

PRESS ON

Power Verses for Transformation – Part 4 of 10

Key verse: “But this is the one thing *I do*: I do not look back, I lengthen my stride, and **I press on** straight toward the prize of reaching the goal for which God has eternally called me in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 3:13-14

Jephthah of Gilead, “a mighty man of valor”

Judges 11:1-40

Jephthah was the son of Gilead, but his mother was a prostitute. But Gilead also had a wife who had given Gilead several sons, and when Jephthah’s half brothers grew up, they chased Jephthah off the land. “You will not get any of our father's inheritance,” they said, “for you are the son of a prostitute and illegitimately born.” So Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in a faraway land. Soon he had following him a band of adventurers who were also of questionable backgrounds.

Sometime later, one of Israel’s most fierce enemies waged war against Israel. When they attacked, the elders of Gilead sent for Jephthah. The elders said, “Come and be our commander! Help us fight our enemy!” Jephthah replied to the elders of Gilead, “Didn't you hate me and drive me out of my father's house? Why come to me now, when you are in trouble?” “That is why - we need you!” they said. “If you lead us in battle, we will make you ruler over all the people of Gilead.”

Jephthah said to the elders, “Let me get this straight. If I come with you and if the LORD gives me victory over your enemy, you will make me ruler over all the people, really?” The elders replied “The LORD is our witness. We promise to do whatever you say!”

Judges 11:1-10

- ***RESILIENCE***

No matter how many times they trip and fall, God-loyal people don’t stay down long; soon they’re up on their feet.

Proverbs 24:16

- ***PERSISTENCE***

Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But *even if He does not*, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.

Daniel 3:17-18

- ***DILIGENT PREPARATION***

A lazy life is an empty life, but a person’s precious possession *is* diligence.

Proverbs 12:27

Surely the plans of the diligent *lead* ultimately to advantage.
Proverbs 21:5

PAUL'S KEYS TO PRESSING ON

But whatever things I once thought were valuable, those things I now consider them worthless because of what Christ has done *for me*. More than that, I count all things to be loss when compared to the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have been able to discard everything else, counting it all rubbish, so that I could gain Christ, and found myself in Him. This means that I didn't receive God's approval by obeying his laws. The opposite is true! I have approval from God through Christ based on faith in Christ. *The divine goal for me* is that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, sharing in His very death and His resurrection from the dead.

I don't mean to say that I have already reached the goal or that I have already completed the course, but I press on until I lay hold of everything that Christ Jesus has fought and won for me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but this is the one thing *I do*: I do not look back, I lengthen my stride, and I press on straight toward the prize of reaching the goal for which God has eternally called me in Christ Jesus. Whoever has a mature faith should think this way. And if you think differently, God will help you to see differently.

Philippians 3:7-15

- Facing the OBSTACLES TO PRESSING ON God's Way:

1. _____
The person who tries to preserve his life will lose it, but the person who loses his life for me will preserve it. Matthew 10:39

2. Fear of Loss leads to a

a. _____
No matter how many times they trip and fall, God-loyal people don't stay down long; soon they're up on their feet, while the wicked end up flat on their faces, broken without remedy.

Proverbs 24:16; 6:15

b. _____
A lazy person says, "There's a ferocious lion out on the road! There's a lion loose in the streets!" Proverbs 26:13

A lazy life is an empty life, but the precious possession of a man *is* diligence. Proverbs 12:27

c. _____ - i.e., trapped in the past
without faith or hope

I press on toward the prize for which God has eternally called me in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:14

THE SURPASSING VALUE OF PRESSING ON

Philippians 3:10

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

**"O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH,
WHERE IS YOUR STING?"**

1 Corinthians 15:55

4. _____

All the things I once thought were so important are gone from my life. Compared to the high privilege of knowing Christ Jesus as my Master, first-hand, everything I once thought I had going for me is insignificant—dog dung. I've dumped it all in the trash so that I could embrace Christ and be embraced by him.

I didn't want some petty, inferior brand of righteousness that comes from keeping a list of rules when I could get the robust kind that comes from trusting Christ - *God's* righteousness. I gave up all that inferior stuff so I could know Christ personally, experience his resurrection power, be a partner in his suffering, and go all the way with him to death itself. If there was any way to get in on the resurrection from the dead, I wanted to do it.

I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward - to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.

So let's keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us. If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision - you'll see it yet!

Philippians 3:8-15