



## **Studies in Philippians: Bearing the Mark of Joy**

*"A Finisher Runs with Purpose"*  
Philippians 3:12-16

### **Sermon Proposition**

Followers of Jesus can run victoriously with the resurrection of Jesus as their focus

### **Introduction (v. 12)**

#### **1. Forget what is behind (don't look back)**

*Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."*

Luke 9:62 (NIV)

**2. Look forward toward what is ahead (see the goal and don't get distracted)**

*Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.*

Colossians 3:2 (NLT)

**3. Press on to the goal (don't stop or coast)**

*But the one who endures to the end will be saved.*

Matthew 24:13 (NLT)

## Read It!

### Read **Philippians 3:12-16**

## Open It!

What is a great length or effort you've gone to obtain something? How long did it take? How much did it cost you?

What was it like finally to obtain it?

## Consider It!

What is the goal or the prize? What indication does Philippians 3:8-11 give about what it might be?

What is Paul's security in his pursuit of the goal, according to verse 12?

What three steps does Paul say he is taking to attain the goal in 13-14?

How can we apply those three actions? To what might it refer in our lives to:

- Forget what is behind (don't look back on past success) (see Ecclesiastes 7:10)?
- Look toward what is ahead (see the goal and potential distractions) (see Hebrews 12:1-2)?
- Press on to the goal (don't stop or coast) (see Matthew 24:13)?

What's the difference between celebrating God's work in History and living in the past?

### Read **Luke 8:4-15**

How do these different soils illustrate some of the pitfalls of the runner who looks back, gets distracted, or starts to coast?

How does Jesus's resurrection and the hope of our own resurrection push us forward to finish our race?

Paul's letter to Philippi previously indicated that he had faced suffering (see 1:12-26). How do you think an athlete's perseverance makes an apt metaphor for overcoming his own difficulty?

What is the danger of thinking that we have already "arrived"? What does Paul say about it for himself in verse 12, and what does he say to those who think of themselves as mature or perfect in verses 15-16?

### **Live It!**

What is keeping you from loving Jesus and living for him in your family, your job, and your leisure? How can drawing near to Jesus refocus you?

Who is someone that you can encourage to run with perseverance as Paul is encouraging the Philippians? What effort will it take you to come alongside that person?

Close in Prayer