The Goal

By

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1
Worldly Goals Offer Limited Satisfaction

Today people have many goals: the achievement of educational degrees, the expansion of ownership in business, an increase in holdings and investments in the financial arena, marriage and family harmony, happy and problem-free living, championships and gold medals.

There are problems with each of these goals, however, because they cannot give lasting fulfillment. No matter how many degrees, how much money, how many children, or what type of home you have, these goals have limited ability to give deep satisfaction. The fulfillment that they bring is either temporary or limited, and in most cases, both.

With these goals, you can only reach a certain level of satisfaction and peace, but you will still have a sense of emptiness in your life. This emptiness may not surface until you have raised your children or reached the top of the ladder in business or education.

It is possible to be successful and still have the right perspective on life. For example, a group of young boys from Victory Christian School recently made a trip to Kansas City to see the Oakland A's and the Kansas City Royals play baseball. The pitcher for the Oakland A's, Mike Moore, is a born-again Christian.

Mike signed a contract with the Oakland A's for a huge sum of money for one year. He gave our boys 45 minutes after the game to ask him any questions they wanted. The first question was, "How does it feel to make that much in a year?" Mike responded, "It's all God's money. The most important thing in life is that I would be a good steward of what God entrusts to me." Mike answered every question the boys asked based upon the Word of God. Mike is an example of proper balance in handling success.

His main goal in life is clearly not baseball success.

At different points in people's lives, they reflect, take stock and look back objectively where they have come from and where they are going. One of the milestones in my life that caused me to reflect was my fortieth birthday. I looked back thinking, "Twenty years ago, I was a student in college. If the next twenty years go as fast as the last twenty, I'll be sixty in a hurry."

I've thought about the things that really count. What is the value of what we do? What is the purpose for our lives? What gives significance to my life

personally?

As you reflect on your past and future, there is one thing to keep as the goal in your life. No matter what happens in business, on the job, in the family, or in the educational arena, you will *not* come up empty at the end of your achievements if the goal is Jesus Christ.

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me."

Galatians 2:20

2

Paul Re-evaluates His Goals

The man who wrote almost half of the New Testament focused his life on the greatest possible goal. In Philippians 3, Paul is writing to the church at Philippi about the primary goal in his life.

"But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

"More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ,

"And may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith,

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

"In order that I may attain to the resurrection of the dead.

"Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

"Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,

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

Philippians 3:7-14

Paul is saying, "I have evaluated everything I have done in the past, and I have come to the conclusion that I no longer count certain things priority as I once did. I have re-evaluated where I am." He saw that knowing Christ was of far greater value than any other pursuit.

Paul simply went through a review process. He looked over his life and basically said, "What I used to live for is about the same as trash. Therefore, I am putting those things on the bottom of the list. I have new priorities in my life now as a result of this change."

When you re-evaluate something, you place new value on different things. Although you previously may have considered certain things of value, your

priorities change. Paul was saying, "Knowing Christ is what really counts. In relationship to everything else, my intense desire is to know Him."

What are your goals? Will you one day look back and call everything you are living for trash? Why waste your life on empty dreams? If Jesus Christ is not the goal of your living, then what is your goal? Will you be fulfilled if you achieve it? Today is a day to re-evaluate goals.

"Thus says the Lord, 'Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches;

"'But let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,' declares the Lord."

Jeremiah 9:23,24

3

Possessing Righteousness Through Faith

"And may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith."

Philippians 3:9

Paul was saying, "My desire is to gain Christ, to be vitally united with Him, to be linked up with Him through faith that is not of my own works, but that which comes through faith in Him. My goals in life have changed. I want to know Christ. I want to live my life in Him, through Him and for Him."

Righteousness is received through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ at the new birth or salvation experience. It is something we maintain through the grace of God, that we continue to walk in a right light, putting away things that are wrong.

In other words, Paul is talking about the ability to stay right. After we get right, we don't stay right by our own works.

