



**Mustard Seed Children's Lesson Summary for August 15, 2010
Released on Wednesday, August 11, 2010**

"Look Ahead"

Lesson Text: Philippians 3:7-16

Background Scripture: Philippians 3:1 - 4:1

Memory Verse: "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14).

Philippians 3:7-16

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 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,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW

Encourage the children to do their best to please Jesus throughout life, like a runner doing his best to win a race.

TRUTHS TO STRESS

1. Doing good is not what gives us rightness with God, but once we are His children, our proper goal is to do what pleases Him.

2. Believers are to try as hard to do and be what Jesus wants (just as a runner tries to win a race).

3. Every believer can be a winner in the Christian life race.

PLANNING LESSON AIDS

For Telling the Lesson, bring a picture of Paul and one of children or adults running a footrace. Make two flash cards: "Right and Good" and "Well Done."

For Helping to Remember, each child will need crayons and a half sheet of white paper cut lengthwise and folded about one-third from the bottom to form a line.

For the lesson activity, make a copy of the Word Search for each child.

TEACHER'S NOTES

Time: A.D. 61

Place: from Rome

A wise teacher once said a child's best guide for deciding what is right or wrong is what pleases Jesus. The New Testament teaches that although good works do not and cannot produce salvation, they are the outflow of it (cf. Matt. 25:21). To a child, those good works are doing what pleases Jesus.

Paul urged the Philippian believers to focus on being and doing all Jesus desired for them and to do so with the zeal of a runner racing toward a goal.

BEGINNING THE LESSON

It was time to leave for the Sunday school picnic, and Judy did not want to go.

"Come on, Judy," her big brother said. "Sunday school picnics are fun. You will play games and run races and—"

"I hate races!" Judy said. "I never win, and when I finish last, the boys make fun of me. There ought to be a race I could win just once."

Maybe sometimes you feel that way. Well, the Bible talks about a kind of race that anybody who belongs to Jesus can win. You can too.

TELLING THE LESSON

The best place for us to start talking about this race is with something Paul wrote to his friends in Philippi. (Show Paul.) "Be careful," he told them. "Watch out for those people who say the way to get into God's family is to do right and good things. (Show "Right and Good.") I used to think that myself" (cf. Phil. 3:2-6).

You see, besides being one of God's special Jewish people, Paul did many right and good things. (Show Paul.) He was trying to make himself be good enough for God to let him into heaven. But then Paul learned that doing what is right and good is not what makes people right with God. He learned that God just *gives* rightness as a present when a man or woman or boy or girl believes in Jesus.

No, being good could not make Paul ready to be in God's family. Only believing in Jesus could do that. But as soon as he did believe in Jesus, Paul *wanted* to do what was right and good so that he could please Jesus. (Show "Right and Good.")

Paul said that pleasing Jesus was like running a race. What did he mean? Well, you know about the races they have at school. (Show racing picture.) Everybody goes as fast as he/she can, doing their very best to get to the finish line first.

Paul was not talking about that kind of race or that kind of finish line. Paul said his race was living to please Jesus. Paul was thinking ahead. Someday he would finish living here on earth. Now he was doing his very best to obey the Lord every day, doing what was right and good (show "Right and Good") so that at the finish line of his life, Jesus would be happy with the way he had lived and would say, "Well done, Paul." (Show "Well Done.")

Here is some good news for you and me. How many boys and girls can win a race at school? Only one, right? But in the kind of race Paul was talking about, every one of God's children who does his best to please Jesus will be a winner and will have a reward.

What will Jesus give the people who live their lives obeying Him? We do not know for sure, but we can be sure His reward will be better than any prize a race winner gets down here. Paul said it was a prize he kept going after. He told his friends in Philippi, "Let us all make up our minds to run the race of life that way."

TELLING HOW TO LIVE

If Paul were here this morning, I can imagine him saying, "Boys and girls, make up your mind to run the race of life well. Keep working at it. Never give up. If you keep obeying Jesus, someday He will say, 'Well done,' and you will get the good reward He has for you."

So get busy. Start thinking about what would make Jesus happy, and do your best to do the things that are right and good.

Let us bow our heads and ask Jesus for help to run this kind of race. You see, we are not strong enough to do this all by ourselves.

HELPING TO REMEMBER

Tell the class to lay their papers flat and draw a running track along the fold line. Above the far left of the track, each will draw a running stick figure, representing himself. At the far right they should draw a cross. Across the top they should print "My Life Race" and across the bottom "Pleasing Jesus."

EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14).

Paul said he was running a race. It was not the kind of race where you run your best so that you will finish first and get a prize. Paul's race was the kind where the people that God has called to be His children do their best to please Him. Everyone who does that will be a winner, and all will get the kind of prize Jesus has planned for them.

CONCLUSION

We are in a race! It's not a foot race, but the race of life and Jesus is our finish line. Everyday, we must make up our mind to keep running the race and never give up. We are to keep pleasing Jesus and doing what is right and good. There is a prize at the end of this race, and it is not just for one person but for everyone who stays in the race and makes it to the finish!

PRAYER

Dear God, we want to please you everyday in the things we do and say. Help us to run the race of life and to do our best along the way, in Jesus' name. Amen.

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week's lesson is "Pray About Everything." Rather than worry, we can take every problem to God in prayer and be thankful that He always knows what to do. Study Philippians 4:2-14.

LESSON SUMMARIZED BY

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Jesus Is All Ministries

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The Pulpit Commentary, Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Hrsg.), Bellingham, WA : Logos Research Systems, Inc.

The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary, by Nelson Books.

Holman Bible Dictionary, Holman Bible Publishers

WORD SEARCH

"Look Ahead" (Philippians 3:7-16)

Find each of the following keywords from the lesson:

WELL DONE

RIGHT

FINISH LINE

RUN

PRIZE

AHEAD

PRESS

PHILIPPI

JESUS

PAUL

FAITH

GOOD

LOOK

RACE

BELIEVE

PLEASING

N N P A R O E P L S F R S S L I P E R E E H I
U P I H E S N S L G A T L D I W L E N C N E C
R H U A I S L U I L A S R I L S I D O I R N N
O I G H E I L S E R I S H E E V E I L E B I R
S L P E I J K E P C I D P R E S S N L E H L I
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D I P A F U E O R I G H T I U O U P I A L N E
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R E U L H L I R L N G I E D L R A E C G P F G
A K N H I I G T L L P L O R S E I S A A P O S
A S P U I S O N H L I U I T L P S Z S V I E I
E N O D L L E W E D P D E P N C E I E E P U L
A L N N A P A U L I P I Z E I A A I D O O G S
G P L O O H E J D E P A S P E R I I E E P I E

SOLUTION TO WORD SEARCH

"Look Ahead" (Philippians 3:7-16)

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R H A U N
I H S E V E I L E B I
L E K E P R E S S L
I A O J H
P D O E G S
P L C N I
I F R I G H T I A N
A P S R I
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