

2 Timothy 2:5 (Ralph Gordon Rule) 217231

Ottawa Conference: 1973, Crowns (2:5)

Address—R. Rule

So we turn together to the book of Timothy. Second Timothy, the 2nd chapter will read one verse there. Had it before me to speak on the subject of crowns, so we'll read the verse that refers to being crowned. It's the fifth verse. Of Second Timothy 2. If a man also strives for the masteries. Yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. I might mention that in another translation. That the first clause is if a man contend in the games. This has to do with the athlete, the man contending the games he's not crowned except he strive lawfully or another thought rendering according to the strive according to the rules. Now let us also turn to 1st Corinthians, the 9th chapter, First Corinthians 9, and verse 24. Know enough that they which run in a race run all. But one receive a surprise. So run that ye may obtain, and every man that striveth for the mastery, or it could be translated, every man's drivers for the prize is tempered in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. Well, we'll read some other scriptures later that have to do with crowns. But comment briefly on the those that we've read I might mention for those who've never considered the subject. But in the Old Testament where you have reference to crown, it usually has to do with royalty. There is a place in Proverbs 12 where it speaks of honor, and that's Proverbs 12 is the verse that says a virtuous woman is a crown to her husband. Conveyed is a virtuous woman is an honor to her husband. But in the New Testament, generally speaking, where you have reference to crowns, it has to do with. Victory, recognition of a victor, or affirmation or approval. And so it's primarily in the Old Testament, I mean the New Testament rather that we want to look at a few scriptures that first one that we read. In in Timothy. He that contends in the games is not crowned unless he strive lawfully or according to the rules. That that verse brings before us one thing. That in order to have, shall we say, the victors crown, we have to be governed by in an athletic contest, one would have to be governed by the rules of the game. For example, if it happened to be 100 yard dash and the runner. Left before he was given the go signal. He might the one might be the first one there. He wouldn't get to be crowned, wouldn't get the reward because he didn't follow the rules he went before he was supposed to. Applying that to those of us who are the Lord if we want the Lords approval. There must be a striving according to the rules. What are the rules? While we're not under the law as such, but we have this book to guide us. We have the word of God to be our guide and so and connection with receiving the victors crowns. What we have to guide us is this blessed book that we have in our hands this afternoon. Well, now. In connection with the 24th verse of First Corinthians 9. Says, Know ye not that they which run and erase one, all but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. In this world. If there is some prize offered, as it says here, there's one receive a surprise, but you know, there's Christian friends.

We're in a race now. It says in the last sentence of verse 24. So run that ye may obtain. The Lord would have each of us, as it were, to win the prize. We're in a we're in a race now, but everyone can be a winner. It reminds me of something I heard many years ago about a dear brother who's been with the Lord for many years. I remember hearing him as a young man and enjoying his ministry. In his early days he was in the horse racing business and after he got converted he felt that he had to give that up and. Many years after he quit the horse racing business. He met one of his old cronies that he had often worked with on various horse races and and he said to his crony, he was asked something about the something was said about the past and so forth. Well, he said, I'll tell you, I'm running a race now. But everybody can be a winner on it. If they run according to the rules. Yes, and I want to turn later on in a minute or two, we might turn to a verse or two in the 12th of Hebrews in connection with that. Well. One's desire is that everyone, every Christian, especially the young believers that are here because this the meeting was speed primarily for the young people all that the Lord might encourage you to be one. It was so running that you might win an incorruptible crown. You see in verse 25, First Corinthians 10 that we've read, we find 2 crowns referred to those that obtain a corruptible crown. Well, any of those that's now, those are the things that are for time, the things that are for time. But the apostle now speaking for believers shows that our responsibility and our privilege now. Is to be those that are seeking and seeking to gain an incorruptible crown. And that would be one that will be endure be forever. Finally, the story that I heard once about. A young man over in England that was just finishing his college days and he'd been studying Greek. I don't think very many we don't. It isn't studied as much today as it was over in England in the last century. But this young man was studying Greek and his teacher noticed that he was just head and shoulders above everybody else in the class. And the teacher was just amazed at what a fine job he was doing in his Greek. He spoke to him one afternoon, he said. How is it that you're doing so much better than all of the other young people here in the class? Always says I have to acknowledge it's because. My uncle has been helping me. All the teacher says I'd like to meet your uncle. Will you or any arrange to have his uncle to come there to see him one day? And so his uncle came. It was a man that I'm sure half the people in the room have heard his name. His name was William Kelly. And so this teacher had a little conversation with William Kelly. And when he finished the conversation, he realized that he was talking to a man that was far more educated in Greek than he was. There was one head and shoulders above the teacher. And he said this to the man, he said. You've been hiding your abilities, he said. If you had made more use in this world of of of your knowledge of Greek, you could have really made a name for yourself in the world. Mr. Kelly answered him with two words. You're asked the question, he said. Which world?

