

## 13 SEPTEMBER

---

### Running to the Goal

*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.*

[Philippians 3:13](#)

SUGGESTED FURTHER READING:

[Hebrews 11:32–12:2](#)

Paul does not question the certainty of his salvation here, as though that were still in suspense. He merely repeats what he has said before—that he aims to make further progress because he has not yet attained the goal of his calling. He asserts this immediately afterward by saying that he is intent on this one thing and leaves off everything else.

For now, he compares our life to a racecourse on which God has marked the limits for us to run. It would profit the runner nothing to leave the starting point unless he went forward to reach the goal.

Likewise, we must pursue the course of our calling until death and must not cease to run until we have obtained what we seek.

Furthermore, the way is marked for the runner so he may not purposely tire himself by wandering off in this direction or that. A goal is set before us, towards which we ought to undeviatingly direct our course, and God does not permit us to wander about heedlessly.

Third, as the runner must be free from entanglement and not stop running because of any impediment, continuing his course and surmounting every obstacle, so we must take heed that we do not apply our mind or heart to anything that may divert our attention. On the contrary, we must endeavor to be free of every distraction so we may exclusively apply the whole bent of our mind to God's calling.

**These things Paul comprehends in one statement. When he says he does *this one thing***

and forgets all *those things which are behind*, he refers to his diligence and excludes everything that is a distraction.

FOR MEDITATION: Regeneration and justification are only the beginning of the Christian life. The believer's legal status before God will never change from that point on, but there is still much running to be done. Sanctification must flow out of justification. Paul knows that he must strive to progress. We too must not be content to stop and relax where we are; we must press on toward the goal of complete salvation in Jesus. Take encouragement from Calvin's words that "God does not permit us to wander about heedlessly," and press on.