

Title	<b>Run the Good Race</b>
Text	<b>Philippians 3:12-16</b>
Date	28 February 2021



The questions below are designed to be used by OCC LIFEGroups as they meet during the week following the Sunday morning message. The intent is not for groups to answer every question, but for leaders to use the questions as a guide as they tailor the discussion to the unique needs of their group.

The Sunday message and these questions can be found each week at [occweb.org/sermons](http://occweb.org/sermons).

## OVERVIEW

Paul continues to remind the church in Philippi of what it means to live faithfully in the world.

## TEXT

V	NIV	The Message	Good News Translation
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.	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.	I do not claim that I have already succeeded or have already become perfect. I keep striving to win the prize for which Christ Jesus has already won me to himself.
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,		Of course, my friends, I really do not think that I have already won it; the one thing I do, however, is to forget what is behind me and do my best to reach what is ahead.
14	I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.		So I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize, which is God's call through Christ Jesus to the life above.
15	All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you.	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! Now that we're on the right track, let's stay on it.	All of us who are spiritually mature should have this same attitude. But if some of you have a different attitude, God will make this clear to you.
16	Only let us live up to what we have already attained.		However that may be, let us go forward according to the same rules we have followed until now.

## How-Wow-Pow-Chow

- **How:** Are you doing right now?
- **Wow:** A wow moment from last week.
- **Pow:** A hard moment from last week.
- **Chow:** The best thing you ate in the last week.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS.

### CONNECT WITH YOUR GROUP

- In your experience, what are some of the keys to a great physical workout routine?
- What kind of goals might people have when they begin a workout regiment?
- The New Testament writers often use “athletic” word pictures to describe the Christian life. What are some ways that physical and spiritual exercise is similar? How are they different?

### Looking at the Text

- Read Philippians 3:12-16
- Are there words, phrases or ideas that pastor Mike used that you didn't understand?
- What is one thing that stuck out to you from the message?
- Pastor Mike used 5 key words to describe the race we are in. Which one(s) do you identify with most and least?
  - Dissatisfaction (vv. 12a, 13a)
  - Concentration (v. 13)
  - Direction (v. 13b)
  - Dedication (v. 14)
  - Collaboration (vv. 15-16)
- **Dissatisfaction:** Describe times when you felt satisfied and dissatisfied with your walk with Christ. What were the circumstances for both? How can you improve your run?
- **Concentration:** Describe your priorities in life. Knowing that your relationship with Christ comes first, how would you prioritize the rest of the things in your life? What is your life like when your priorities get mixed up?
- **Direction:** Why is it important to not dwell on the past—either your failures or achievements? Why should all Christians continually reach forward toward the prize in Christ? How has your past shaped who you are today? How has it slowed you down? How could it be used to get you further along the track?
- **Dedication:** What would the outcome be if you put as much dedication into your spiritual life as you do the peripheral things of life?
- **Collaboration:** If you have a favorite sport, what is it? What are some of the qualities of a good athlete? How can you mimic some of those qualities in your spiritual life?
- Do you need to make a game plan? Develop, either alone or with a close friend, a strategy for getting into spiritual shape and focusing in on the reason for your life here on earth.

### PRAY WITH EACH OTHER

Pray that you and your group will live by Biblical truth, not by cultural myths.

### THIS WEEK

Read the letter/book of Philippians – it's only 4 chapters.

- **Connect Up:** God created you as a whole person made of physical (mind/body) and spiritual parts (spirit/soul). How can you train your entire body to run your race well? Consider the following:
  - Spiritual: Bible study, prayer, fellowship, communion, and evangelism (see Acts 2:40-47)
  - Physical: Eat right (see 1 Corinthians 10:31), exercise (see 1 Timothy 4:8), and empathize (have compassion)
- **Connect In:** Running with others in your spiritual race will help you in your run. Enjoy the company God has given you because your outlook will help sharpen your in-look. Put another way, the way you view life will influence the way you value life. Your attitude is important. Discuss the role attitude has in your relationships. Why is having a healthy attitude essential to running a good race with fellow Christians?
- **Connect Out:** To empathize is to understand and sympathize with others. Empathy can be cognitive or affective. Cognitive empathy is the ability to identify what others think and/or feel. Affective empathy is the ability to respond appropriately. Biblically, empathy shows itself as compassion, servanthood, mercy, and most importantly, love. How can empathy help us run a better race, particularly when serving people and sharing the gospel?