Which world? Dear young people. And we can include the older. When we can include ourselves, I'll include myself. Let us ask the question. Which world? Where is our goal down here? Getting a name for ourselves here? Or is it? Is it in the glory? Which world? That's all he had to answer. Just raise the question. Well, anything that this world has to give, one might make a name for themselves, one might get a place down here. But that recognition of victory, that crown or whatever you call a reward, it's a corruptible crown. But the apostle Paul writing the Corinthians says. We. And incorruptible crown all. Let me ask us, Let us each ask ourselves. Which are we thinking, a recognition approbation, A crown down here or the Lords approval? A crown, An incorruptible crown that is future but is abiding? Well. It's our privilege, each one of us. To buy the grace with the Lord's help, to be seeking to obtain a Cora, an incorruptible crown. That's the apostle Paul. That was that was his desire. That's very obvious from a number of things that we get in the word. Let's turn to Philippians 3 where we find a turnabout with him, Philippians 3, verse 7. In the verses that preceded, he was. Bringing out how as he said in verse 4. He says there, if any other man think of

the half Robbie my trust in the flesh. I more he tells how he was the tribe of Benjamin and an outstanding Hebrew and and he was a religious man, a Pharisee and he was zealous and and his life outwardly had been blameless and so forth. He was a man that would have had a real standing did have in this world. But notice what he says in verse 7. What things were gain to me? Gain in what way? Or it had to do with the standing in this world, that which would have given him a place of of. Honor and approval in this scene, he says, verse seven, those I counted lost for Christ. He turned his back on all that that would have made something of him in this world in our meeting yesterday afternoon. We had brought before we as far as the flesh is concerned and self is concerned, we should seek to be done with self. But it might be Christ and not self. Well, you see, the Lord had appeared to him, He seemed. As we learned at the time of conversion, He seen the glory of that light in the heavens, the Lord speaking to him, Glory of the Lord. And it made a transformation in his life. And now he and his, so he says, what things were gained to me, I counted lost for Christ. He'd seen Christ the man in the glory. And so he made an entirely new appraisal of things. That which was big game to him always says, I count that loss. And he never changed his mind. Notice in verse 8. He says, yeah, doubtless I count. That's the present. He's speaking in the present. This was some years after his conversion. But he says, I count all things lost for the Excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, of those things that were gained to him. Now he says. I count them but down, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, and so forth. Well, for lack of time, we just go down a little bit further in the chapter. He said not as though I had already attained verse 12. By the way, another translation explains what gives a wording that makes it a little clearer what he's referring to. He's referring to a prize not as though I had already attained the prize either were already perfect, but I follow after if that I may apprehend or lay hold of that for which also.

I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth toward those that are before I press toward the mark or toward the goal for the prize. Of the high calling of God in Christ, or another translation of the calling on high of God in Christ Jesus. All are changed for the Apostle Paul if an incorruptible crown he has before him now. That which will endure, that which will be forever. An incorruptible crown. And now he turned his back on those things that the natural man would make much of. You know, I was just thinking and thinking on this subject. I was thinking the fact that in a few weeks they're going to be a lot of graduations around the country, not only in Canada, but in the United States. A lot of graduations, and I'm sure that it needs that dresses that are given at time of graduation. Why the young people that are graduating, they will be encouraged to seek to go out and make a name for themselves in this world. Be outstanding and make a name for yourself well. We come right down to this, that question again. Which world, though? Oh, that appeals to the wisdom of the natural man to be somebody down here. Yes, get into a play, have a place of standing and honor, reputation or whatever it may be. Well, power, yes, But we come right down to this basic question. Is it a name for oneself down here? Is an honor down here? At very best, one could get down here as a corruptible crown, something that's passing. All the apostle Paul, he said. We an incorruptible crowd, you know, dear young friends. Nothing can satisfy you except Christ, the world in its names, even though you, the world, will set some goals out for you to achieve, and if you achieve them, you won't be happy. Oh, it's only as we seek to go on and live for Christ, seek to live a life that's pleasing to Him. What true happiness is. When I left home, I didn't even know I had it in my pocket, but I found in an envelope. A little pamphlet that referred that had the title to It Is Life Worth Living? And I just noticed a couple of comments in it that says after I'd already started meditating on this subject, that occurred to me. Well, this certainly makes the point as to the two different kinds of crowns. And so in this article I'll just read a a sentence or two. It tells, first of all that in the United States there are about 16,000 people every year that. Definitely come to the conclusion life isn't worth living, that they commit suicide. But then the article goes on to mention that life is not worth living if you live it only for and it gives three things for fortune, for fame or for power and against quotations the different ones a thought and connects to those. That's the fortune that tells about Jay Gould who was a multi millionaire. You know what he said? This is in quote. I am the most miserable man on this earth. Yes, fortune money won't make you happy. The next one. Group and I just read one of them. One or two is under fame. Now. It tells about a famous poet composer of plantation songs, one that that. Brought old Black Joe and another one Swanee River and others says he died at a drunkard's age at the age a drunkard's death at the age of 38 and it tells another one another one of fame. A famous poet Edgar Allan Poe drank himself to death. Couldn't have been too happy, could he? Neither of them that mentions Napoleon, who died a lonely horrible death on the aisle where his exiled and Julius Caesar one who was the head of a great world.

