

# DO YOU HAVE A GOAL?

Pastor Joseph Hovsepian

Philippians 3:7-21

Many people make New Year's resolutions, set new goals and promise to keep them, only to realize the next day that they have already broken them.

Of course it is good to make resolutions and set reasonable goals if we make them seriously and our aim and goal is to change.

Even though our desire maybe to change, yet we may not be willing to work on it or we may not be serious enough to do it.

The **Present** seems to be more exciting, the present is here and now.

The **Future** seems to be so far away.

Even professing Christians in general are more pre-occupied with the day-to-day activities and habits in life, then the goals they set for their future.

They are satisfied with their general knowledge of their religion, God and Jesus Christ, and the routine of going to church whenever they can.

Although the present is very important and today is what we have is sure, let us not forget that for every "today" there was a yesterday, and there is a certain future, either a future life or a future death.

And if tomorrow brings death, then death brings to an abrupt end to the ability of a person to determine his or her future. Death is the door through which a person goes to his or her everlasting future.

**Matthew 25:46:** *"Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."*

The person who decides to take a long trip, usually has a plan or a goal.

The person who wants to become a doctor must go through a period of studies and a disciplined way of life, just a general knowledge of the profession will not do.

If that is a basic principal, how can we then as Christians be satisfied with just a general knowledge of God, and a few typical and duty like spiritual activities that have no **goal** and purpose?

Apostle Paul is not satisfied with just a general knowledge of Jesus. He wants to know more about Him. He says: **Philippians 3:10** *"I want to know Christ and the power of His*

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*resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.”*

Apostle Paul has a goal, a purpose for living. Listen to his words –

**Philippians 3:12-14:** *“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, 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 press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”*

Apostle Paul says: No, I have not finished the race yet and I have not received the prize. But you better believe it that I will do my very best to finish it!

Apostle Paul sees Christ as the final Judge, who will proclaim the finisher and give the prizes, just as they do at the Olympics.

- There is a starting point
- A Track (Distance)
- A Goal (Finish)
- And the Runner

Paul says: *“I am in this race by the grace of God and I want to finish it. I will only look at the **Goal** forgetting everything else” ....*

In verse 13 he says: *“I am straining toward what is ahead”*  
“Straining” = Greek “Epektimenos” = stretching forward

A Marathon runner does not want to be destructed by anything or anyone, his or her eyes are glued on the goal.

Every believer must run the race and reach the goal. The question is: “What is the goal, my goal, your goal?”

Are you in this race for the fun of it, not caring whether you finish it or not? Do you know why you are in this race called **“Christian Life”**?

There are those who are in the race for all the right reasons and motives. Yet, they are wasting their time and efforts running all over the place doing all kinds of things, but they are not getting any closer to the goal, because they either have lost sight of the goal or they never had a goal.

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Just as a serious runner has his eyes nailed to the goal and does not allow anything to hinder him or her from reaching the goal, so, we must also keep our eyes nailed, glued to the goal and run with confidence and perseverance until we reach the goal.

**Hebrews 12:1:** *“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.”*

Apostle Paul is writing from his experience, at the end of his race.

**2 Timothy 4:7-8:** *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day – and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.”*

Apostle Paul’s goal was very clear, what about yours, do you have a goal?

And if you do, is it the right goal?

Setting goals and running well is not always easy, it involves discipline and some pain, as every Marathon runner knows.

But look at the rewards:

**Daniel 12:3:** *“Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.”*

**Ephesians 6:8:** *“Because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free...”*

**2 Corinthians 4:17:** *“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.”*

**1 Peter 5:4:** *“And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”*