



August 8, 2022

Last November at The Way International Headquarters, I ran in a 5K event with many other enthusiastic Christian believers and our guests. During the run, I thought of these Bible verses where Paul describes pressing toward, or pursuing, the finish line for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

*Philippians 3:13,14:*

*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,  
I press toward the mark [finish line] for the prize of the high [upward] calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

During the 5K run, thinking too much about the first part of the run was not going to help me run the rest of it well. Thinking about the goal would. Likewise, Paul committed to forgetting those things which were behind him, and he pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God.

What does this mean? The mark, or finish line, Paul pressed toward in verse 14 is the return of Christ. When Christ returns, we will meet the lord in the air, being gathered together with him forevermore. The high calling of God in this verse is God's continuing invitation to walk for Him. Though we as born-again believers responded to God's call to become His sons via the new birth, and we cannot lose that sonship, we can also respond to God's moment-by-moment, daily call to walk in a manner pleasing to Him. Living this way results in the "prize," or rewards for our faithful walk with God.

In order to follow after God's high calling, Paul could not focus on his past worldly accomplishments.

*Philippians 3:4-6:*

*Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*

Previous to getting born again, Paul had a background of high worldly credentials and great personal gain in the senses realm, yet afterward, none of that mattered to him in light of serving God. After Paul got born again, he changed his lifestyle. Instead of going after what, at one time, he thought was important, he began pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God. To truly succeed, he kept the vision of the hope of Christ's return alive in his mind and heart, and he focused on spiritual matters.

*Philippians 3:7,8:*

*But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.*

Paul did not mince words here. He counted his past accomplishments as dung compared to the knowledge of Christ.

Verse 3 of Philippians 3 shows more spiritual principles Paul adhered to that helped him press toward the finish line for the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus.

*Philippians 3:3:*

*For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh [the senses realm].*

Dr. Victor Paul Wierwille, The Way International's Founding President, wrote in *The New, Dynamic Church*, page 202, "Rejoicing in Christ Jesus is only possible by renewing the mind and focusing on spiritual matters—trusting in things spiritual rather than trusting or having confidence in the flesh."

Forgetting things behind, having no confidence in the flesh, and elevating his focus to spiritual matters helped Paul rise up to God's calling. Paul spent his efforts focusing on the upward calling to which God called him, and he exhorted others to do the same.

Paul was not preoccupied with his past worldly accomplishments—he was not “resting on his laurels” but instead “pressing toward” God's high calling. We can live like this too as we keep growing in our knowledge of Christ Jesus our lord, with the hope of his return in our hearts. The 5K I ran was a specific event. Pressing toward, or pursuing after, the finish line for the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus is not a specific event but a continual journey we can choose to make. We can live a lifestyle of rising up to the calling wherewith God has called us.

*For more information, visit [www.theway.org](http://www.theway.org)*

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