



Life Group Notes: 'Back To The future' Tuesday 6th February 2018

READ PHILIPPIANS 3: 7-14

*7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 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.***

INTRODUCTION:

Following our recent 'Greater' series exploring the Book of Philippians, here we focus on some key verses where Apostle Paul encourages the believers at the church in Philippi to forget their past and to 'strain' towards the prize ahead. As you read these verses together take time to examine what things in your past are holding you back from a greater relationship with Jesus and allow the spirit of God to refresh your focus on your sure and future hope in Christ.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE:

1. In verse 7 Paul suggests that the things in life that used to be valuable him are now no longer his focus and he now considers them to be worthless in comparison to knowing Christ. Discuss what areas of our life can hold us back today and the importance of pursuing a more deeper and intimate relationship with God.

Further Exploration: John 4: 28-29 and notice what the woman at the well leaves behind after a deeper encounter with Jesus). Discuss what you may need to leave behind today to make room for Jesus!

2. In verse 10 Paul says "I want to know Christ" and he further expresses his desire to become more like Jesus. First discuss the importance of a biblical salvation experience that

starts the process of a relationship with Jesus and then discuss the practical and spiritual steps we can take in our lives to develop our relationship further to know Jesus better.

Further Exploration: Ephesians 1:17-19 to see Paul's fervent prayer for the believers in Ephesus that they would know Jesus better and somehow obtain a much deeper spiritual understanding.)

3. In verse 12 Paul writes a reassuring phrase for us all when he says "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal". Discuss what Paul meant by this phrase and how it can maybe help us view our lives when we don't feel like we've reached God's perfect standard.

Further Exploration: Philippians 1:6 and discuss what Paul meant by this key statement and the reassurance it brings for us today in realizing we are not perfect by our efforts but simply by trusting in Jesus.)

4. Verses 13-14 essentially summarise much of the Spirit of what Paul is saying in Philippians 3 and challenge us to consider the way we view our walk with Christ. Paul says 'I forget what's behind and strain towards the goal to the win the prize'. Discuss the affect on our relationship with Jesus when we focus on our past rather than our future. On the contrary, explore the need to address past sins in order for God to permanently erase them from his memory!

Further Exploration: 1 John 1:9 along with Proverbs 28:13 to understand the power of confession. Also see Hebrews 8:12)

CLOSING REFLECTION & PRAYER

Take time to pray with each other that God will stir your hearts to a deeper desire to know him better and to help you to let go of things in life that are holding you back and to further turn your focus from failures to God's promise of a greater future.

This time is also a great opportunity for you to consider receiving Jesus as your own savior and beginning the start of your own personal relationship with Him.

Useful homework scriptures to further explore:

(2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 1:13-14, Luke 9:57-62)