

The Goal is just Ahead!

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When we dedicate our life to God—to live His Truth—giving up the world and totally accepting the Word that explains Christian living—we are born again—the journey begins—traveling the path of faith that leads to the goal ahead—an eternal kingdom!

The apostle Paul committed himself to do this and he said to follow his example as he followed the example of Christ. *Philippians 3:14* “*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*” We press on because the goal is just ahead—knowing that every day can be another battle with the devil—but we carry on to reach the goal of God’s kingdom.

Heaven is the goal and eternal life is the prize that is given to believers—all who continue to put their faith and trust on the shed Blood of Christ to the end of their life. It is God’s divine *promise* and it is our living *hope*—*2 Timothy 2:12* “*If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us.*”

To stay on the path and to reach that goal, three conditions must be met.

1—*Philippians 2:5* “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*” That is the attitude to maintain—learning each day to walk *humbly* as Jesus—with the same trust on God. *1 John 2:6* “*He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*”

2—Knowing God personally and allowing Him to remove self from our heart by replacing it

with His Holy Spirit. We learn that God is loving, merciful, and powerful. *John 17:3* “*This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*”

3—Conducting our life in full obedience to New Testament teaching and example.

1. Converted to the attitude of Christ; 2. Knowing God personally; and 3. Obeying His Word by the power of the Spirit. If our *inward* attitude is not changing each day to what *God* wants, any *outward* religion is a facade.

To begin the Christian life but with no application of the Scriptures, is like providing one meal for a child but giving no further nourishment. God requires that we *grow* spiritually by staying *connected* to the *source* of growth—Jesus Christ. *John 15:4* “*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*”

God is patient, and He works with us until our faith in Him is perfected. *Matthew 5:48* “*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*” Perfection of our faith in God means not dividing our faith between Him and something else. Self is to be taken *out* of our heart *by God*, so that the Spirit can live *in* our heart *by faith*.

Every day of this journey is a day to trust God for—good health and not trusting anything else. Sensible eating and daily exercise are for a well person—not to make a sick person well. We are healed through repentance, faith, and trust on the power of God.

God promises to supply what we need each day in a way that is worthy of repentance. *Ephesians 4:1-2* “*I beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love.*”

If we are committed to follow the New Testament, we will be going in the *right* direction toward the *right* goal—that is just ahead. Remaining *on* that path of trust in God enables spiritual fruit to be seen—it keeps us going in the *right* direction. *John 15:8* “*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*”

The journey toward the goal begins when we give our heart to God—asking Him to work *with* us and *in us* to bring change to our *attitudes* and *desires*. If we are willing to *believe*, then we are promised to *receive* the gift of His Spirit—Who enables us to obey the Word. This *change* begins with our *commitment* to God.

Outward religion is vanity if there is no *inward* conversion of heart. The Christian life begins with a true commitment of our life to God. *Matthew 18:3* “*Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*”

The believer learns to trust God for all life issues—finances, health, healing, protection, divine guidance and everything else. A financial trial is unpleasant but much can be learned from them.

Pride is the basis of money problems. If someone has a guaranteed income, self always *depends* on that income. It is *human nature* to depend on *human sources*—but it is the *divine nature* to depend on *divine sources*—every day of the journey to the goal.

If finances are lacking or indefinite, the world worries and works out a plan to get more. Not having the money injures pride, but a money problem *met* right, eliminates *pride* right. When confronted with a financial problem, our *faith* and *trust* is to be on God alone.

As we continue to trust God and do not worry or try a worldly plan, He will use the financial trial to perfect our faith in Him. Financial problems give the opportunity to obey the Word on money matters. Such situations prove that God is always

faithful—Philippians 4:19 “*My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*”

If we have children to feed and no food in the house—that is a financial *crisis*. God does not allow *deliberate debt*, however—we cannot borrow money for food, clothing, or anything else—nor are we permitted to buy on credit or use time-payment plans. *Deliberate debt* is the world’s way—not God’s way. Romans 13:8 “*Owe no man anything, but to love one another.*”

Satan often tempts us to want many and expensive things, but God is not pleased with that mindset. Philippians 2:5 “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*” Also 1 Timothy 6:8 “*And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.*”

A low-paying *job* is a spiritually valuable *position*, because *in* that position, we are compelled to *trust God* in faith to meet expenses each day. Hebrews 13:5 “*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have.*”

The believer wants to respond correctly to insults, injustices, and favoritism. If our life is committed to God and someone offends us—we just follow the example of Christ—Who said nothing in reply and placed the matter in the Father’s hands.

There are only two ways to respond to insults—the *carnal* and the *divine*. Matthew 5:44-45 “*Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.*”

To pray for those who harm us is so opposite from the world’s response—but our mind needs conversion—we are *in* the world—not *of* the world. We do *not* seek revenge, but we forgive from the heart. Romans 12:20-21 “*If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink;*

For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

We forgive from the *heart* and forget in our *mind* so the incident will *not affect* how we treat that person. Christ *in* our heart enables us to *stay* apart from the world, and to pray for those who offend us—which is really different from the world.

We cannot resent anything, and by the Spirit’s power, we forget that the incident even happened—totally forgiving the offender. Luke 6:36-37 “*Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.*” That is the attitude that reaches the goal!

Jesus would *not* have given us those commands if they were *not* important. There is no merit in following them, but by *doing* them, we give evidence we are connected to the Vine. John 10:27 “*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*”

Our one focus on this journey is to stay connected to Jesus and to meet circumstances in a Scriptural way. 1 Peter 2:21 “*To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps*”—not the world’s steps.

As we journey on, we understand the *will of God* by reading the *Word of God*—1 Peter 2:1 “*Rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.*” This is much different from our old attitude—it is a *new* life with a *different* goal. Philippians 2:5 “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*”

We are to always be the peacemaker—1 Peter 2:21 “*To this you were called.*” We are to *stop* arguments with God’s help—not *start* them. We should do everything possible to *avoid* arguing. Hebrews 12:14 “*Persistently strive for peace with all*

men, and for that growth in holiness apart from which no one will see the Lord.”

Resentment *defiles* our conscience. Hebrews 12:15 “*See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.*” As God enables us, we are to do anything possible to bring peace in any situation. We should look for the *good* in people and *not* criticize or slander their name.

God’s *Word* gives valuable *advice*—no matter what has happened, whether it be an insult, an offense, or a lie told about us—if we will meet it in a scriptural way, with God’s help, peace and goodwill is the result.

Meeting things right brings us closer to God as we journey toward the goal ahead. **1.** Being *converted* to the attitude of Christ Philippians 2:5; **2.** Really *knowing* God John 17:3; **3.** Actively living in obedience to the New Testament 1 John 2:6 “*He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*”

God has done His part—John 3:16 “*For God did so love the world, that His Son—the only begotten—He gave, that every one who is believing in him may not perish, but may have [everlasting] life.*”

To reach the finish line of our spiritual journey—every day and with every temptation, trial, or trouble—we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Hebrews 12:2 “*The author and finisher of our faith.*” Then the journey ends at the *right destination!*



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