



Covenant Life Church Newsletter #14: Pressing In For The Prize

Dear CLC Family and Friends,

From the Desk of Apostles Jeff & Dr. Linda Herbert

Pressing In For The Prize

Paul the Apostle encouraged the Philippian church to press toward the mark for prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:13-16). Paul wrote to the Philippians encouraging them to forget those things which lay behind, and reaching forward to those things that are before them - press for the prize. As warriors for the Lord, this is our mandate! God wants us to reach forward and press to win the prize.

Writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul the Apostle used the word 'prize' indicating that there is an award to obtain in Christ Jesus. In Hebrews 12:1, the Holy Spirit reveals that we are in a race and that we should run the race with patience. Later, he encourages us that we are victorious in Christ Jesus. Collectively, these scriptures indicate that we are in a race where we will be victorious and we will obtain a prize!

However, to obtain the prize, we must press for it. Pressing indicates a fight and the Bible states that we are to take the violence by force. Matthew 11:12 states, And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force. We must fight to possess what God has for us – we cannot give up. Our faith must be aggressive, and we must fight the good fight of faith. First Timothy 6:12 says, Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many

witnesses. In order to be aggressive, we must believe in God, His word and speak those things that be not as though they are – just as it says in Romans 4:17, (as it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations”) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.” It is only through faith in the name of Jesus that our circumstances will change.

If we want to lay hold of all that God has for us, the cry of our heart must be to follow Jesus and be determined to know Him above else. The scriptures indicate that from the time that Paul was called by Jesus, he was determined to finish his race for that which he was apprehended. There is a race that is marked out for each of us. We must remember that the Lord does not expect us to accomplish our race based on our natural ability, but rather on his supernatural ability. The Lord only requires our willingness and obedience in following Him. His plan is to empower us with His ability. It is in our weakness that He shows Himself strong. God looks at our heart and all we have to do is follow Jesus and do what He tells us to do. The Word tells us to go by the proceeding word – so, what did Jesus tell you to do today? We merely have to obey God and we will win the race!

In order to win the race, we must keep pressing and not lose our focus in Christ. We must determine to know Him and the fellowship of His suffering (Phil 3:10-11). One method of getting to know God more intimately is to tithe our time. Taking time to be with God in prayer, reading the Word and worship may be contrary to our busy life, but we must be willing to simplify and sacrifice things in our life so that we can spend time with God. Hard times demand that we spend time with God because only God has the answer to our problems. If you can spend one a day with God, it will change your life. His power and anointing will infuse you and empower you to walk in His ways and operate in His spirit. After being infused by his spirit, you will have the strength to press for the victory in your life. We must press forward by faith, not looking at the circumstances, but believing in Him and speaking His word into our situations.

Second, stretch your faith toward the finish line. Paul never stopped reaching toward the goal. He stretched because his goal was more important than even his own life. Jesus said that we must deny ourselves and follow Him. Have you denied yourself to follow Jesus? Have you surrendered your will and desires to follow Jesus? Hebrews 12:1-2 says that we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses and so we must lay aside every weight and sin and look to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith and follow Him.

Consequently, we must not give up the fight. But be aggressive to pursue the calling that God has set before us. The bible says that you will reap if you do not faint. Galatians 6:9 states, Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper

time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. So, stay encouraged, keep the faith and pursue God. It will be worth it all when we see Jesus!