**PHILIPPIANS: Picture Joy**

Wednesday, August 7

Phil 3:14:*I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

A second time Paul declares “I press on.” He writes it with determination and courage, with faith and hope. And he invites us to join him in pressing onward.

We move toward the goal, the mark. Every athlete knows the goal. We love athletics in part because we can easily identify the winner. Sometimes in the daily grind of life we have difficulty knowing who is winning and who is losing. Sometimes it is hard to tell if we made a difference.

When you hit a golf ball you get instant feedback about your stroke. Not so usually when you make a decision for your family or your company. You may wait years before you can clearly see the outcome of your choice and your work.

The greatest assurance you have in your work and decisions involves the goal toward which you are working. If you know that the goal is noble and lofty and true and good, then you can throw yourself into that work with abandon. Even if the results are not all that you envisioned, you know that you were expending your life and energy and time for a noble and worthy goal.

Paul notes in I Corinthians 9:25 that the athletes work long hours and train with great discipline in the hope of winning a prize that will not last—a wreath of flowers. We who follow Christ, however, are working for the prize that never fades, kept in heaven for us.

Prayer: *Father in heaven, give me your perspective as I do my work today. Help me to do it with love in my heart. Give me wisdom to know right from wrong, to make good decisions that honor you.*