**Sermon on Staying Focused | Living The Focused Life**

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**PROPOSITION**: **Sermon on Staying Focused**: To teach the Bible’s doctrine of living the focused life by the example and teaching of the apostle Paul. We must stay focused!

**INTRODUCTION:** Philippians 3:10-16

A. A hungry tiger started tracking the scent of a deer. As he followed the deer, he came across the scent of a rabbit. He turned aside and started after the rabbit. Then he was distracted by the scent of a mouse and started following that. He finally came to the hole into which the mouse had vanished. He ended the day hungrier than when he had started the day. This fable illustrates how many spend their lives distracted with this or that, and at the end of the day – they have accomplished little.

B. Philippians 3:10-16 gives us a focus for our life – a spiritual focus

1. Paul wrote Philippians 3:13b-14

2. Paul said “this one thing I do”

a. Not “a hundred things I start” or “a dozen things I attempt” – but “one thing I do”

b. Paul says he is putting all his energy into this one thing – “pressing toward the mark”

C. I struggle with this concept – I get involved, at times, in too many projects and end up doing less than my best with many of them

1. There is a German proverb: “He who begins too much accomplishes little”

2. Perhaps you, too, have trouble **living the focused life**. If so, a study of Paul’s focused life will help us both.

**DISCUSSION: We must stay focused: [ Discussion of this sermon on staying focused. ]**

**A. FOCUSED ON A PERSON**

1. Philippians 3:10-11

a. “Knowing” [Christ](https://gewatkins.net/christ-the-only-savior-2/) involves more than just knowing about Him – includes developing a relationship with Him

b. Paul already enjoyed a special relationship with Christ, but he stilled longed for a deeper and richer knowledge

2. Knowing Christ in this life

a. Paul wanted to know everything about Jesus. He wanted to know “the [power of His resurrection](https://gewatkins.net/the-power-of-the-resurrection/)“

1) Paul wants to know the power or strength available to the Christian through the resurrection of the Lord

2) Paul wrote Galatians 2:20 > Philippians 4:13

3) But at the same time he felt the need for a constant renewal of that strength and power

b. In addition, Paul wanted to know “the [fellowship of his suffering](https://gewatkins.net/the-significance-of-the-sufferings-of-the-christ/)“

1) “Fellowship” is sharing or joint participation

2) Paul felt no one could know Christ fully unless he shared in His suffering

3) Galatians 6:17 > 2 Corinthians 4:10-11

4) Through suffering for the cause of Christ, Paul came to understand more clearly what the Lord had suffered for him

c. Paul concluded his thought with the words, “conformable unto his death”

1) With the help of the Lord, Paul was dying to himself

2) Galatians 2:20

d. Paul’s desire to know Christ more fully had at least four facets:

1) A personal experience: “that I may know Him”

2) A powerful experience: “and the power of His resurrection”

3) A painful experience: “and the fellowship of His suffering”

4) A practical experience: “being conformable unto His death”

e. The beginning of our quest to know Christ is seen in Romans 6 – notice the emphasis on Christ’s suffering and resurrection and our need to conform to His death

3. Paul looked forward to Knowing Christ in the next life

a. This is evidently what Paul had in mind > Philippians 3:11 > John 5:28-29

b. Paul looked forward to the time when he could know Christ fully

**B. FOCUSED ON A PRIZE**

1. Philippians 3:12-14

2. Regarding the Present: Humility Needed

a. “Not as though I had already attained…” (v. 12a) – Paul had not yet obtained the full knowledge of Christ – which would come at the resurrection©

b. “…either were already perfect” (v. 12b) – Paul knew that he was not all he could be or should be

1) If Paul claimed he had room to grow – what about us?

2) The Bible challenge is for us to grow > Ephesians 4:15 > 2 Peter 3:18

3. Regarding the Past: Forgiveness Needed

a. How did Paul cope with not being all that he could be?

1) “forgetting those things which are behind” (v. 13)

2) What did Paul forget?

b. He forgot his past successes – as was seen earlier in this chapter

1) We cannot rely on our past laurels

2) We must continue to prove ourselves

c. Paul also forgot past failures

1) He admitted he was not “perfect” and he had not “laid hold”

2) Paul did not spend his time regretting – he repented and moved forward

3) Many allow the past to destroy their present and future

4) Hebrews 8:12

4. Regarding the Future: Progress Needed

a. When we dwell on the past we many times become distracted and discouraged

b. Paul said “this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before” (v. 13)

1) “I follow after [press on – ASV]”

2) Here Paul’s intensity is seen – he had a great desire to reach his spiritual goal

c. What was Paul reaching for? > Paul was reaching for the prize

1) Paul knew, and so should we, that this can only be done as we faithfully fulfill our mission

2) We must live faithfully and bring as many to Christ as we possible can

3) 2 Timothy 4:7-8

[ Finally in this sermon on staying focused we are to be… ]

**C. FOCUSED ON PEOPLE**

1. Philippians 3:15-16

2. Genuine Concern

a. In verses 4-14 we find Paul remaining focused on his life (“I”- “me”-“my”-“myself”)

b. But in verse 15 he suddenly sifts to the plural “Let us” – Paul’s [focus in life](https://gewatkins.net/staying-focused/) was also on others

c. Paul wants everyone to have the attitude he has been describing

3. Gentle [Correction](https://gewatkins.net/our-attitude-toward-correction/)

a. “and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you”

b. One trait of immaturity is an inadequate grasp of God’s word

c. Paul was confident that they would get the instruction they needed to make the proper decisions – he was confident that the dissenters would soon learn better

4. A General Command

a. “Walk by the same rule…mind the same thing”

b. To be spiritually united we must have a common authority – [God’s Word](https://gewatkins.net/our-standard-for-authority/)

c. God’s will for us will be plain if we will obediently adhere to His written word

**CONCLUSION:** Living the focused life finds us: [ End of this sermon on staying focused ]

A. Stay focused on the spiritual task before us

B. Many matters in life are important, but none are as important as following Jesus