

"The Great Race"

Philippians 3:10-21 April 28, 2015

*****Please register your ATTENDANCE
and Sign up for REFRESHMENTS. Thank you!
Prayer Requests & Opening Prayer**

--Focus Question: What is the ultimate goal of this life?

¹⁰ I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,
¹¹ and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

¹² 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. ¹³ 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, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵ All of us, then, 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.

1. Would you say you are more like the pioneer pressing forward or the settler settling down?

2. Using the imagery of a track race, where does Paul picture himself in his spiritual life? What prize is he after? How is he going to reach it?

¹⁷ Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. ¹⁸ For, as I have often told you before and now tell you 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 set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 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.

3. From what Paul says in this passage, what do you think is going on in this Christian community?

4. In contrast, what should characterize the citizens of heaven?

5. If you had to compare your life in Christ right now to a track race, where would you be: Sitting on the sidelines? Warming up? At the starting blocks? Just beginning the race, in the middle of it, or coming down the home stretch?

6. What are you passionate about? Are you more likely to strive for excellence in your secular life or your spiritual life or both?

7. How would you finish the sentence from verse 13: “But one thing I do...”?

1 Timothy 4:6-8. ⁶For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸Now 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.

8. What would you like to accomplish by the time you have “finished the race”?

--Closing Prayer

Great, Giving, Guiding, Gracious God. We thank you for this life you have given us. We thank you for walking with us through the darkest valleys and on the highest mountain tops. Teach us that you have a perfect purpose for us no matter what stage of the race we are running. Teach us that we are only passing through this earthly existence and that our true home is in heaven. Because of the great gift of heaven that waits, guide us to live in gratitude and serve you and your people with joy while we journey this road of life. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.