

Unity Through Goals

# Introduction

- Thus far:
  - Unity through Truth
  - Unity through Relationships
- Now: Unity through forming and working toward common goals

# Paul's Goals

- Paul had given up much
  - Philippians 3:4-7
- Explanation of why...
  - Philippians 3:8-11
- Paul's ultimate goal for his life
- Paul gave clues as to how to achieve his goals

# Paul's Goals

*Philippians 3:11*

11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

# Paul's Goals

## *John 5:28–29*

28 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

# Paul's Goals

*Philippians 3:14*

14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

# Paul's Goals

## *Philippians 3:17*

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.

# We Have Not Yet Attained...

- Philippians 3:12-14
- Not just one long-term goal
  - Reasonable short-term goals
  - Paul was “pressing on”—working toward that long-term goal
  - We are in the same position as Paul!



# We Have Not Yet Attained...

## ***2 Timothy 4:6–8***

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

# I Press On...

- Similar to other athletic references made by Paul
- “Pressing on...” conveys idea of work involved
- “That I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus also laid hold of me...”
  - Romans 8:35-39
  - Paul had been “grasped” by Christ, and was “pressing on” so that he might “grasp” eternal life!

# I Press On...

## ***1 Corinthians 9:24***

24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? **Run in such a way that you may obtain it.**

# I Press On...

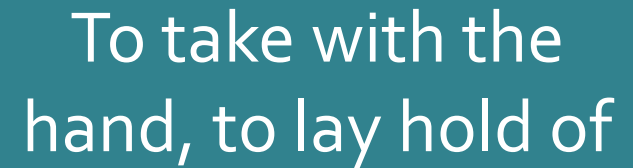
## ***Hebrews 12:1***

1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and **let us run with endurance the race that is set before us...**

# I Press On...

## ***Philippians 3:12***

12 Not that I have **already attained**, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.



To take with the hand, to lay hold of

# I Press On...

## ***Colossians 1:13–14***

13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

# One Thing I Do...

- Paul's plan to accomplish his goal
  - Forget what was behind
  - Reach toward those things that were ahead
  - Singular focus!
- We need the same singular focus of moving toward our goal!
  - Following the plan is "pressing toward the prize"
  - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

# Unity in the Goal...

- Philippians 3:15-16
  - Call to be “like minded”
  - Here: “have this mind...”
- Those who are mature seek the same thing!
  - Work together to achieve that end
  - Ephesians 4:11-16
- Specific goals should be set in the local body!
  - Short-term goals to help all the members work toward their ultimate goal



# Unity in the Goal...

- Growth of faith leads to growth of unity
- “To the degree we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.”
  - As much as we possibly can, we should have unity!
  - Avoiding unity is a sign of immaturity!
  - Peace and Unity go hand in hand!

# Unity in the Goal...

## ***Ephesians 4:13***

13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...

# Unity in the Goal...

## ***1 Peter 3:10–12***

10 For “He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. 11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; **Let him seek peace and pursue it.** 12 For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”

# Unity in the Goal...

## *Ephesians 4:1–3*

1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

# Conclusion

- Paul addressed both short and long-term goals
- We need unity of goals and unity of attitude toward achieving those goals!
  - This one thing I do:
    - Forgetting those things which are behind
    - Reaching forward to those things that are ahead
    - I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus