

Title: Doing life with a Joyful Heart

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It is a true blessing being here with you this evening

Phil 3:12 - 4:7

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.

Phil 3:12

12 I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection! But I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ Jesus saved me for and wants me to be. NLT 1st addition

Pressing on- working toward God's perfect plan for our lives

Gods Plan for your life is perfect –there is no one like you-illustration

- Maybe this is **you right now**
- Pressing on working toward something...

- Let's see again what Paul is saying ***but I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ Jesus saved me for and wants me to be...***

- We were bought at a price

-This is what He wants- for us to put Him number one.

****Let's be real for a minute- today is Valentine's Day**

- Raise of hands if married- Focus on putting God #1 then God will give you #2

Let's Pray

Tonight and Pastor Bo

This evening we are going to look at the rest of chapter 3 and see how we can keep God number one in our lives

Paul right now is not satisfied with where he is in His Christian Life

Phil. 3:13 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,

This verse shows 2 key examples of what we should be focusing on as we are pressing on toward the goal- they are Devotion and Direction

Paul's says in this verse **But one thing I do** which implies his devotion to what God has called him to do

1) Pressing forward we must be fully Devoted.

Definition of devotion- profound dedication; consecration
earnest attachment to a cause, or person

Being fully devoted to Christ and to His word is essential in reaching this Goal

God wants this in our lives; to be fully devoted to him and the calling that He has put on our lives.

***How many of you watched the opening ceremonies for the Olympics on Friday?**

Watching all of the athletes march out, ready to compete after all of their training paints a perfect picture of what our Christian walk should be. We should be training ourselves in the Word, practicing in prayer-preparing for this race that Paul is talking about.

Bob Costas made the point when they were lighting the torch that it always amazes him how these athletes are so brave. They compete in front of the entire world, with the possibility of falling on their faces. Risking humiliation for a chance to win gold.

We have the opportunity to be brave and bold for our Lord by standing up for our faith- the world might try to humiliate us, but our gold medal is in heaven.

*Ask to write down

You are fast becoming what you are going to be.

- Let's slow down right now- who are you becoming right now?? What things in your life are turning you into who you are going to be?
 - Maybe it is a positive thing that you are building on to become the man or woman who God wants you to be.
 - Or possibly it is the opposite. Little things are adding up and you getting further and further away from who God wants you to be.
- Right now you are becoming somebody who is it?**
- As a follower of Christ running in the race of life we must be devoted

1 Cor 9:24-27

24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. **25** Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. **26** Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. **27** No, I beat

my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

Time with God=spiritual training

Daily Devotionals are time spent every day with the Lord. It is a quiet time where you can be alone with God. This gives Him the chance to speak into your life.

Scripture??

We also must forget what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,

- **I think that it is very important to see how God does this God puts it all behind –Luke 15: 11-**

2) Pressing Forward we must have Direction

A Compass is an essential tool for a Boy Scout to know how to use. Going off into the wilderness it very easy to get lost.



God has provided many ways to direct His people. The Israelites left Egypt and they were lead by a cloud in the day and a pillar of fire by night. God would take them and show them where to go.

God does the same for us today.

Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path

-You see God's Word contains the spiritual principles that will help us avoid many sorrows, pitfalls and tragedies brought on by wrong decisions and choices

The bible is our life compass

Illustration: of the parade of life

We are not to look behind.

In football, I have seen it so many times, a guy is running toward the end zone, he has it in the bag. But for a split second he lets doubt and fear creep in, and he slows down just enough to glance back and that is all the enemy needed and he gets tackled right before the touchdown.

As we are going forward it is important to forget what is behind The Word says that we are to **forget what is behind us.**

Sometimes we can't go forward because of how much from our past we are dragging with us.

Let Go of it and give it to God You are only hurting your self

"To forget" in the Bible means to "No longer to being influenced by or affected by"

We must break the power of the past by living for the future

We need hope in our lives and hope comes from looking ahead

C.S. Lewis wrote:

Hope ... Means ... a continual looking forward to the eternal world... It does not mean that we are to leave the present world as it is. If you read history you will find that the Christians who did the most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next... it is since Christians have largely ceased to think of

the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at Heaven and you will get earth "thrown in": aim at earth and you will get neither.

As Christians, we should be living today- with the expectations of the future. Living today, with the eternal in mind.

I love the story of Noah no sail, not wheel, not oars, not problem the Lord was guiding that boat.

Phil. 3:14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Again I see the words I press which means I follow-

A man does not become a winning athlete by listening to lectures, watching movies, reading books, or cheering at games. He becomes a winning athlete by getting into the game and determining to win!-

It is the same with the Christian life Warren Wiersbe says that.

so many time we get so busy "dying to self that we never come back to life again to run the race! And others are so sure they cannot make it on their own that they never stop to read the Word, Pray, or ask for the power of the Lord.

What this world needs to day is determined followers of Him!!!!

3) Pressing forward we must be Determined.

Heb 12:1-2

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let

us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ² Let us fix our eyes on Jesus,

-by getting the sin off us it makes us free and we can then run with perseverance.

*Let turn in our Bibles to **Matthew 14:24**

By fixing our eyes on Jesus nothing can get in the way of the goal.

Track story

As a Pastor I see new Christians excited and they have a great zeal.

Phil. 3:15 All of us who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. ¹⁶ Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

4) Pressing forward we must be Disciplined.

Imagine many years have passed and you are now in your old age. You die one night in your bed and you are happy to go to heaven and meet Jesus and see all of your old friends and family. But when you get there Jesus greets you with a smile, but the look on his face shows disappointment. He then begins to tell you about all of the wonderful plans there were for your life. The amazing way you were going to change the world, but you didn't. You were too busy to let him work in you and too fearful to take any big leaps in the name of the Lord. Your heart breaks at the thought of the exciting and fulfilling life you could have had and at all of the work that you could have accomplished for your Lord.

This is a very real picture of what could happen if you are not seeking with your whole heart the plans that God has for your life.

Jer 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

I have a quote in my office hanging up to help me remember this. It says- ***Expect, Attempt something so big that unless God is in it, it is bound to fail.*** This would be a great motto for 2010.

2 Tim 1:7

7 For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

Live dangerously - *"We need to quit living as if the purpose of life is to arrive safely at death. Jesus didn't die on the cross to keep us safe. He died to make us dangerous."* Pastor Mark

Phil. 3:17 -20 17 Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. 18 For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

5) Pressing forward we must not be distracted

- We must keep the main thing the main thing

But Satan wants to keep us distracted and our eyes not focused on eternity but on today's problems – drama with friends, school...

2 Cor 4:16-18

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. **17** For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. **18** So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Are you distracted right now wondering what the purpose in all of this could be? What is the plan that you have for me Lord?

One of the scariest things we can do is become nearsighted. This is where we do not look at the big picture of life only what is right in front of us.

We must open our eyes and see what the Lord is doing and trust in faith that He know best.

Story: of Amanda and I

Phil. 3:21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Romans 12:1-3

12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual **a** act of worship. **2** Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

- By having a renewed mind and living a transformed life in Christ, we are able to test, prove and affirm that God's will is good, desirable and perfect.

Transformed believers know and embrace God's will as the highest and best way of life.

To live the best life we must give up ours and let go....

Phil 4

Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!

The more that we devote our lives to the Lord and seek His direction, Determined to give our all and Disciplined to always be consistent, the firmer we can stand for Christ.

We must stand strong for our Lord

Lets Pray and then I am going to read one last verse.

Phil. 4:4-7 4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Rejoice in what the Lord is doing let Him work in you.