

## Pressing Toward 'The Mark'

Written by Mac Hammond

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

**(Phil. 3:12-14)** In many respects, the concept of the mark is the most important of all in Paul's statement about "pressing toward the mark of the high calling."

Notice that Paul didn't say, "I press toward the prize." Nor did he say he was pressing toward the high calling. No, it is the mark that he has his sights set on, but why?

The mark, as Paul describes it here, is an intermediate goal or objective. If you'll focus on it and move toward it, it will keep you on course.

That's what Paul is talking about here. You may not yet know what your high calling is. The dream God has placed in your heart may not be well defined enough for you to know what to do next. But, praise God, His Word has given us a mark to press toward. Head for that mark and ultimately God's dream or high calling for you will come into view.

### Servanthood

There is one interesting thing about this mark. It is the same for all of us no matter how widely our individual callings may vary. It is a universal signpost that will put all who follow it on the pathway of the winner. What is this mark that we must press toward?

In a word, it is *servanthood*.

Jesus, the ultimate winner, established that with His words and with His example. Remember when the disciples were arguing about who among them was the greatest? Jesus told them that the greatest among them was he who would be the servant of all. He later demonstrated that principle by washing their feet.

Service is the key to becoming a winner. It's the mark by which we should measure every decision, every action and every thought.

The problem is, many of us have a negative stereotypical image of what a servant is. We equate servanthood with slavery and forced servitude. We think the role of the servant is a degrading one. That's certainly not something we equate with winning.

If you're going to win the prize of true Zoe life, the God-kind of life, you're going to have to change the way you think about servanthood. You're going to have to realize that it is the way of the winner.

When you begin serving with your money (in other words, giving), you'll soon find yourself winning in the area of finances. Start serving in the area of relationships (loving), and you'll soon reap a winning harvest of love in your own life.

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The same principle applies to any and every area of your existence. The more you press toward the mark of service, the more you'll find yourself moving into God's marvelous Zoe life.

Why is that? It's because servanthood releases the very power of God in your life. In fact, pressing toward the mark of servanthood can turn even the bleakest of situations around 180 degrees.

Job proved that. He had big problems. No matter how desperate your circumstances, you're probably not as bad off as he was. Satan had done his worst in Job's life.

### **Focusing Outward Is Key**

If you'll read the book of Job, you see that for some 41 chapters, Job tried to get God to heal him. He was completely focused on his own need the entire time. He clearly loved God and God clearly loved him. Yet he could not seem to figure out how to get God's divine provision and power operating on his behalf.

Then in Chapter 42, Job finally turned his focus outward. He prayed for his friends, he began to serve the needs of others rather than focusing on his own needs and the power of God was immediately released in his circumstance. Not only was he healed, he ended up twice as wealthy as he had previously been.

In your life, just as in Job's, the power of God will be released when you orient your life toward the mark of service to others. It will heal you, restore you and provide for your every need.

In fact, as you press toward the mark of servanthood, the power of God will open doors of opportunity you never dreamed existed. He'll exalt you and give you visibility and influence in your community.

He'll keep on propelling you toward your dream until one day you'll look around and find that you've arrived at the high calling of God for your life. The place of fulfillment. The place of meaning and purpose. The place of blessing.

### **Serving: The Way Of The Winner**

You serve in the truest sense of the word when you make yourself available to the Holy Spirit to minister the saving Word to sinners and the cleansing Word to saints. In this type of service lies great joy. Nothing is more gratifying than seeing someone restored to health because you spoke a word of healing. Or watching someone conquer a mountain of debt and lack as you remind them that God is the all-sufficient one.

It is God's perfect will that you serve others. When you do, you can be sure you're moving toward the mark that will bring you God's highest and best.

That's the way of the winner. Choose that way and the glorious prize of the high calling will be yours. You have God's Word on it.

Source: *The Way of The Winner* by Mac Hammond

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