

Philippians: Goal Of The Believer| Philippians 3: 12-16

1. **THINK:** We all have a tendency to make ourselves look better than we are; to make us look like we are more advanced in the Christian life than we are. Why do we do that? What is refreshing about Paul's admissions here? **DO:** Determine where you are prone to not admit failure or not admit that you struggle. Where are some areas that you could intentionally let someone else know that you're not 'all that' when it comes to following Jesus?
2. **THINK:** Paul not only admitted he was weakness, not perfect, and didn't have it all together, but in 2 Corinthians 12:9, he actually declares that he would much rather boast about his weakness? Why do you think that is the case. What does that do for his soul? Where does it position him? **DO:** What weaknesses could you boast in today? Struggling in your thought life? Struggling with covetousness? Struggling with your tongue? Where does that weakness drive you? To whom do you go for salve on your weak wounds?
3. **THINK:** We also have a tendency to think those in spiritual authority over us have it all together and are about 95% there when it comes to Christ-likeness and maturity? How do you think the Philippians might have responded to this great apostle who had been serving Christ and writing leadership letters for 30 years? How do you respond when your pastors admit struggle or weakness: condemnation, ridicule, gossip, judgment.....or prayer and encouragement? **DO:** Write a pastor today. Tell him you know he struggles with sin and that some days are harder than others. Thank him that he keeps his eyes on Jesus and thank him that he isn't perfect and that you don't expect him to be. Then, pray for him. Bless him and encourage him.
4. **THINK AND DO:** Going forward for Paul meant several things all working together at the same time; many truths coinciding in an effort to spur him onward. Give some comments on each of these and comment on what these look like in your life right now.
 - a. I am not there yet. I am not perfect
 - b. I press on for ownership of the truth
 - c. Christ owns me
 - d. I forget what lies behind
 - e. I strain forward to what lies ahead
 - f. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus
 - g. The mature think it this way.
 - h. hold true to what we have attained or be faithful with where you are today.
5. **THINK:** What does it mean for you to take a real, honest look at where you are and assess if you have forgotten about what lies behind and then are stretching to press onward toward the upward call in Christ Jesus. **DO:** Assess your life. Are you holding on to anything that prevents you from moving forward in Christ? Hebrews 12 calls this

an encumbrance and calls us to lay them aside? Are you doing that? Do you have intentional amnesia and if so, is it selective or complete?

- 6. THINK:** To Paul, personal achievement was replaced with knowledge of Christ. In fact, knowing Christ became his ultimate achievement. He longs for knowledge of Jesus and that's it. Everything else, every frame of accomplishment that had occupied his mind before Christ dissolved over the years. How has that happened in your life? **DO:** Talk through what still needs to be dissolved. Is Christ your ultimate achievement? Is knowledge of Him so sweet to you that poverty, rejection, exposure, illness, lost possessions and other hardships are welcome if they somehow enhance your knowledge of Jesus?