



## Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

**Pressing on Toward the Goal**  
**October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

### **Philippians 3:10-14**

**<sup>10</sup> I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup> and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. <sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. <sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.**

1. Do you have a memorable race story? Either an epic finish or a tragic burn-out in the middle of the race?

I shared mine in the sermon. I didn't share that at one point I had to ditch the half marathon to use the bathroom, as well as the fact that I lost the race by three minutes to my supervising pastor who was twice my age! But, I did finish in a full sprint. It was also so cold that day that the water cups were freezing over at the top.

2. I ran across a statistic that said: Half of Americans are facing burnout in their jobs, especially due to factors related to COVID- 19. The heightened stress is hard to escape. How are you doing? (If your answer is “Good,” my follow up question is, “How are you really doing?”)

Burnout is a real danger for our fast paced, social media connected world. Covid only adds stress to every decision as well as takes away much of our normal social outlets to refresh ourselves. Watch yourself carefully. Get help or talk it out with someone when you need to. Don't turn yourself into a silent martyr.

3. Running is 90% mental. Since Christ our Savior has already run our race for us, we have a huge advantage. We know what we can expect in the race. 1) His power 2) His pain 3) His reward. How does each of these prepare and help you in the race?

This frame of mind gives us the edge. God's power works in us. What could be more unstoppable than that. But, we can't kid ourselves, as if there won't be hardship. The race is hard, but we take up our cross and follow Christ. He has won the award through suffering and death, and has this reward waiting for all those who follow in his footsteps.

4. In Rocky 3, Rocky Balboa has achieved the heavyweight title and all the fame that comes with it. His training gets lax. His mind gets weak. He soaks in the glory for a while... and then he gets clobbered by Clubber Lang. After an embarrassing knockout, he spends the rest of the movie trying to get back the “Eye of the Tiger,” his competitive edge, his hunger for the goal. Why is it so easy for us to lose the “Spiritual Eye of the Tiger”? How do we keep it?

It's easy to rest on our laurels, thinking we've done enough. We've built a big enough lead; we can afford to rest. Status quo and coasting are the enemy of spiritual progress. Paul

says we must keep our eye on the prize and strive as though we have not already attained it.  
Constant work, constant stress can also send us into a funk.

saying, Come to me, ye weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

5. We can't afford to look backward during the race because we've got two spiritual enemies trying to overtake us. 1) Pride in our accomplishments 2) Guilt and regret from our failures. Why are each of these enemies so dangerous to look back at?

Taking our eye off the prize is the first mistake. Satan always tries to make us into a pride Pharisee or a despairing sinner. Neither of these are looking to Christ. Christ has accomplished our work perfectly. That's what we rest on. Christ has removed our failures from us as far as the East is from the West. So we don't need to bother looking back at them. They will only derail our progress.

6. Trying harder when there is nothing in our tank will only result in burning out faster. There is, however, an unending source of energy, Christ's power. What are the times and ways during your week that you will use to tap into this source? (Don't kid yourself with generalities. Make regular appointments with God and keep them!)

I struggle as much as anyone to not let my work crowd out my time to connect and rest in Jesus. Especially when much of my work deals with ministry and God's word, it's not the same to use it professionally as it is to sit and let it do its work personally.

7. God has called us heavenward in Christ. He has called us to receive the reward. That much is sure—the victory is ours! But the race is still yet to run. How do we keep these thoughts balanced so that we continue to press on and also continue to rely totally on Christ's finished work?  
The balance is key. Sometimes your prideful Pharisee needs a kick in the pants to get moving again. Sometimes your sorrowing sinner needs nothing but the word of Christ