

# The Finish Line



*“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, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.”*

*The Apostle Paul | Philippians 3:13-14 (NLT)*

Nearly spent, I rounded the curve thinking the finish line was just ahead. I patted myself on the back, “Good race!” My grin quickly vanished when I realized I had yet another lap. I had to dig REALLY deep – physically, emotionally – to make it. Had my sights been set on the right finish line, I would have run a much different race. Having the right goal changes everything!

What’s the finish line for your Mission?

“Retirement is your point of liberation... strive to get there, the sooner the better!” the world shouts. Captivated, we start running, unknowingly toward the wrong finish line. You see, the Lord has set an entirely different time to “hang up your spikes.”

Your Mission, being transcendent, isn't finished until you no longer reside behind enemy lines. This is the actual liberating and rewarding end of the race. Have you set your mind on the right goal?

*Reflect: Which finish line have I been focusing on?*

Like the ring announcing the end of school for summer, we justify that our work is finished when our career ends. “Good race!” we tell ourselves. Before long, languishing, we describe our purpose in the past tense. Yet, the race isn't over!

*“So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.” The Apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 3:18)*

Even after a life of incredible ministry, the Apostle Paul recognized that he hadn't arrived yet. Referring to becoming one with Christ (“Oneness”), he understood that the finish line would be the day the Lord had finished his work in him. With a sober look, Paul admitted there was much more ahead of him. Perhaps he'd learned, “The more I know, the more I realize I don't know!” He committed to dig REALLY deep to finish.

*Consider: The greatest change in me is still to come.*

Your Mission acts like a Boomerang. As you seek to advance it by serving others, the Lord circles back to carry out healing work in you.

Ironically, your Mission describes the work God wants to do in you... to make you one with Christ. If you stop advancing your Mission, what happens to the Lord's work in you? Envision diminishing fruit around you, in you.

*Imagine:* Enduring focus on my Mission producing fruit throughout my entire life.

This world is broken. We can't deny the implications of failing health. Carrying out your Mission under these circumstances may seem impossible... it is! Take a minute to reflect, does your Mission ever not seem impossible?

*"My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever." Asaph (Psalm 73:26)*

Paul says, dig REALLY deep – physically, emotionally – but that's never been enough. Though you grow weary, the Lord does not. Rely on him to carry you over the finish line. He's always done the hard work.

Like an investment that continues to yield dividends, years of steadfast focus on your Mission will continue to yield fruit despite less from you. Continue to pray fervently for those on your heart as, deep within, the Lord continues his work. He'll have a heavenly prize awaiting at...

### The Finish Line.

Go off the grid and ask these questions:

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### Coach's Questions

- How will shifting my finish line change how I run my race?
  - How has advancing my Mission made me more like Christ so far?
  - What practice will I put in place to advance my Mission and endure my aging?
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## Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

### Never hang up my spikes.

“But the godly will flourish like palm trees and grow strong like the cedars of Lebanon. For they are transplanted to the Lord’s own house. They flourish in the courts of our God. Even in old age they will still produce fruit; they will remain vital and green.”

Psalm 92:12-14



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