Sometimes people think we attain righteousness by faith, and from there, it's all works. No, it's faith all the way, although it is a work of faith. In other words, we are doing it, but we are doing it through trusting in Jesus every moment of the way.

The goal then is to live righteously by faith in Jesus Christ.

"Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."

Philippians 1:27

4

That I May Know Him

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death."

Philippians 3:10

"That I may know Him" simply means "that I may come into an intimate relationship with Him, to fellowship with Him, to know all about Him, to learn of Him and hear from Him. I am going to know the deep things about Christ, and He is going to know them about me. My whole life is wrapped up in Him."

"That I may know Him, and *the power of His resurrection..."* (Verse 10). The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead is what raises us up on a daily basis. It is that power that gives us victory over sin, over the world, the flesh and the devil. Paul says, "I want to know the power that was in Christ. I want to know it in my life experientially. I don't want to just be able to talk about it. I want to deeply know it. That is my pursuit."

Paul was saying, "I was going one direction, but now I have a new goal. I want the resurrection power of Jesus Christ to be in every area of my life."

"To know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings" has a two-fold meaning:

1. When Jesus suffered, He provided us with benefits, including forgiveness of sin and healing of the whole man. Some of these benefits are mentioned in Psalm 103:1-5:

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits;

"Who *pardons all your iniquities;* who *heals all your diseases.*

"Who *redeems your life from the pit;* who *crowns you with lovingkindness and compassion;*

"Who *satisfies your years with good things,* so that your youth is renewed like the eagle."

2. Another aspect of entering into Christ's sufferings is, if you perfectly identify with Christ, you will face the same rejection He faced. If you so align your life that you are living in Christ the way Paul did, your life will run contrary to the world and the same opposition, suffering, insults and rejection of the world that were hurled at him will come against you.

Now, that doesn't mean everyone in the world will reject you. We're not

looking to be rejected or for people to feel sorry for us. We know there were people in the world that Jesus was able to touch, and there were others who opposed everything He did. And so it will be in our walk with Him.

Paul said, "I want to come into the fellowship of His sufferings. I want to be so vitally linked up with Him that I can identify with His sufferings."

Of course, we can't take the substitutionary suffering that Jesus did. He was the Lamb of God. His blood was shed as a once-and-for-all sacrifice. Nothing we suffer will ever atone for anyone's sins.

Paul was talking about the identification with what Jesus did in this earth to bring the message of life, godliness and truth, that there will be those who won't stand up and cheer for you.

To be "conformed to Christ's death" means to be conformed to His image, to be transformed or changed, to be like Him. It means to be dead to sin, but alive to righteousness; to no longer be controlled by the world, but to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.

"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Philippians 1:21

5

"I Haven’t Arrived Yet!"

"Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

"Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,

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

Philippians 3:12-14

Paul was saying, "I haven't arrived yet, but I am headed in that direction. I am in pursuit of knowing Christ, being conformed to His image, identifying with His life, dying the death to sin that He died and separating myself unto Him. I am pursuing that. I have re-evaluated all of the goals in my life, and my goal now is to be *spiritually mature in Jesus Christ."*

Is that your goal? If it's not, your life will be one continuous series of disappointments, because when you get the promotion that's burning in your heart, you will discover that there is emptiness all around you.

Some people think marriage will fulfill their life. I have a wonderful wife and four beautiful children. I love them, I have fun with them and I enjoy being with them and talking to them. There is a fulfillment in that, yet there is part of my life that they cannot fill. It's the God-shaped vacuum that can only be filled by knowing Christ. Until we realize that, we'll stuff our lives with so many things, pursuing people and achievements in a continual rat race.

Paul was saying, "I haven't arrived yet, but I am pressing toward the mark for the prize of the upward call of God that is in Christ Jesus. God is calling me upward. I've got a new force in me that has overcome the gravity of this world. I once was pulled down by it. I was moved by worldly goals, but now I have heard God's upward call. It is still calling and beckoning me to go toward the prize of

Jesus Christ and knowing Him."