He was assassinated Mussolini another great leader. He was executed to all happiness isn't found in what one is what this world can give that multi millionaire said he was the most. That he was the most miserable man on this earth. Very young Christians get this clearly in mind. Only Christ can satisfy. You know, of course many of you do enjoy seeing it now. None but Christ can satisfy none other name for me. There's love and life and lasting joy. Lord Jesus found in thee. You want lasting joy, You'll find it in Christ. Occupation with him, seeking to live for him. Well, going back. To our chapter in Second Corinthians or First Corinthians 9 I just. Just refer to a verse or so. First Corinthians 9. 1st 24. It says that they which run in a race run off. So run that you may obtain. I just think you were used to those words. Run. In verse 26, the apostle uses of this to himself. I therefore so run not as uncertainly, and so forth. But you have that word run brought in. You know, it takes energy. To run takes energy, so run. That he may obtain. Now the question might be raised, why is that used in connection with those that are seeking an incorruptible crown? Those that are where we're just making an application of it is the apostle to his life. Well, I believe it's because at least one reason would be because it does take energy to run. There's a danger for us in our Christian life to get to where we're just drifting along. Drifting along, or maybe just down to the point where we're asleep, as it were. Which class are you in? Are you running the race? Are you just drifting along or have you more or less fallen asleep? You know that verse? And we don't need to take the time to turn to it, but I think it's Ephesians 5:14. There's a word at the end of a verse there. It says await thou that sleepest arise from the dead, and Christ will give thee light. Now I'm going to give that in a more accurate translation, I believe. Wake up now the sleepest. Arise from among the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee. Wake up. Are you drifting along? Asleep, as it were? Wake up, dear Christian friends, wake up. Now you might wonder what it means when it says arise from among the dead. You know you might have. Two courses in a room and if two people are sound asleep beside those courses, corpse living but asleep, you might the person that they're 50 feet away where they can't see the two breathing or hear them breathing. Why might think they're all dead? They look alike. Look alike? Well, you know, those that are not saved, They're dead in trespasses and sins. You and I, we have life, a new life. We've been born again. But you know, if we get to going along with the world and its pleasures and and those in the world and that's our company and get occupied with just the things of this poor world. Why we are like those that we look just like those that are dead in trespasses and sins. And God's exhortation is wake up.

Are there some here today that are just asleep, as it were, just drifting along? Wake up dear friend, wake up. The Lord encourages us to be as those that are running a race. Let's turn to Hebrews 12. It gives us a thought or two as to the character of the race. And something connected with it. Hebrews 12. Verse one. Verse one. Wherefore, seeing, we also. Our accomplice of thou was so great a cloud of witnesses. Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race of the set before us, looking steadfast,

looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross. Despising the shame, and it sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Well, here in this verse. We have another 2 verses, a number of things that are very helpful. First of all, it says let us run with patience. That's one of the things Let us run with patience. The race is set before us. Another translation says let us run with endurance. I believe that conveys the thought more accurately. Let us run with endurance, the race that is set before us. I mentioned earlier 100 yard dash for the athlete, but you know, we're not on a short race like that. 100 yard dash is over pretty fast. But what it's referring to here is what might call the marathon. It's the whole period of our Christian life down here. That's the race all through the journey down here. He would have us as it were, on this. This race that's referred to here and. In the in the clause that precedes that, it says, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us, you know. There are two things here, wait and sin now. Everyone knows what sin is that's doing the something that's definitely contrary to the Lord's mind and letting our own world have their place. And if there's something you're going on with in your life or allow that's never been judged, may the Lord give you to lay that aside. And the way you do that is to get into his presence and own your failure. Give it up, first of all, whatever it is, if it's something that dishonors the Lord, give it up and then own to God. For if we confess our sins, He's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Well, that would be laying aside the sin besetting sin. We all have things. Satan knows what the special temptation to us. Oh, let us judge it in the Lord's presence. But then even waits, you might say, well what does it mean? Lay aside every weight? Well, you know a runner. If somebody just on the day of a race where to fill his pockets, let's say, would put a put 100 silver dollar bills in each pocket and they're worth more than a dollar today. If they're the real thing too. But 100 silver dollar bills in each pocket, that would be worth today. The way silver is, the real silver be worth over \$1000. Well, you know. Person had that in his pocket, then just before he gets to where the race is to start, if he really wanted to win the race, he. Toss that aside because 200 dollar \$200.00 in silver billed coins, that may be a weight on them. It would be a hemisphere. Now there's some things that maybe will evolve in our lives that awaits as far as our running the race. The important thing is to run the race. And so it says, lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us. Dear friends, especially the dear young people. I know their things but. It's been quite a few years now since I was in the young person category, but I know there are things that command that tend to become weight. Oh, anything that's a hindrance to our running the race. Let us just lay it aside. Let us lay Christ in glory. Our goal. We read those verses in Philippians 3. Let's turn back to the Philippians 3.

In verse 13. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended. Or to another rendering would be too late, too late hold or obtained. But this one thing I do forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth under the things which are before. I press toward the marker, toward the goal for the prize of the calling of. Higher for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He was pressing towards the goal. What is your goal in life? What is your goal? I crept toward the goal of Christ and glory. That's the prize that was before him, Christ in glory. Oh dear young friends, that's what should be first with us. Christ the man in the glory. And so, he says, I press toward the mark or the goal. For the prize. Yes, all those that are truly pressing toward the goal and for Christ and glory is the object before the soul. Well, they're among those that are going to be crowned. Crowned. And it's Speaking of crowns. I'd like to turn to another scripture now in in the book of James verse 12 lesson is the man that endures temptation, for when he is tried, he received shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him. Here's a crown now, a crown of life. But this is to a man that endures temptation or dearest trial. When he has tried, he should receive the crown of life. Oh, you know, sometimes we tend to get discouraged. Let's not be discouraged. Hebrew for Hebrews 12 Says run with endurance. The race is set before us here. It says Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he's tried he should receive the crown of life. And so there may be things in our lives that for some little time there are problems. And if we want to walk in the path of faith. It it takes endurance. But there will never be the losers if we're fighting the good fight of faith and and there's the crown ahead. What a turn. Speaking of fighting the good fight of faith, let's let's turn to Second Timothy for a verse or two. Come to mind we have here, we'll look first. At what the Apostle? Himself could say at the end of his life, and then we'll look at what he encouraged another young Christian to do. In verse six, Second Timothy 4, Second Timothy 4/6 I am now ready to be offered in the time of my departure is at hand. The Lord seemed to have made it clear to him he was right. Near the end of the journey he said, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, not to me only, but unto all of them also love is appearing. Oh, he says. I've kept the faith henceforth is laid out for me, a crown of righteousness. Which the Lord, the righteous judge, forgive me a bad day. You know, sometimes we get discouraged by things about us. We think perhaps some other of our young friends, even Christian friends, maybe they're not treating us right or we're not being dealt with fairly or whatever it may be. Well, here it speaks in that day of the righteous judge. The Lord is the righteous judge and he's not going to make any mistakes in what his estimate is when.

