

28. 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.
29. This noun’s definition implies a trial under pressure for the purpose of approval. Paul encourages the believer to press the attack:

Philippians 3:14 I press on toward the goal
for the prize [**βραβεῖον (brabeíon)**⁵] of the upward
call of God in Christ Jesus.

30. 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.
31. The principle is, never retire from the battle, but orient and adjust after every failure and be encouraged by every victory.
32. 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.
33. 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).
34. This promotion comes up next in the verse, “for once he has been approved,” which is the word, **δόκιμος (dókimos)**: “to be approved as acceptable in the furnace of adversity.”
35. Although faith alone in Christ alone enlists every new believer into the Lord’s army, this does not mean he will immediately become an effective warrior for our Lord in the Angelic Conflict.
36. Those who enter the Divine Academy of Grace Didactics and become serious students of the Word of God “will receive the crown of life.”

⁵ “A prize such as a wreath or garland bestowed on victors in the contests of the Greeks (1 Corinthians 9:24). Metaphorically, refers to the rewards of virtue in the future life (Philippians 3:14). Synonym: crown” (Spiros Zodhiates, ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. [Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993], 347–48).

37. The word “receive” is 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.
38. 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.
39. The thing to be received is the noun **στέφανος (stéphanos)**: “crown.” The category of crown is indicated by the descriptive noun, **ζωή (zōḗ)**: “life.”
40. At this point we took up the Doctrine of Crowns which includes lessons JAS1-63 through -70.
41. The Crown of Life is the second among the 13 Nike Awards presented at the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ:

Revelation 2:10c **Be faithful unto death,**
and I will give you the crown of life. (NASB)

42. In James 1:12, this award is promised by the Lord to “those who love Him.” The word “promised” is the aorist middle indicative of **ἐπαγγέλλω (epangéllō)**.
43. The aorist tense indicates this promise was made in “eternity past,” a term we use to describe thoughts, decisions, and actions made by God before time began.
44. Remember that time is the invention of God as the environment in which man is allowed to function. Earth is host planet where we are singularly allowed to exist.⁶ Time as we know it does not exist in the eternal state.
45. God, meaning all three members of the Trinity, has always existed outside of time. If God created “the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1), then He was outside of the universe in order to accomplish it since they did not exist before He did so.
46. Ephesians 1:3–4 informs us that God blessed all Church Age believers with Escrow Awards before He created the world.

⁶ Yes, we have sent men to the Moon and are even considering doing so to Mars, but in order to survive they must take the earthly essentials for life—air, water, and food—with them in order to survive.

Ephesians 1:3 Worthy of praise and glorification is God [as First Party or Grantor], even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed [aorist active participle of εὐλογέω (*eulogéō*): decreed escrow blessings] us [believers, the Second Party or Grantees] with every spiritual blessing [contents of the escrow] in heavenly places [location of the Depository] in Christ [the Third Party, Escrow Officer or Depository],

v. 4 since He Himself has elected [ἐκλέγω (*eklégō*) main verb] us in Him before the beginning of the world [creation (Genesis 1:1)] that we should be holy and blameless in His presence. (EXT)

47. The grammatical structure in these two verses is very important to note. The action of the aorist active participle, εὐλογέω (*eulogéō*), always precedes the action of the main verb, ἐκλέγω (*eklégō*). Therefore, our escrow blessings, *eulogéō*, were decreed before we were elected, *eklégō*.

48. This is explained by the omniscience of God with relation to the divine decree:

The decree of God is His eternal [always existed], holy [perfect integrity], wise [the application of omniscience to creation], and sovereign purpose, comprehending simultaneously all things that ever were or will be in their causes [thought, decision, and action], courses [progressions], conditions [positive or negative], successions [subsequent causes and effects], and relations [cumulative impact], and determining their certain futurity.⁷

49. Love for Christ begins when any person places his personal faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. This is the first expression of personal love for Christ and all who make this most critical decision are imputed the crown of life.
50. Whether they acquire the transfer of that crown from the depository is determined at the evaluation tribunal of Christ noted in 1 Corinthians 3:12–15 cf., 2 Corinthians 5:10.

⁷ R. B. Thieme, Jr., “The Doctrine of the Divine Decree,” in *The Integrity of God*, 4th ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2005), 297.