"Not that I have now attained [this ideal], or have already been made perfect, but I press on to lay hold of (grasp) and make my own, that for which Christ Jesus (the Messiah) has laid hold of me and made me His own.

"I do not consider, brethren, that I have captured and made it my own

[yet]; but one thing I do [it is my one aspiration]: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,

"I press on toward the goal to win the [supreme and heavenly] prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward."

Philippians 3:12-14 (AMP.)

6

The Goals of Instruction in the Gospel

"But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

1 Timothy 1:5

Note the four goals of instruction:

1) Love
2) A pure heart
3) A good conscience, and
4) A sincere faith.

The goals of the instruction of the Gospel aren't better cars, bigger houses and more "things." Some people have come into Christianity, misinterpreting the Scripture, thinking that the goal was more things. Other people have thought the goal was just to be happy and problem-free. Others see success in life's pursuits as the goal, but the Bible does not identify these as the goal.

When you ask these people, "How are you doing?" they respond, "I don't have any problems." In a sense, they are saying, "I have arrived. I am happy."

There are people who are blindly missing the will of God. When you read Paul's writings in 1 and 2 Corinthians, if simple happiness and problem-free living are the goals, then Paul missed it all the way. He never attained it. Everywhere he went, there was trouble, persecution and opposition. However, he had joy and victory in the middle of it.

The goal is not simply to be happy. Many people avoid the call of God in order to be happy. They refuse God's call to service saying, "My family wouldn't be happy if we went on the mission field. If I had to work in the bus ministry on Saturday, it would create too many problems in my family." Because people have problem-free living and happiness in their mentality as goals, they reject God's call to do hundreds of things that He wants them to do. It doesn't fit within their mindset.

When we assume that happiness and problem-free living are the goals we are after, we will never fulfill the will of God. We must change our thinking and say, "God, the greatest thing in my life is to know You, to love You, to serve You, to have a clear conscience toward You and toward others and that I would have a faith that is pure." The end result of obeying God will be joy and overcoming victory, now and for eternity.

"The ultimate aim of the Christian ministry, after all, is to produce the love which springs from a pure heart, a good conscience and a genuine faith."

1 Timothy 1:5 J. B. Phillips

7

Our #1 Goal is Jesus Christ!

The number one goal in our lives must be Jesus Christ. He is the One we are going toward. He is the One we are to live for. It is through Him that we are to live our lives. *He is the goal!* In Him, we will find the fulfillment that God intends for us to have.

Part of the goal of knowing Jesus Christ intimately is being conformed to His image, or simply put, *becoming like Him* so that our lives reflect His life.

Many marriage problems are a direct result of not having Jesus Christ as the number one goal in life. Psychological problems that people go through, worry and anxiety, financial problems, career problems, family challenges with children can be traced to wrong goals.

They go after vain goals, and when they have given them their energies, they discover it is like sand through their fingers. Maybe you have been there. You have gone the whole route, you come to the top of the mountain, look at all the empty people around you and then realize you are one of them!

There must come a point where we change our goals and ask: What are we living for? What drives us? What motivates us? What pulls us?

What is the driving motive behind your life? Is it to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ? Another aspect of this goal should be maturing as a Christian. As we conform to the image of Christ, we will mature in Him. *We will be like Him.*

Part of the goal is maturing in the God-kind of love (agape), for God is love. If we become like God, we will be people of love, so our goal should be the attainment of an ever-increasing measure of love in our lives.

We could add to our goals a clear conscience. As Paul related it, we are right through faith in God, not of our own works. We are righteous through Jesus Christ, and that has cleared our minds of the consciousness of sin. The moral part of us declares our actions and attitudes right or wrong. One of the goals in our life is that our conscience would be clear.

