

God's Great Adventure: Pressing On

Wylie United Methodist Church
Pastor Jeff Hatcher – May 31, 2009

Philippians 3:7-14

7 **Whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.** 8 What is more, **I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord,** for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, **not having a righteousness of my own** that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ-the **righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.** 10 I want to **know Christ** and the **power of his resurrection** and the **fellowship of sharing in his sufferings,** becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, to **attain to the resurrection from the dead.** 12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but **I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.** 13 Brothers, 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, 14 **I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me** heavenward in Christ Jesus.

The Christian life is a Marathon - - not a Sprint.

Our Purpose is to...

I. RELENTLESSLY PURSUE THE "PRIZE"

v. 12 **I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.**

v. 14 **I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me** heavenward in Christ Jesus.

The "Prize" is:

PERFECT FREEDOM FROM SIN

v. 9 **a righteousness ...** which is through faith in Christ-the **righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.**

Paul's prayer was to be wholly formed (as much as possible) into the likeness of Christ.

DELIVERANCE FROM TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS

v. 10 I want ... the **fellowship of sharing in his sufferings,** becoming like him in his death

VICTORY OVER DEATH

v. 10 I want to **know Christ** and the **power of his resurrection** ... 11 and so, somehow, to **attain to the resurrection from the dead.**

The fact that Christ has risen from the dead (if completely realized) transforms us:

- We see the Rewards and Struggles of this world as Less Relevant
- We endure Trials for His Sake
- We no longer Fear our Own Death

In the mean time, we are to...

2. AVOID ALL OBSTACLES

v. 13-14 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.

Paul realized that to allow himself to be distracted by things of this world, was to be distracted from His primary purpose in life—

The prize of Jesus Christ.

(Barnes' Notes Commentary)

"A man will accomplish little who allows his mind to be distracted by a multiplicity of objects. A Christian will accomplish nothing who has not a single great aim and purpose of soul. **That purpose should be to secure the prize, and to renounce everything that would be in the way to its attainment.**"

And we are to...

3. COMPLETE THE TASK ASSIGNED TO US

Acts 20:24

I consider my life worth nothing to me, **if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me**-the task of **testifying to the gospel of God's grace.**

What is our task? **Testifying to the gospel of Jesus Christ!**

Then we will...

4. ATTAIN THE PRIZE

2 Timothy 4:6-8

6 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. 7 I have **fought the good fight,** I have **finished the race,** I have **kept the faith.** 8 Now there is in store for me **the crown of righteousness,** which **the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me** on that day-and **not only to me,** but also **to all** who have longed for his appearing.

★ WHAT OBSTACLES STAND IN THE PATH OF YOUR PRIZE?