The Pursuit, Pt. 3
"Worth the Pursuit – Pursuing Eternal Focus"
TW Norman
11/15/2026

Philippians 3:12-14 (NIV) *"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."*

1. The Danger of Looking Back

You can believe in eternity and still spend your life consumed with temporary things.

But Paul gives us a better way... "*One thing I do"*

Philippians 3:13-14a (NIV) *"Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on."*

2. Your Past is a Step Toward Your Purpose

Acts 22:3-5 (paraphrase) "*I'm a Jew, educated under Gamaliel, according to the law, zealous for God. I persecuted the Way (Christians) TO DEATH, putting men and women in prisons. I got letters from the high priest to continue my persecution and to imprison believers in Damascus."*

Acts 22:6 (NASB) *"But it happened that as I was on my way, approaching Damascus about noontime, a very bright light suddenly flashed from heaven all around me."*

Pursuing Eternal Focus begins when I surrender my temporary plans to God's Eternal Purpose.

3. Propelled with Eternal Purpose

Philippians 3:13b (NIV) *"I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it."*

Refuse to allow yesterday's accomplishments or disappointments to become today's excuse for complacency

What about you? Are you pursuing Eternal Focus, or do you find yourself drifting in complacency?

4. Three Ways to Live with Eternal Purpose

A. Surrender Your Plans to His Purpose

Philippians 3:12 (NIV) *"I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me."*

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV) "*For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."*

B. Release What is Behind You

Philippians 3:13 (NIV) *"Forgetting what is behind."*

C. Pursue What is Ahead of You

Philippians 3:13-14 (NIV) *"Straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal."*

Why are we pressing?

Paul sees the finish line: *"The prize for which God has called me Heavenward in Christ Jesus."*

5. Three Obstacles to Eternal Focus

1) Regret Over What You Have Done
2) Comfort with What You've Accomplished
3) Distracted by What is Around You

Four Practical Things to Put into Practice

1) Ask: What has Jesus taken Hold of me for?

   Stop asking, "What do I want from God?" and start asking, "God, what do you want from me?"

2) Identify what You Need to Leave Behind.

   Ask: What am I carrying from my past that is keeping me from pursuing the future God has for me?

3) Identify Your One Thing.

   What is the one thing God is asking of you right now?

   Eternal focus turns good intentions into present obedience.

4) Live with the Finish Line in View.

   One day, every temporal thing we've achieved will fade away, and all that remains is what we have pursued for Jesus.