We should add to our goals "a sincere faith." Without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). We live by the faith of Jesus Christ, so to have Him is to have faith. We are saved by faith and we live by faith, so we come to know Christ by faith. If we are going after Christ, one of our goals is to have a sincere, genuine faith.

"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness.... "

Matthew 6:33

"To this end also we pray for you always that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power;

"In order that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Thessalonians 1:11,12

8

It’s Time to Get Back on Track!

Maybe you have gotten off track, either by erroneous teaching or by your own selfish motives. You have listened to men rather than going to the Word, but now that you have heard the Word of God, your goal is *Jesus Christ.* Your goal is *knowing Him.* Your goal is being conformed to His image. That means you are going to have love, a pure heart, a clear conscience, a faith that is sincere and that has purpose.

Your goal isn't just to be in church. It is to get the life of Christ in you. If we don't establish Jesus Christ and knowing Him as our eternal, long-range goal, we will make mistakes in daily planning. We won't plan for prayer unless knowing Christ is important.

What I have shared with you in this minibook will help structure your whole life. It will either destroy a lifestyle that you presently have and a new one will be recreated, or it will reaffirm a lifestyle that you have already set and are living out.

The time you spend in God's Word, if you believe it is God speaking to you, will be in direct proportion to how much of the love of God, the pure heart, the clear conscience, the sincere faith and conforming to the image of Christ that you want.

Jesus put everything that I have said in capsule form in Mark 8:35,36 (KJV):

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s, the same shall save it.

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

You may have been a Christian for sixty years, but somehow in the process, you have lost sight of the goal of Jesus Christ and knowing Him.

Hebrews 12:1 (KJV) says:

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, *let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us,* and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

It's time to lay aside those things which have moved us off track and taken us down the wrong path. Let's run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, because *He is the goal!* He is the finish line! He is where we

are headed!

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross... "

Hebrews 12:2 (KJV)

Jesus had a goal, so He endured. He has left us an example to follow. Maybe you thought that being a Christian businessman was just to try to make all the money you can and that would glorify God. Praise God that you make money, but we glorify God by *our relationship with Him.* All those other things are by-products of the relationship. They are benefits, but they aren't the goal.

A goal is something you head toward. As you are going toward it, there are benefits and byproducts because you are going that direction. Happiness, peace and joy will come out of a right relationship.

It's time to re-evaluate the goals in your life. When everything else is stripped away, your relationship with Jesus Christ is all that really counts.

Paul had to re-evaluate what was important and what he was headed toward. After he reevaluated everything, he basically said, Lord Jesus, You are THE GOAL of my life!

"...Let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

"Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross.... "

Hebrews 12:1,2

Personal Prayer of Commitment

Father, today I want to set new goals for my life. My foremost goal, Father, is that I may know Jesus Christ first as my Lord and Savior and second, to develop a relationship with Him.

I acknowledge Jesus Christ as Your Son, Father. I believe He died for my sins, was buried, resurrected and then ascended to Your right hand.

Lord Jesus, I accept You now as my Lord and Savior. I desire to be conformed to Your image and likeness and to grow up spiritually in You.

I receive the instruction of the Word, Lord, and I want it to work in me Your love, a pure heart, a clear conscience and a genuine, sincere faith.

Signature

Date

About the Author

Billy Joe Daugherty is the pastor of Victory Christian Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He has a daily radio and television ministry in addition to writing several books: *Faith Power, Absolute Victory, This New Life, You Can Be Healed, The Demonstration of the Gospel, Be On Fire For the Lord, What Is the Fear of the Lord?, You Will Increase, Diligence Pro<luces Results, You Are Valuable, Overcoming the Storms of Life, You Can Start Over,* and *How to Know God's Will.*

Victory Christian Center, established in 1981, has grown to over 8,000 members. The church operates Victory Christian School, Victory Bible Institute and Victory World Missions Training Center.

Billy Joe and his wife, Sharon, were married in 1973 and have four children: Sarah, Ruth, John, and Paul.