



## A Focused Life – Message 4

### Warm-Up

Think about your day today. What kept you from being focused on your current task? Where you able to refocus again? How?

### Overview

Welcome to the fourth message in our series entitled *You'll Get Through This*. This week we will discuss the third chapter in Philippians in which Paul writes to encourage the church of Philippi to stay focused on Christ at all times, even during troubled times.

### Word and Application

It's easy to become distracted in life and the Apostle Paul was well aware of how the Philippians could be preoccupied by different beliefs in the church. Being focused is an essential part of our lives as believers. As we become stronger in our relationship with God, focus enables us to stay the course God has intended for us. Paul had faced many trials while preaching the gospel, but he knew nothing was more important than to stay focused on Jesus. It's his passion for Christ that keeps Paul on course, despite the many difficulties he faced (**Read 2 Corinthians 11:24-25**).

Paul taught us three keys to a focused life.

#### 1. First things first.

Paul had to understand it's not who you are but whom you know. We read in **Philippians 3:5-6** that Paul was able to trace his origins to the true line of Israel, Jacob and the tribe of Benjamin. However, his inheritance was no longer of importance once he confronted the resurrected Messiah. Jesus became the center of Paul's focus.

- **Read Jeremiah 9:23-24.** What traits are you holding on to that keep you distracted from Christ?
- How can we focus on the glory of God rather than ourselves?

#### 2. Forgive and forget.

Paul was all too familiar with the past. He was a murderer and a persecutor of the church. Paul was very aware of how one's past can haunt their thoughts:

"You are not good enough."

"You will never measure up."

"What about all the pain that you have caused to others?"

"Everybody knows all the dark deeds you have done."

What are some lies from your past that you still believe? Why is it difficult for us to move beyond the past?

**Read Luke 9:62 and Philippians 3:13.** What do these passages speak to you personally?

The sins we've committed in the past will condemn us. Paul could not wipe out the past from his memory, but he refused to let the past obstruct his purpose of preaching the gospel.

- How can God use the best of who you are when you are fully surrendered to Christ?
- Why is it so important to keep our eyes focused on Christ?

**3. Focus on the finish line.**

Here Paul challenges us to complete the race and destiny God has called us to. No matter what we have faced in the past, we must get back up and continue the race to the finish line.

- **Read 2 Timothy 4:7.** What does it mean for you to "press on"?
- What would be required of you to keep moving forward?

## **Life Challenge**

How will you apply this lesson to your life this week?

## **Prayer**

*Father, I thank you for shedding your blood on the cross that I may be transformed into a new being in Christ. Help me to submit to your will, by letting go of my past and to stay focused and finish the race. My desire is to submit my life to you. In this we pray. Amen.*

Pray for the specific needs of the group.