

# RUN, DON'T WALK – Part 3

This is part 3 of a series we've entailed RUN, DON'T WALK. This series is about the need to be deliberate and intentional about our pursuit of God and spiritual things. We began this series by explaining the importance of making preparation before you run. We said to you that in order to run effectively we must FREE ourselves of all impediments. The Bible says, "Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily beset us" **Hebrews 12:1.**)

In addition to this, we said to that there were things the Bible commands us to run from. In other words, there are things we're not to meddle with, things we need to get as far from them as we can because they're dangerous. We shared with you what some of these things are (i.e. *fornication, covetousness and idolatry*).

Today I want to move to another topic, namely the need to run towards something.

## ***Philippians 3:14***

***14 I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.***

The word "press" means *to move energetically or with a high level of energy*. This is essentially what we are doing when we run—we are moving energetically towards a particular goal. Therefore, when we talk about "running" we don't mean this in a literal sense. We're talking about the need to press (move, think, speak) towards a particular goal.

When Paul said, "I press," he's not just talking about pressing for the sake of pressing. He's motivated to press *because* of he's in pursuit of a prize!

## ***1 Corinthians 9:25, 26***

***25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now THEY DO IT TO OBTAIN A CORRUPTIBLE CROWN; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, NOT AS ONE THAT BEATETH THE AIR:***

Paul is not striving aimlessly. He's not wasting punches or running in circles. He's striving (moving) towards something. What is that *something*?

### ***Philippians 3:14***

***14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the HIGH CALLING OF GOD...***

Apparently, Paul is moving towards the “calling of God.” God has called Paul to something and he’s eager to apprehend it. In fact, he’s so eager to get it that he is *pursuing* it with all his might.

### ***Philippians 3:12***

***12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I FOLLOW AFTER, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.***

The words “follow after” is the same word that is translated “press” in **verse 14**. Therefore, Paul is not just moving towards the calling of God, he’s *chasing* or *following after* it! We are also told what this “calling” is—to apprehend Christ!

This is what we’re *pressing* (striving, fighting, RUNNING) to apprehend—Christ. Unfortunately, many in the Body of Christ are going through life aimlessly. They are wasting their punches, running in circles because they running without a mark (goal). And when you run without a goal you rarely run straight!

### ***Philippians 3:14 The Good News Bible***

***14 So I RUN STRAIGHT TOWARDS THE GOAL in order to win the prize, which is God’s call through Christ Jesus to the life above.***

People often wonder why there’s no consistency in their Christian life? Oftentimes it’s because they lack direction. They get saved, leave the world, leave friends, even family, but they don’t really know what to do after this. As a result, they start doing the things they did before coming to Christ (seeking ambition, wealth, fame, and other fleshly lusts). The only difference is they’re doing it in a new location—the Church!

### ***1 Timothy 6:11***

***11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and FOLLOW AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS, GODLINESS, FAITH, LOVE, PATIENCE, MEEKNESS.***

Notice, after we flee the world, we’re not told to simply sit around and wait for the Lord to return. No, we’re told to “follow after” (or pursue with intense effort) righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience and meekness. In other words, God has given us something to follow.

Not only has He given us *something* to follow, He's given us *someone* to follow.

### **Hebrews 12:1, 2**

**<sup>1</sup> Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and LET US RUN with patience THE RACE that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> LOOKING UNTO JESUS the author and finisher of our faith;**

We're supposed to be "following" (pursuing with intense effort) the example of Christ. And if following Christ's example seems too difficult for us, God has given us *other* examples to follow.

### **1 Corinthians 11:1**

**<sup>1</sup> Be ye FOLLOWERS OF ME, even as I also am of Christ.**

Just make sure the people you're following are themselves following Christ, because your fate will be tied to theirs!

### **Luke 6:39, 40**

**<sup>39</sup> And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not BOTH FALL INTO THE DITCH? <sup>40</sup> The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.**

We should add that it's possible to run with a person *without* following them.

### **Luke 6:46**

**<sup>46</sup> And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and DO NOT the things which I say?**

### **Philippians 3:12**

**<sup>12</sup> Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may APPREHEND that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.**

The word "apprehend" means *to win or acquire through strenuous effort*. Therefore, it's going to require great effort on our part to apprehend Christ. Now, the question is, "What *kind* of effort is needed?" Because it's very possible to put forth the wrong effort and not gain Christ (i.e. His righteousness).

### **Romans 9:31**

**<sup>31</sup> But ISRAEL, which followed after the law of righteousness, HATH NOT ATTAINED to the law of righteousness.**

So, Israel sought the righteousness of God but did not obtain it. Why?

### **Romans 9:32**

**<sup>32</sup> Wherefore? BECAUSE THEY SOUGHT IT NOT BY FAITH, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;**

The reason Israel did not obtain what they were running after is because they did not do it IN FAITH. We don't apprehend Christ with our hands. We apprehend Him with our faith!

### ***Ephesians 3:16–18***

***<sup>16</sup> That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; <sup>17</sup> THAT CHRIST MAY DWELL IN YOUR HEARTS BY FAITH; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup> May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;***

The word “comprehend” in **verse 18** is the same word that is translated “apprehend” in **Philippians 3:12**. Therefore, this verse is not talking about comprehending Christ. It's talking about apprehending Christ. Moreover, how do we apprehend Christ? We apprehend Him BY FAITH. Therefore, the strenuous effort the Bible associates with apprehending Christ is something we exercise through our faith. If we want to apprehend Christ (His righteousness, His glory, His eternal life), then we must be strong in the faith.

### **Hebrews 12:2**

**<sup>2</sup> Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

There is a “cross” we must endure in order to lay hold on the prize (salvation). In other words, enduring in our faith to lay hold of Christ (His righteousness) will bring pain to our mind (flesh)!