

Moving Forward

Sunday, January 1, 2023

INTRO VIDEO: A Fresh Start

KEY TEXT

Philippians 3:8-14

8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. 10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

12 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. 13 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, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:8-14 (NLT)

8 Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ 9 and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith. 10 I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death, 11 so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead!

12 I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. 13 No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

Many people see the New Year as an opportunity to move forward. To reset their priorities, to close the door of the past, to start afresh, to set new Goals. Paul gives us a beautiful picture of moving forward and a fitting message to guide us as we enter a New Year.

This morning I would like to unpack 4 keys to Moving Forward that I think The Holy Spirit wants us carry throughout the coming year

Moving Forward Means...

1. Breaking the foolish cycle of sin

8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith

All of us have area of our lives in which we struggle with sin. I'm not talking about those occasional missteps and trip ups in which we miss the mark of God's best for our lives; but those areas of repetitive sin that keep us tied to the old life

Proverbs 26:11

11 As a dog returns to its vomit, so fools repeat their folly.

Satan doesn't have to be creative in his attempts to entangle us with sin. In fact, he is not a creator. He is a deceiver, a manipulator, a liar, a twister of what God has created. He doesn't need new lies and temptations. He just keeps using the same old ones; and we keep falling for them

Maybe it's greed, lust, selfishness, lack of love for others, unbelief, fear, not trusting God, anger, disobedience, unforgiveness, bitterness Substance abuse, lack of faith, hypocrisy adultery, unrighteous living or anything else that misses the mark of God for your life

And you know what it is. The Holy Spirit has made you aware before. You've found yourself the victim of this particular sin more than once. It's a cycle of sin and it Keeps us from moving forward into the Freedom and victory God wants for our lives

- Acknowledge and confess your sin
 - To yourself and to God
 - Don't minimize or justify it by comparing it to the sin of others

1 John 1:8-10

8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

- Repent be touched with the brokenness of your sin and ask God to make you a different person
- Receive God's forgiveness, grace and new direction for your life. God always replaces the old with something new and good. He doesn't leave you empty

Matthew 12:43-45

43 "When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. 44 Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. 45 Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation."

2. Seeking God for new and renewed vision and direction

10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

12 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.

Paul's speaks of ongoing goals in his life. We don't always need new direction or vision but sometimes we need God to renew our passion for the direction he has already given us

- Reading his word
- Prayer
- Being a part of the body of Christ
- A call to ministry and service
- A vision for His kingdom

And indeed there may be something new like more specific direction to something you are already doing or something brand new that The Spirit has for your life

Worship Dream

3. Letting go of things that anchor you to the past

13 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,

I'm talking about those negative anchors that hold you to the past and prevent you from moving into the future

- Disappointment
- Failure (our failure of Go as well as others who failed us)
- Regret
- Disobedience
- Hurt
- Bitterness
- Unforgiveness
- Even Annoyances

Of course we don't forget about the good but why is it we have the tendency as humans to do the opposite - remember the bad but forget the good

We receive the forgiveness of God, forgive ourselves and then forgive those who have sinned against us

Matthew 6:12

12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Matthew 10:8

8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

When I first came to this church, now some 21 years ago, at the close of the evening service when I was voted in as Pastor I said "We'll have to forgive each other"

4. Pressing on (Striving) to reach the Goal of knowing Christ more and become more like Him

Video: It's A New Year

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

We don't do this in our own strength... A few verses later, Paul reminds us...

Philippians 3:20-21

20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

May we MOVE FORWARD into the New Year encouraged by the promises of God's Word

Lamentations 3:22-23

22 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Isaiah 40:31

31 but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.