

Ladies Fall Kick-Off
September 5, 2025

~When Your Goal is Jesus~

Philippians 3:12-16

- 12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.
- 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
- 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- 15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you;
- 16 however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.

1. The Goal Motivates Us to Press On (verse 12)

"Growing in the knowledge of Christ implies a more fruitful consideration of His resurrection. The justice of God arrested Christ, and cast Him into the grave as into a prison. If Christ were not risen, our faith would be in vain, and the guilt and power of sin would remain. Christ being raised, He triumphed over death and Satan, and true believers are delivered from sin's punishment and power! For believers, there is a very great power and virtue to be derived from the resurrection of our Lord. There is power to raise a drooping spirit (John 20:17); power to make carnal affections to be spiritual, and set the affections on things above (Col. 3:1-2); power to confirm and establish the soul in grace (Rom. 6:9)."

~Nathaniel Vincent¹

2. Do This One Thing to Gain the Goal (verse 13)

¹ Nathaniel Vincent, *Voices from the Past, Volume 2* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2016) 240.

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"Reflect upon your blessings, of which everyone has plenty, not on your past misfortunes, of which everyone has some." ~Charles Dickens²

3. The Goal is Everything (verse 14)

"All is loss that comes between us and Christ." ~George MacDonald³

4. How the Goal Streamlines Your Daily Choices (verses 15-16)

"The greatest and hardest work of a Christian is the well-ordering of his heart, which is unseen. A good Christian begins his repentance where his sin begins, in his thoughts. ...As we desire our whole man to be saved by Christ, so we must yield the whole man to be governed by Him. We must conform to the truth and goodness of God in the inner man, or we will wrong our own souls with false apprehensions and will view things in a way different than God intended. ...God counts it an honor when we regard His all-seeing eye so much that we do not take liberty in what is offensive to Him, no, not even in our hearts." ~Richard Sibbes⁴

Communion with Christ is a certain cure for every ill. Whether it be the wormwood of woe, or the cloying surfeit of earthly delight, close fellowship with the Lord Jesus will take bitterness from the one, and satiety from the other. Live near to Jesus, Christian, and it is matter of secondary importance whether thou livest on the mountain of honor or in the valley of humiliation. Living near to Jesus, thou art covered with the wings of God, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms. Let nothing keep thee

² Charles Dickens, quote source unknown, though it's all over the internet.

³ George MacDonald, *The Dictionary of Burning Words*, 95.

⁴ Richard Sibbes, *Voices from the Past, Volume 1* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009) 208.

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from that hallowed intercourse, which is the choice privilege of a soul wedded to the Well-Beloved. ~C. H. Spurgeon⁵

If only I may finish my course. ~Acts 20:24

- "By faith, apply the promises of quickening. Promises are steel spurs that will reach the dull heart to draw out the corruption of sloth."
- "Consider others that have gained the victory as your example (Heb. 12:1-3). A dull horse will speed up when he sees other horses gallop before him."
- "Consider, too, how impossible it is for creeping snails to finish their journey's end. Run that you may obtain (1 Cor. 9:24). Don't creep, but run, not indifferently, but industriously."
~Reverend Mr. Simmons⁶

Lord, it belongs not to my care,
Whether I die or live;
To love and serve Thee is my share,
And this Thy grace must give.

If life be long, I will be glad,
That I may long obey;
If short, yet why should I be sad
To soar to endless day?

Christ leads me through no darker rooms
Than He went through before;
He that unto God's kingdom comes,
Must enter by His door.

Come, Lord, when grace has made me meet (ready)
Thy blessed face to see;
For if Thy work on earth be sweet,
What will Thy glory be?

Then shall I end my sad complaints,
And weary sinful days,
And join with the triumphant saints,
Who sing Jehovah's praise.

My knowledge of that life is small,
The eye of faith is dim;
But 'tis enough that Christ knows all,
And I shall be with Him.
~R. Baxter⁷

⁵ C. H. Spurgeon, *Daily Help* (Baltimore: R. H. Woodward & Company, 1892), 217–218.

⁶ Reverend Mr. Simmons, *Voices from the Past, Volume 1* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009) 245.

⁷ Richard Baxter, "Lord, It Belongs Not to My Care," from J. C. Ryle's, *Hymns for the Church on Earth* (London: William Hunt and Company, 1876), 8.

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Questions for Reflection

1. What things stood out to you from this passage?

2. What things do you need to “forget” so you can “reach forward” to what lies ahead (verse 13)?

3. How can you keep living and moving forward spiritually so you don’t get lazy or satisfied with where you are (verses 15-16)? What things help you live in such a spiritually vibrant way?

“Jesus is not embarrassed by your past. He is not overwhelmed by your brokenness. He delights to take what is marred and make it new.” ~ Sinclair B. Ferguson⁸

To further your own blessing of this passage, listen to Dr. Rick Goertzen preach on Romans 8:17-25 in the following 4 sermons. You’ll be so glad you did!

- <https://youtu.be/25W7jrdYIBM?si=GOOAuwAkrD014Vqk>
- <https://youtu.be/aLD-mqprFQo?si=w3YxmiqbKQxBLfa1>
- <https://youtu.be/Hyjmbf8el3g?si=8A40ItE7uojybgR>
- https://youtu.be/9A_QLApKZDE?si=rJG1_cuQNSze5kCd

⁸ Sinclair B. Ferguson, *Devoted to God: Blueprints for Sanctification* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 2016), 52.