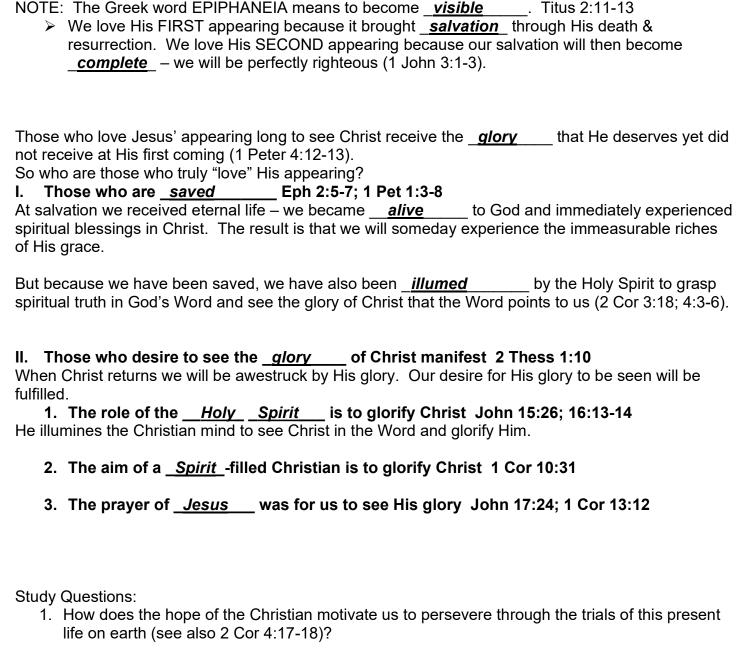
## Loving Jesus' Appearing

Introduc	tion: In th	ne final days	of the apo	stle Paul	as he was	writing to	Timothy, h	ne testified	to his
<u>hope</u>	in Christ.	Anticipating	death by	execution	n, he looke	d beyond	that painfu	l experien	ce to
Christ's a	appearing	(2 Tim 4:6-8)							

Christ's appearing (2 Tim 4:6-8).
Paul viewed his life from three perspectives:  The PRESENT – he was <u>imprisoned</u> for the gospel and awaiting execution.  The PAST – He had fought the good fight ( <u>defended</u> the faith to the end)  He <u>finished</u> the course God had laid out for him.  He kept the faith (was <u>true</u> to the end).  The FUTURE – He looked forward to seeing <u>Christ</u> and receiving His eternal reward (hope).
Paul says what remains for us following life on this earth is "THE crown of righteousness." This reward is described three ways in verse 8.  1. Paul's reward is a <u>settled</u> condition of righteousness  For the Christian, righteousness has three aspects:  1) Imputed righteousness – the moment we are saved we receive a right <u>standing</u> before God because we are IN CHRIST and have received HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS (2 Cor 5:21; Rom 3:21-22).
<ol> <li>Practical righteousness – as Christians, we pursue righteousness in our behavior and in our relationships with people (we do what is right according to God's <u>standard</u> Rom 6:13</li> </ol>
But it is NOT a present state of perfect righteousness because of the flesh that remains in us that <u>resists</u> our pursuit of righteousness (Gal 5:16-17).
So in this present world we strive to achieve righteousness because that is the <u>goal</u> of our salvation (Rom 8:29; Phil 3:14).
3) Perfect righteousness 1 John 3:2; Gal 5:5; Jude 1:24 When we die, we leave our sinful flesh and its desires behind and we become like <u>Christ</u> in perfect righteousness. THAT is the crown of righteousness that Paul looked forward to in 4:8.
2. Paul's reward was <u>secure</u> Heb 11:6; Mat 6:20; 1 Peter 1:3-5  Our crown of righteousness is assured and kept for us in heaven by the omnipotent God who not only keeps our <u>reward</u> but keeps <u>us</u> for our reward.
<ul> <li>3. Paul's reward was _specific 1 Cor 1:30; Phil 1:23</li> <li>Those who are righteous in Christ "have loved his appearing."</li> <li>When we were _saved we fell in love with Christ (Rom 5:5; 1 Cor 16:22)</li> <li>That love for Christ abides and grows in our hearts and produces a longing to be _with Christ.</li> </ul>



- 2. What is the relationship between our faith and our hope (see Hebrews 11:1)? What causes Christians to become weak in their hope (see Colossians 3:1-3)?
- 3. Note again how Paul was secure in his faith and hope. What causes us to feel insecure (see Revelation 12:10)? Read John 10:28-29. What is the basis of our eternal security? How does that help us when we don't "feel" saved?
- 4. Read 1 John 2:15-17. What prevents us from loving Christ's appearing?
- 5. How does loving Jesus' appearing and longing to see His glory manifest impact our walk with God and our effort to live out our faith?