



**SERIES: Philippians (May / June) “Finding Joy in the Journey”**

**SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD**

**Wednesday, June 9, 2021**

**Scripture: Philippians 3:14**

**TITLE: Don’t Give Up, Press On!**

If you’ve ever read *The 5 Love Languages* by Dr. Gary Chapman, you know that people want to receive and give love in five primary ways. In other words, what motivates or fills their love tanks is different. This concept is true in business: What motivates employees is equally different, and so should be rewarded accordingly. Well, we, as the people of God, aren’t working a job for Christ, but we are in a race, running together for a prize. That prize can and should motivate us. But what is that prize?

Paul gives us the answer in Philippians 3:14 (NLT):

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

My friend, Jim, tells me often, “Nat, we’re all on the same path when we’re saved. It’s not a matter of getting off and back on the path. Christ picks us up and puts it on it. The question is, how are you going to navigate it. What is your pace?”

Paul says, “I press on.” In other words, “This is a sprint, and I can’t pause. I can’t slow down.” “But Paul, you’re in chains.” Paul says, “I press on.” “But Paul, you’re on house arrest awaiting trial”. Paul says, “I am focused on one thing: becoming like Christ. That’s why I press on.” “But Paul, you’re going to continue to suffer and probably die.” Paul says, “To live is Christ. To die is gain. I press on.”

Paul is like Jesse Ventura in [the movie] *Predator*, who said, “I ain’t got time to bleed.” Paul has told us that he is not perfect, but he aims for perfection in living. He is focused on becoming like Christ each moment of each day. But it is not until that glorious Resurrection, when those who are found in Christ become glorified.

The finish line that we are to press on towards is the threshold of Heaven, where the rewards will be handed out. When Christ appears, the reality of 1 John will be seen. John wrote in 1 John 3:2 (ESV), “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appear we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.”

We are called to press on toward the Heavenly prize, so here’s my challenge for you: press on.

I get it. Life is hard. Life in a pandemic world stinks. It’s hard. It seems to drag on forever - so do races. They are exhausting - so can life be. It’s easy to want to sit down on the race track, or even

to give up. Christ won't let you. He says, "Let's go." Paul says, "Press on. Focus on that daily living for God's glory for your own growth."

So what's one thing you can do to press on? What is that one act of obedience that moves you closer towards that glorious day when Christ makes you complete? Each day, make a decision to press on and do the next thing. When we press on for that heavenly prize, we will win the day.