

EVERY MAN'S MISSION

Pursue Jesus Christ

Philippians 3:1-14 | **Participant Guide** (September 13th, 2026)

Key Idea

Everyone is pursuing something. Paul discovered that even the things he once considered his greatest accomplishments were worthless as a life mission compared with the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ. The Christian life is not merely about doing more for Jesus - it is about knowing Jesus more and knowing Him changes everything.

Key Scripture

"I want to know Christ - yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings..." - Philippians 3:10 (NIV)

Opening Conversation

1. If someone could look at how you spend your time, energy, attention, and resources, what might they conclude you are pursuing most in life?

Read Together - Philippians 3:1-14

Listen for the words Paul uses to describe his past, his present priorities, and the future toward which he is pressing.

1. The Futile Pursuit - What I Once Pursued

"What if you succeed at the wrong mission?"

2. Looking at verses 4-6, what were some of the things Paul once used to measure his worth, success, or spiritual standing?
3. What are some modern equivalents - good things that can quietly become the things by which we measure the value or success of our lives?
4. Read Luke 12:16-21 or Mark 8:36. How do these passages challenge the way our culture normally defines a successful life?

2. The Wise Assessment - What I Now Value

"Knowing Christ changes what we count as gain and what we count as loss."

5. What changed between verses 4-6 and verses 7-9? Did Paul's accomplishments change, or did his assessment of their value change?
6. Paul says he considers everything a loss "because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." What does that tell us about the value Paul now places on Christ?
7. Read Ecclesiastes 12:13. How can remembering what ultimately matters help us evaluate what deserves our time, attention, and pursuit right now?

3. Mission Realignment - What I Now Want

"Your mission shouldn't be merely to do more for Jesus; it is to know Jesus more - and knowing Him changes everything."

8. Why is "I want to know Christ" different from simply saying, "I want to do more things for Christ"?

9. Read Jeremiah 9:23-24 and John 17:3. What do these passages tell us about how highly God values knowing Him?

10. Read Psalm 27:4 or Psalm 42:1. What do these passages reveal about the difference between simply believing in God and genuinely desiring God?

4. Mission Strategy - What I'm Doing About It

"His accomplishments don't define him. His failures don't disqualify him."

11. What do the words "press on," "straining," and "toward the goal" tell us about the intentionality of Paul's pursuit of Christ?

12. Read Hebrews 12:1-2. What might we need to lay aside - or stop allowing to define us - in order to pursue Jesus more fully?

13. Paul says he is "forgetting what is behind." How can both past successes and past failures keep someone from moving forward with Christ?

Personal Application - What Am I Actually Pursuing?

14. What is your life mission - what are you actually pursuing? Is there anything Jesus is asking you to reassess, realign, leave behind, or pursue differently?

What is one concrete way you can intentionally pursue knowing Jesus Christ more this week?

Prayer

Jesus, I want to know You. Reorder what I value, realign what I pursue, and help me press on toward You.

Prepare for Next Week

Read Ahead

Philippians 3:15-21. As you read, notice how Paul describes those who are spiritually mature, the examples we choose to follow, the danger of setting our minds on earthly things, and the contrast between an earthly focus and our citizenship in heaven. Mark one verse, phrase, or question to bring back next week.