

# Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*Philippians:  
A Choice to Rejoice*

## Lesson 10: Keep Going

### Bible Text

Philippians 3:12-16

### Memory Verse

"All these many people who have had faith in God are around us like a cloud. Let us put everything out of our lives that keeps us from doing what we should. Let us keep running in the race that God has planned for us." (Hebrews 12:1)

### Word List

**champion:** someone who has won

**compare:** to look at two or more things closely in order to decide which one is better

**unique:** unlike anything or anyone else

Derek Redmond was expected to win a medal in the Olympic Games in 1992. He needed to win three races to win a medal. He was the fastest runner in the first race. But in the second race, a muscle in the back of his leg tore, and he fell to the ground in great pain. The other runners ran past him. Some officials tried to make him get off the track. He was in terrible pain. But Derek had worked hard to get to the Olympic games. He did not want to quit. So, he pulled himself up and began to

limp one painful step at a time. Then he heard his father's voice. Jim Redmond left the crowd in the stands and ran to the side of his son. Derek wept over the race he knew he had lost. But the father put his arms around his son and said, "Derek, you are a **champion**." Together they began to press on to the finish line. The crowd of 65,000 people stood to their feet and cheered father and son for their courage and love.

The officials said that Derek's race did not count. He could not have the help of his father. He could not win a medal. But Derek won far more than a medal that day. He would never forget how brave and loving his father was. He would never forget those people who encouraged him to keep running.

As followers of Christ, we are running a race. Our race is not about medals. We run to please our Father. We all face problems and hard times along the way. Some people will tell us to quit. But our Father walks beside us. He holds us in His mighty hands. We know His love for us. He finished His work to save our souls through His Son, Jesus Christ. Our goal is to be like Jesus and please our Father. We have a great crowd of people who have run the race before us. They encourage us to keep running the race that God has planned for us (Hebrews 12:1-3).

### **Keep Going** **(Philippians 3:12)**

**12 I do not say that I have received this or have already become perfect. But I keep going on to make that life my own as Christ Jesus made me His own.**

In verse 8 of this chapter, we learned that Paul's goal in life was "to know Christ Jesus my Lord." Jesus became Paul's Lord the day Paul gave his heart to Christ. God took hold of Paul that day. As God's hand reached down to grasp him, Paul reached up to take hold of all God had to offer him. He kicked off the old life and became the man God wanted him to be. He did not lose any of his energy the day he met Jesus. He began reaching up to God with all his strength and energy. God began a good work in Paul's life that day.

And Paul's energy did not stop. Paul had been following Christ for many years by the time he wrote this letter. But Paul was not willing to stop growing in Christ. He wanted a growing relationship with Christ more than anything else in his life. All the things he had been proud of were nothing to him now.

Paul made it clear in verse 12 that he had not arrived at the finish line yet. He was not perfect. He was still growing as an example his readers should follow. Paul's best example was that he did not quit. He

kept going no matter what hard times came. He did not listen to people who tried to discourage him. He would never quit trying to take hold of everything God could give Him.

Every believer is given this growing relationship with God. Paul said, "I am sure that God Who began the good work in you will keep on working in you until the day Jesus Christ comes again" (Philippians 1:6). Our journey with God will go on until the day Christ Jesus comes again.

### **Keep Looking Forward** **(Philippians 3:13-14)**

**13 No, Christian brothers, I do not have that life yet. But I do one thing. I forget everything that is behind me and look forward to that which is ahead of me.**

**14 My eyes are on the crown. I want to win the race and get the crown of God's call from heaven through Christ Jesus.**

Every runner knows that looking back loses the race. When we look back to see what other runners are doing, we slow down. We stumble and fall. We should never **compare** ourselves to others. We cannot listen to the voices of those who tell us to give up and stop running. We are surrounded by a crowd cheering us on.

We might become discouraged if we

look back at our past sins. God forgets what we remember. He forgets our sin. And God remembers what we forget. He has made us completely clean in Christ. We forget that He has set before each of us a **unique** race to run. We are not all alike. We do not all run the same. The hardships we endure are unique to each of us. The struggles are longer for some. The valleys are darker for some. But our Father is always with us. He walks the dark valleys with us. If we listen, we can hear the voice of our Father.

We cannot rest on races we have won in the past. All of us have had moments when we knew we were exactly where God wanted us to be. We have said just the right word. We have known we were serving God well. We can never stop running because of those sweet times with God. Those are opportunities that may not come again. We cherish those times but strain to keep looking ahead.

We always have more ahead of us. God is not finished with us yet. Our Father tells us we are champions. He has a crown for us. We put our eyes on the crown because we want

what our Father offers more than anything else. We use all our energy and strength to reach up to God's call from heaven. We remember all He has done in Christ Jesus and claim Him as our prize.

### **Keep Growing Up (Philippians 3:15-16)**

**15 All of us who are full-grown Christians should think this way. If you do not think this way, God will show it to you.**

**16 So let us keep on obeying the same truth we have already been following.**

God's call from heaven is for all people. One day we will all stand in a crowd of people no one can count. We will see people from every nation who are speaking every language. They will be from every tribe. And we will all together be praising God for the race He has set before us. None of us will compare ourselves to others. We will all see that God's plan for our lives was exactly right.

But not all of us are that grown up yet, are we? Some of us disagree with the things Paul taught. We want to argue a little and say surely God is wrong about the hardships we endure. We might even think He does not love us as much as He loves others we see along the way.

### **Things to Think About**

1. How did Jesus "take hold" of you?
2. What failures in your past still trouble you?
3. Are there victories in Jesus that you are proud of?
4. How should you respond to believers who have not grown up enough to have Paul's attitude?

Paul does not argue or scold his readers who have not yet grown up. He reminds us one more time that God is not finished with us yet. He trusts God to do the changing of minds. We will one day understand if we keep running the race and keep looking forward to Christ. God will show us the truth as we walk with Him.

### **Things to Remember**

God's love for us is not just something that happened when Jesus died. It is not something that will be real to us one day in heaven. No, God's love is real every day of our lives. We keep going forward loving God and doing what He calls us to do. Every Christian has a unique race to run. There are ups and down. Hardships and blessings enter every race. We can lose our focus on Jesus if we are not careful. Some people tell us to quit, and others encourage us to keep going and growing.

But rejoice! Every believer receives a reward. There is a crown waiting for everyone who runs the race God has planned. By faith we trust God with our past. In hope we look forward to the reward He has for each of us. And day by day we reach out with all our energy and strength to the Lord who took hold of us. We share His love with those around us. One day we will all stand together in that great crowd in heaven. On

that day we will fully know Christ as we meet Him face to face.

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