Comes to a question of a crowd. No, he's the righteous judge and the apostle and we would encourage you to keep in mind and to think in terms not of this life but that day that's ahead. All you know we're all going to be our life is all going to be made manifest reveal that the judgment seat of Christ and everything that's been done that's pleasing to him will lend have his reward in that day. Well, he could say. He could say I have fought a good fight and you know, there's one kind of a fight. There are a lot of fights is most fights is best for us to stay out of. But I would have encouraged you to fight the same fight that the apostle did. Let us turn to what he says to a young man, the name of Timothy and the first first epistle, first Timothy, the last chapter, first Timothy, the 6th chapter, first 12. Fight the good fight of faith. Lay hold on eternal life and so forth. Fight the good fight of faith. Oh yes, are we seeking to walk by faith? If we are, and trial comes in, the Lord will sustain us and undertake for us. We are reading in Hebrews 12. We won't take the time to turn back to it, but if we turn back to the 11th chapter, it tells us about it tells us about how Abraham. When he was tried, offered up Isaac, what a test. God told Abraham to take his son. Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him up for a burnt offering. Oh, what a test. But by faith. Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac, will never be the losers if we walk by faith. And seek to do that which the Lord would have us do based on the athlete who runs according to the rules. Based on the Word of God, that which we have in this book. And so you and I were encouraged to fight the good fight of faith. In that same portion, a few verses further down from the one I just referred to as Abraham, it says Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer. Affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season. There are things in your life and mine we have to refuse. Oh, look what Moses turned down. Why he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. That would have really given him status. He might have been on this road in Egypt someday. Refused to be called the son of Pharaoh daughter. Why choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God. Oh, he knew that which really counted. It might mean trials and afflictions, and indeed it did. Why for 40 years he was in the in the desert, as it were. Yes, he was. We know we can't take time to go into the circumstances, 40 years in the wilderness. But you know, he was somebody's once said he was 40 years learning to be somebody. 40 years learning to be nothing. And then 40 years used of God. Oh, dear young friend. It takes faith, though. I encourage you. Fight the good fight of faith in the end of the 19th verse of that last chapter of Timothy. The wording here is that it

says speak to those that they may lay hold on eternal life. Another translation. I'm surely glad to see this. That they may lay hold of that which is really life. Oh yes, this world can't offer what's really life. I've already read to you about the multi millionaire that said I'm the most unhappiest man that ever lived. Yes, but you know, if we give the Lord his place, then we'll lay hold of that which is really right. Yes, oh may the Lord encourage us that we might be found seeking to walk in the past. Be like the one who we read in James Blessed is the man that endorse temptation that when he has tried he should receive the crown of life. Oh you know how wonderful to be one of those to receive that recognition of the Lords approval a crown in that coming day. Speaking of the crown of life in the in Revelation 2.

We find others who are going to be given that crown. In Revelation 2 and straight to the book of to the to the assembly of Smyrna. It it speaks of in the end of verse 10 it tells all the overcomer. It says be thou faithful unto death. And to verse 10 of Revelation 2 be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life. Well here is the monitors that get the crown. Well I doubt if many of us are going to call to be martyrs. But. Here are the markers here that get the crown of life, those who are faithful unto death. But you know, may the Lord encourage us to be faithful because we've learned from the other verse that we already looked at, but it isn't limited to those that are faithful on the death of those that are martyrs. And while our while our Bibles are open to Revelation 2. Let's look in the third chapter, just one verse. I noticed the time is up, so just one verse, the 11Th verse, the Lord says behold, I come quickly. Revelation 311 Behold, I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Oh, I hope, I hope that the Lord will encourage each year to seek to hold fast the truth, the principles that God has given us in His Word. A little while that's left. How true it is today that He's coming quickly, very soon. Why we feel it could be now at any moment. There's so much to indicate. The Lord's coming is right at hand. Oh, dear young friends, and those of us who are older too, may the Lord help us to hold fast, as it were, what He's committed to us. How thankful we can be in this day when the Word of God is being set aside in such a measure that He's given us to value this word. And many truths that he's brought out. And given us to know and enjoy. And may we seek to hold it fast. And then just in closing the last verse. In the 5th chapter of Revelation it tells us. It says, oh, I meant to say the 4th chapter, sorry. The 4th chapter of Revelation tells us there are those in the middle of verse 10. So that says, well I'll read the verse. The four and 20 elders fall down before him that sat on the throne and worship him that liveth forever and ever and cast their crowns before the throne. The four and 20 elders here refer to redeem, that they're going to at that time be with the Lord in glory, or it says they cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and so forth. This morning we all were reminded in a very precious way of how the worthiness of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Well, you know what a wonderful thing will be to be our privilege in that day, to have a crown. To cast at his feet. Oh, may the Lord encourage us and these last and difficult days. May we seek to be found walking in a way that will merit his approval. May we seek to hold fast that which is being committed to us, that no man take our crown. Shall we pray?

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