



Running the Race


I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus. ~ Philippians 3:14

Discover the Context
Philippians 3:1-17

 You are now in the middle of summer. The initial excitement may have worn off and you are getting weary. The routine of summer work can be tiring. So what do you do to keep fresh and endure the remaining weeks?

 “Endurance comes from minimizing excess baggage and maximizing efforts to achieve God’s objectives.”

~ Jerry Wragg
Exemplary Spiritual Leadership

 What is the baggage you need to remove? Are there failures and frustrations from the first few weeks? Is there any relationship that is diverting your attention? Hebrews 12:1 tells us to throw off every weight and sin that ensnares us. What can you do to maximize your efforts? How is your prayer life doing? How are you spending your days off?

Are you running to win, or are you just running with no clue as to where you are headed or what the overall objective is? Summer can sometimes feel that way. We have all been given a job to do, and at the beginning of the summer we were told, “Go.” So we went off running, but it’s easy to forget where we’re really headed.

In Philippians 3:14 we read of Paul’s personal testimony and of the race he is running—with a clear goal and objective in sight. Every person who knows Jesus Christ and has a personal relationship with Him is running the race with a purpose. We call it life on this earth. You may be fired up and running with a vengeance. You may have been at it for a while and have grown tired of the race, wondering if there really is a purpose to it. Maybe you’ve actually quit, and you’re just coasting along watching the chaos around you.

Paul declares, “I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God’s heavenly call in Christ Jesus.” Earlier in chapter 3 he gave us his testimony and listed many reasons he has for pressing on to follow Christ (vv 4-11). So in verse 12 he realistically admits that he has not reached the goal and there is still a lot of work to do. He is striving to forget what has happened in the past and is moving forward. The past is like water over the dam, but here in the present he can continue to point people to Jesus, until the day that God calls him home to heaven.

Today is a new day, and it holds opportunities for us to preach Jesus and to encourage people to follow Him. The focus is straight ahead. Our direction is running forward—hard after Christ, bringing as many people with us as possible.

Do you see this as your purpose? How successfully are you running this race? Do you have the goal of glorifying Christ clearly in your sight? Forget what has happened in the first few weeks of camp. Press on, keep moving, love Jesus, and serve people. [WHD]