

At the ancient Olympics, the Greeks and Romans tested themselves - all for the glory of winning a crown, a wreath of leaves to wear on one's head. Two prominent Biblical themes have their roots in athletic competition: the idea of testing, and the reward of a crown. Both passages in the New Testament where the "crown of life" is mentioned are in the context of testing, or temptation. (James 1:2-12; Revelation 2:10-11) James 1 is the well-known section on joyfully facing spiritual tests, concluding with the promise of the "crown of life" for all who persevere. The same is true in Revelation 2:10-11. The church in Smyrna was about to undergo testing, after which the "crown of life" would be given to the faithful.

Even if tests lead to death, we have the promise of eternal life - a reward leading to the praise of Christ. (Revelation 4:10)

James 1:12 "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."