

In Search of the Holy Crown!

Revelation 2:8-11 - *"To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. [9] I know your afflictions and your poverty--yet you are rich! I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. [10] Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

[11] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.

1 Corinthians 9:25 - *Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.*

The key to doing this:

Look beyond the _____ and into the _____.

Vs. 10 – "crown of life"

James 1:12 - *Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.*

Vs. 11 – "second death"

Hebrews 11:13-16 (the Message) - Each one of these people of faith died not yet having in hand what was promised, but still believing. How did they do it? They saw it way off in the distance, waved their greeting, and accepted the fact that they were transients in this world. [14] People who live this way make it plain that they are looking for their true home. [15] If they were homesick for the old country, they could have gone back any time they wanted. [16] But they were after a far better country than that— heaven country. You can see why God is so proud of them, and has a City waiting for them.

The results of doing this:

- Experience _____ in a special way.
Vs. 9 – "I know your afflictions"
"I know your poverty"
"I know you are being slandered"
- You are an _____ to those around you.

Hebrews 12:1-3

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. [2] Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. [3] Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.