

# **I've Got My Eyes on the Goal**

## **Աչքերս Կ'ուղղեմ Նպատակակետիս**

### **Philippians 3:12-16 esv**

One man said to his friend: "Say, you look depressed. What are you thinking about?"

"My future," was the quick answer.

"What makes it look so hopeless?"

"My past."<sup>1</sup>

-Every institution keeps an inventory or runs an evaluation of performance. How did we do the year? What are the positive and negative aspects from which we can learn and improve?

-Every person evaluates his/her life. How much did we care for our SOULS? We learned about "Being connected to God and each other." How did we do with those priorities so far?

-We just heard testimonies. I am thankful to God who is leading you, my congregation, towards the right path in seeking His will, obeying His will, and sharing His message.

Thanks for sharing those personal stories.

Today, I want to end the year 2018 by reading from Paul's letter to the church of Philippi. I just read from ESV and now I will read the same passage from the Message:

**I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.**

<sup>15-16</sup> **So let's keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us. If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision—you'll see it yet! Now that we're on the right track, let's stay on it.**

We can summarize the passage with these points:

## **Look Back, Leave Behind, Look Forward, Look Upward**

### **1. Look Back**

Paul acknowledges that Christ saved him from an old life. Just remember his dramatic conversion on the way to Damascus. Accepting Christ as his Savior changed the journey of his life. Paul looks back and admits that he has many shortcomings:

**“Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.”**

(Philippians 3:12 ESV)

**“I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way.”** (MSG)

It is the end of the year. I look back and I can see things that I did well and things that I messed up. It is good to look back and learn. It is good to admit our shortcomings and ask: “What can I learn from my mistakes?”

One needs humility to see these things. We need God's wisdom to evaluate our lives using the biblical standards God has given us to lead holy lives. I'll call it biblical evaluation.

### **2. Leave Back**

Paul says:

**“Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind...”** (Philippians 3:13 ESV)

**“I’m off and running, and I’m not turning back.” (MSG)**

It is good to look back, evaluate and learn; yet leaving behind is as important. Look back, learn and leave....leave. I mean it. Let it go...leave.

I wish I could do this better. I often stay back and contemplate on the past. Instead of asking God to heal me, I stay there with my mistakes and wounds, sinking in...

Once we receive forgiveness from God, we need to learn to move on.

-Illustration: Do not say, "Why were the former days better than these?" You do not move ahead by constantly looking in a rear view mirror. The past is a rudder to guide you, not an anchor to drag you. We must learn from the past but not live in the past.<sup>2</sup>

And also stop getting puffed with the victories you have experienced. Thank God for them and move on. Do not live on former victories. Move on...

### **3. Look Forward**

**But one thing I do: .... straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**  
(Philippians 3:13-14 ESV)

**I’ve got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus.  
I’m off and running, and I’m not turning back. (MSG)**

But one thing I do...

Do you see Paul is busy with many things, but he is focusing one thing? In other words, he says, “This is my priority.” What is His priority?

**“Straining forward to what lies ahead...”**

**“I’ve got my eye on the goal...”**

Let me put it in my own words: **“I am focused on looking forward towards Christ,** who is my light. I am not turning back. I am not quitting; I am not giving up; I am running forward, and my eyes are focused on Christ.”

In the book of Hebrews, I learned about **drifting.** **We Christians can drift when we do nothing about our growth in our faith.** You will be surprised how easily we can drift from our focus and our goals.

So what is your goal for 2019?

What would you like to achieve in 2019?

#### **4. Look Upward**

What do we know about tomorrow?

What are the predictions of 2019?

Some read major newsmagazines or watch TV media to predict the future. I know some people refer to psychics.

Some years we got a Christmas card from the InterVarsity Fellowship of Armenia. The letter had the following title:

TOWARDS THE UNKNOWN FUTURE  
IN THE HANDS OF THE ALL-KNOWING GOD

I love this title. It really summarizes my message.

King David said:

**I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. (Psalm 121:1-2 ESV)**

Yes, I don't know much about 2019, but I know about my God.

How can I look up? How can I practice what I am saying?

How can I walk the talk?

It is like a New Year's resolution. Statistics show that most New Year resolutions will not be fulfilled. **Any resolution needs consistency.**

**<sup>15-16</sup> So let's keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us. If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision—you'll see it yet! Now that we're on the right track, let's stay on it. (MSG)**

How can we implement this goal?

For me, I want to mature in my faith, I want God to feed my soul. I need **to be fed by Him. I want to BE**, by being by his feet, keeping my soul by the streams of living water...

Also, at same time I would like to be His useful instrument in loving, serving, preaching, teaching, singing, conducting, and more...

Look up to God for energy and let His Spirit lead you day by day.

Get rid of "sins" that are blurring your vision:

**let us lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2 ESV)**

Happy New Year!!

Prayer for the New Year

The risen, living Christ  
Calls me by my name;  
Comes to the loneliness within me;  
Heals that which is wounded in me;  
Comforts that which grieves within me;  
Seeks for that which is lost within me;  
Releases me from that which has dominion over me;

Cleanses me of that which does not belong to me;  
Renews that which feels drained within me;  
Awakens that which is asleep in me;  
Names that which is formless within me;  
Empowers that which is newborn within me;  
Consecrates and guides that which is strong within me;  
Restores me to this world which needs me;  
Reaches out in endless love to others through me.

Amen.

Flora Slosson Wuellner

1. Christian Medical Society Journal, Winter, 1978, p. 2.
2. Dr. Warren W. Wiersbe.

Men who live in the past remind me of a toy I'm sure all of you have seen. The toy is a small wooden bird called the "Floogie Bird." Around the Floogie Bird's neck is a label reading, "I fly backwards, I don't care where I'm going. I just want to see where I've been." [Harry S. Truman](#).