it interesting—that the Apostle Paul did not look back—and give in to sorrow, but instead he looked forward to Jesus’ return—knowing that the best is yet to come on the day — when he would ____ these believers — in Christ’s presence in Heaven.
20. These Gentiles, who were pagans steeped in the worship of idols before hearing the gospel (1 Thessalonians 1:9), should know that he could never forget them and that his inability to visit them should never be taken as a lack of ____ or care for them.

9 For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God (1 Thessalonians 1:9).

21. As we have been studying, at “**the judgment seat of Christ**” our works will be judged and rewards will be given (Rom. 14:10–12; 2 Cor. 5:9–10), and in the Pauline epistles these rewards are ____ pictured as “**crowns**” as here in 1 Thessalonians chapter 2.

22. While he is referring to a literal “**crown**” given for evangelistic faithfulness, as seen by his use of the Greek noun “**stephanos**” here translated “**crown**” — again a noun used to literally signify an athletic “**crown**” & not the royal “**crown**” for a _____.
23. Nonetheless, he is using a play on words to also say that these converts themselves would also be his “**crown of exultation**” — when he will meet them in _____.
24. Seeking to capture his double entendre of both his literal & his metaphorical ____ of the word “**crown**” in this verse, some versions & translations render verse nineteen:

19 For who is our hope or joy or crown to boast of before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not of course you? (NET)

19 For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? (NIV84)

19 After all, what gives us hope and joy, and what will be our proud reward and crown as we stand before our Lord Jesus when he returns? It is you! (NLT)

19 For when our Lord Yeshua returns, what will be our hope, our joy, our crown to boast about? Won't it be you? (CJB)

25. We have seen this theme already of believers in heaven whom we have influenced through the gospel who will someday be there to _____ us in heaven (Luke 16:9).
 26. The ‘**joy**’ of meeting believers in heaven, also brings with it a serious consideration in that while we may not feel “**successful**” — we are called to be “**faithful**” (1 Cor. 4:2), and if we are “**faithful**” long enough—we will see fruit and will receive this _____.
 27. While it may look like little is happening—it is important to keep in _____ John 4:36:
- 36 “Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. 37 “For in this case the saying is true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ 38 “I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor” (John 4:36–38).**
28. When we see someone come to Christ—we must never forget as “**reapers**” that the “**harvest**” we enjoy — is very often the fruit — of another believers _____.
 29. Jesus is teaching us an invaluable lesson — since seed in the ____ has been planted—seed in the present—can be expected to be harvested, and both the “**sower**” & the “**reaper**” will someday be rewarded.

30. So often—the one who “reaps” or brings a lost person—to the point of decision, the pastor—the evangelist—the missionary—gets the honor down _____, but there will be no such distinctions at “the judgment seat” of Jesus.
31. Many times — some unknown Christians — plough the ground — plant the _____, and then they water it with their prayers & their tears—yet never see the harvest, but God will reward those—who are “faithful” stewards of the gospel of Christ.

1 Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy (1 Corinthians 4:1–2).

32. All who are good stewards of ‘the gospel’ — and the opportunities entrusted to them, will be rewarded for our all-knowing Father knows the spiritual history of each _____.
33. In the winning of some person to Christ—we may be the first link or the last link or a link somewhere in between—in that supernatural process (Jn. 6:44) of God drawing an individual to Christ—the question is whether or not we are an available _____.
34. This leaves us all without excuse—for we can all be a link in the chain—and it also means that we do not have to be discouraged if we see few results from our efforts, so long as _____ are at the disposal of the Lord—obeying His Great Commission.
35. All God asks of us—is to be available to the Lord Jesus so that he may be _____ by the Holy Spirit to bring the lost person into touch with the plan of salvation.

16 “You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you (John 15:16).

36. The Apostle Paul was filled with “exultation” or “rejoicing” or “pride” — but if we go to heaven empty-handed because we did not even attempt & have it in our heart to try to win others to Jesus then will not experience the “joy” of this _____.
37. While he admonished the Thessalonians “to wait for His Son” (1 Thessalonians 1:10), he also wanted them, as he modeled, to be engaged in *witnessing* about God’s _____.
38. The Apostle words for his converts here are especially affectionate—and his _____ and strong love for these people bleed through the pages of Scripture (2:7, 11, 17).
39. He was _____ by their conversion—and he was concerned—for their development.
40. The Lord’s approval for Paul’s ministry to the Thessalonians would, on the one hand, be like a crown that would make him justifiably proud when the Lord gave it to _____.

41. But on the other hand, it was the Thessalonians themselves, would also be his _____.
42. Sadly, some Christians today have falsely concluded—that since they have not been given by the Holy Spirit—the gift of evangelism that they need not share their _____.
43. These misinformed — or sometimes simply disobedient Christians — who are _____ looking for an excuse not to obey—will sometimes confuse the relationship between a spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 12:8-11; 1 Peter 4:10) with that of a spiritual role.
44. The Bible is clear in that—just because we do not have a spiritual gift in a particular area does not mean—that we do not have a spiritual responsibility in that same _____.
45. And so, while an evangelist might do well not to focus his time in a hospital ministry in favor of an evangelistic outreach—he still has the responsibility to show _____.
46. It helpful to remember — that as we effectively use our spiritual gift in serving others, we can — as we walk by the Spirit—become a good model for others who do not have that gift & so encourage them with the spiritual responsibility that all believers _____.
47. A few examples of responsibilities we _____ regardless of our gifting include:
- a. Teaching (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 5:12; Ephesians 6:1)
 - b. Giving (1 Corinthians 16:2; Matthew 10:8; Luke 6:38)
 - c. Mercy (Matthew 5:7; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:12)
 - d. Serving (Luke 22:27; John 13:13-17)
 - e. Evangelism (Matthew 28:19; 2 Timothy 4:5)
 - f. Hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Hebrews 13:2; Romans 12:13)
 - g. Faith (Hebrews 2:4; 10:38; 11:6)
 - h. Knowledge (2 Peter 3:18)
 - i. Exhortation (Romans 15:14; Hebrews 3:13; 10:25)
 - j. Discernment (1 John 2:27; 4:1; Hebrews 5:14)
 - k. Wisdom (James 1:5)
 - l. Administration (1 Timothy 3:4; James 3:16; 1 Corinthians 14:33)
 - m. Leadership (1 Timothy 3:4; Proverbs 17:2; 16:32)
 - n. Apostleship (Matthew 28:19)
 - o. Prophecy/Preaching (Colossians 4:2-6; 2 Timothy 4:1,2)
 - p. Pastor/Shepherd (Romans 12:10; Matt. 28:20)
48. If we expect—for God’s glory to receive this “**crow**n” then we must share _____.

**Must I go, and empty handed, Thus my dear Redeemer meet?
 Not one day of service give Him, Lay no trophy at His feet?
 Must I go, and empty handed? Must I meet my Savior so?
 Not one soul with which to greet Him, Must I empty handed go?**