

"Joy In The Everyday: One Goal"

Growth Group Guide

September 13, 2026

WELCOME *(Connecting with each other)*

Athletes have one goal...win! They are single-minded. When you've watched them compete, what did you learn? How is Jesus becoming your main goal, your best and greatest reward?

WORSHIP THROUGH PRAYER *(Connecting with God)*

Open in prayer by reading the following prayer and verse aloud together.

"O God. My Reward and my Rewarder, I must know You. You Yourself are truly the one thing in life that I demand, the one and only thing I cannot live without. I choose to diligently seek You, to earnestly pursue my relationship with You. You are my first love. My goal is You - not the peace or joy or blessings You give, but You Yourself. Lord, in the midst of my joys and my trials, work in me a constant responsiveness to You, a constant walk in the sunshine of Your love." (Ruth Meyers, The Satisfied Heart)

Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides Thee. Psalm 73:25 KJV

WORD *(Letting God speak to us)*

1. **Read Philippians 3:12-14 and Romans 8:29.** What pictures are brought to mind in reading these verses?
2. Andrew Murray says, "In every pursuit it is essential to have the goal clearly defined. It is not enough that there be movement and progress - we want to know that the movement is headed in the right direction." What strikes you in this in connection to the above verses?
3. Neil Anderson defines a **goal** as: a result we want to see that does not depend on other people, or circumstances, one that we can control. He defines a **desire** as: a result we want to see that does depend on others. One we cannot control. How do these definitions help you?
4. We've been able to gather from Paul in Philippians 3:7-14 and Romans 8:29 that our only goal in life is Jesus and growing in Him. Why is this a healthy goal based on the definitions above? If we want this for others, would that be a goal or desire? Why or why not? How does understanding the difference help us love others well?
5. Paul uses a lot of action language like: pressing, straining, and aiming. Are these actions done in the flesh? If not, then what powers them?
6. The prize that comes from aiming for the goal (of knowing and growing in Jesus) is full maturity in Him at the finish line of heaven. How does this cause you to think differently about today (the present) and the future you have in heaven?
7. In Philippians 3:12, Paul is saying, "I don't comprehend everything I have in Jesus, and I haven't reached full maturity yet. But, I know

Jesus made me His own, so I'm exerting myself to know Him as my own. I'm exerting myself to grow in who He's made me to be." How does this encourage and motivate you?

8. Children are perfect (fully) human beings at birth but not fully grown up and mature. Similarly, we are God's perfect spiritual children when we become a Christian. However, we too are not perfect in all stages of our spiritual development. Does this change how we see ourselves as a child of God? Could it change our interactions with Him?
9. In verse 13, Paul talks about forgetting things which are behind him. He's not literally forgetting them, but he's choosing to not be influenced or affected by what is behind him, good or bad. Why is this so important to our goal of knowing and growing in Jesus?
10. Paul used athletics as an illustration for how we can apply ourselves to knowing Jesus and growing in Him. Thinking of athletes today, and how they approach their profession, is there anything positive that aligns with Paul's thinking that you might add to help you grow?

WALK *(Living out God's purposes)*

- ✓ **One Big Idea: Our only goal in life is Jesus and growing in Him.** Our life's "race" is run and won in the present. We are to make sure we are clear on the goal of the race: Jesus and growing in Him. If we're clear on the goal, we will run with our eyes on it, and not let things, good or bad, keep us from it. Did you discover today that our responsiveness to Jesus is an important part of the process? It spurs on our growth. If He's our focus and we are responsive to Him, we will grow. This week ask Him how you can respond to Him. Are there new formative habits to be done in love, trust, and repetition that He's calling you to? Whatever He shows you, participate with Him as you learn to be single-mindedly focused on Him, unhindered by any distraction. Read aloud the prayer and verse in the Worship section of this guide several times this week as you put "feet" (running feet) to your faith. Obtain Jesus! Unhindered in your growth. Ready, set, go!

WORLD *(Embracing God's heart for others)*

Dove Medical offers an eight-week post-abortion support group called "Safe Place." The purpose of this program is to help women find healing in whatever part of the recovery process they're in following an abortion. The goal is to help women find forgiveness and hope. Would you pray for the facilitator? Pray that the Lord will give her clarity of mind, discernment, and wisdom when she meets with these women. Pray also that the participants would find forgiveness, healing, and hope in Christ.

*2026 Celebration Fundraiser Banquet: Thursday, October 8 at 12:00p or 6P. To register go to dovefriends.org. *If you would like to donate practical support items to Dove Medical, they have an Amazon Wish List. Visit <http://a.co/0e8Sox2a>. (All info from June and August 2026 newsletters.)

[Copies of this Guide are available at <https://thurston.church/resources>]