



# HTC SMALL GROUP

## *Discussion Questions*

**Sermon Title:** Press on to Win the Prize

**Sermon Date:** July 3, 2016

**Scripture:** Philippians 3

**Speaker:** Pastor Matt Peca

1. Take a look at the following passages: (Phil 3:7-14; 1 Cor 9:24-27; Heb 12:1-2; 2 Tim 4:6-8). Why do you think the analogy of an athlete is so fitting to describe the Christian life? What kind of adjectives can you think of that describes what it takes to be a successful athlete? Can any of those adjectives rightly apply to the Christ follower.
2. The question is asked in the sermon, "What does it take to reach the goal and win the prize?" It begins with the right motive. What is Paul's motivation *to reach the goal* (Phil 3:7-8)? Sometimes our spiritual walk with Christ might be motivated by trying to impress others, look a certain way, or to get something we want. Why is this a wrong motivation?
3. Fill in the blanks: Paul's motivation *to reach the goal to win the prize* was for the \_\_\_\_\_ (v.7) of Christ; that I may \_\_\_\_\_ (v.8a) Christ; and \_\_\_\_\_ (v.8b) Christ; and be \_\_\_\_\_ (v.9a) in Christ; and have \_\_\_\_\_ (v.9b) in Christ; that I may \_\_\_\_\_ (v.10) Christ; and take \_\_\_\_\_ (v.12) of Christ!
4. Over and over and over again, Paul's motivation is Christ! In fact, read (Phil 3:4-8) and look at how Paul views his accomplishments in light of knowing Christ. What are some potential accomplishments you sometimes hide behind - or better yet - make sure everyone around you knows about? What does keeping Christ at the center of our motivation do to us?
5. Read again (Heb 12:1-2). The author of Hebrews so aptly calls us to "throw off everything that hinders us" from running this spiritual race. What are some things in our lives (or yours personally) that often times hinders you from *pressing on toward the goal*.
6. Paul mentions that in order *to reach the goal and win the prize*, he must forget what is behind (Phil 3:13) - why is this so important for us in our discipleship to Christ to continually fix our eyes ahead on the goal?
  - For further study -
    - i. Read/discuss what it was that kept Lot's wife from keeping her eyes fixed ahead (Gen 19). Keep in mind, the term used here "looked back" implies "longing in the heart."
    - ii. Read/discuss Jesus' parable of the man who continually looks back while plowing.

7. Consider Paul's past for a moment. Consider the weight of why it was so important for Paul to *forget what is behind and strain on toward what is ahead*. How can our past keep us from moving forward in Christ? Is this something that is/has been true in your life?
  
8. It is worth noting and discussing that Paul does not merely press toward the goal - he presses on to win! Compare for a moment what it might look like practically for the Christ follower who is pressing on to win and the one who is *coasting* in.
  
9. Finally, consider this study as it relates to Jesus.
  - In light of Christ being Paul's motivation (Phil 3:7-8 ) - What was Jesus' motive during His earthly ministry? (See John 6:38 for example).
  - In light of us encouraged to throw off everything that hinders us (Heb 12:1-2) - What were some examples that Jesus did this?
  - In light of Paul fixing his eyes ahead (Phil 3:13) - What did Jesus have to see past and through in order to keep His eyes fixed ahead?
  - Finally, in light of Paul pressing on toward the goal to win (Phil 3:14) - How did Jesus win the prize?