

FORGETTING THE THINGS THAT ARE BEHIND



BY: PASTOR ISAAC T. ADEOLA

FORGETTING THE THINGS THAT ARE BEHIND

By

Pastor Isaac T. Adeola

Presented by

Victorious Army Revival Movement Church
No. 24 Olaoluwa Street, Araromi,
Akesan, Lagos, Nigeria

July 2025

INTRODUCTION

Most of human endeavours could be likened to a race, the same way Paul likened practising Christianity to a Grecian race.

In a Grecian race, there is a starting point which comprises several competitors. Some may be renowned, some well-known, while others may be completely unknown. There is a common goal of winning a single prize. This is quite unlike the modern style where you have the gold, silver, and bronze medals.

Now, between the start point and the finish line, there are several hurdles. There are distractions from other competitors, jeering or booing from the crowd, and possible stumbling blocks on the undemarcated tracks. Apostle Paul stated categorically that his one surviving strategy is to forget those things that are behind as the race progresses—distractions from crowds, cheering when he is leading, booing when he is lagging behind, fellow athletes crossing his path, natural hurdles on the track, etc.—because all of them are capable of hindering him from winning the prize.

Bible Text: Philippians 3:12–15

“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

STUDY OUTLINE

1. Little Foxes, Great Hindrances
 2. The Power of Focus
 3. Diligence in Running Profitably
-

1. LITTLE FOXES, GREAT HINDRANCES

Scriptures: Philippians 3:3–7, 12–13; Romans 12:1–3

Here we sit at the feet of the greatest apostle of all time to learn the secret of his success in life and ministry.

Paul pointed out in our passage that the only “one thing” he does is to forget his past.

As a very successful missionary and evangelist, he never considered himself to have arrived at any point in the timeline of his relationship with God.

In Christianity, no man is the standard of achievement—only Jesus.

That was why he said:

“Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect...”

Complacency often leads to self-conceit that degenerates into pride.

We are to watch out if the present level of our spiritual life, relationship with God, service for Him, prayer life, and obedience to His commandments—both general and personal—are truly what He wants them to be.

Q: How can we know whether we have arrived at the level God intends for us?

Q: What other little things can distract us from running a smooth race?

Apart from being ignorant that God’s purity, purpose, and excellence are far above where we are, there are other “little foxes” that can hinder our journey.

Among them is holding on to past negative experiences.

There are questions we may never get answers to in this life—questions like:

“Why me?”

“God, where are You?”

Or others asking: “Where is your God?”

But these experiences do not invalidate the promises of God. They are as sure as His throne.

“God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? Or

hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?” — Numbers 23:19

Since multiple athletes compete in a race, there will be deliberate or accidental offences—crossing our path, pushing us aside, causing offence or bitterness.

Refusing to “forget” these offences can be very costly to our spiritual journey.

Q: How can offence from others deprive us of running a successful Christian race?

2. THE POWER OF FOCUS

Scriptures: Philippians 3:12–13; 2 Timothy 2:3–5; Hebrews 12:2–4

Focus is simply the concentration of attention and energy on something.

It is vital in the execution of anything meaningful in life.

An athlete who lacks focus cannot go far—before or during a race. Coaches and athletes alike know you do not stop accelerating until after you’ve crossed the finishing line.

God designed the human eye to look in one direction. You cannot look up with one eye and down with the other at the same time. There is no alternative to holiness, and no vacation from the Christian life.

No matter how unpopular righteousness becomes in this consistently corrupt world, God’s standard remains unchanged.

That is why Paul admonished us to:

“Look unto Jesus...”

And reminded us that we have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

Q: How can we demonstrate focus in our Christian life?

3. DILIGENCE IN RUNNING PROFITABLY

Scriptures: Philippians 3:13–14; 2 Peter 1:5–9

Participation in a race is not the most important thing—winning is.

Paul said he stretched himself forward (reaching forth).

There is a serious need for diligence and consistency in running our Christian race. We are not at any point to relax until our journey is complete.

In the historic world heavyweight championship bout between Muhammad Ali and his former friend Joe Frazier, 14 rounds of intense fighting had passed.

There was no clear winner. Both men were dehydrated and exhausted. The crowd was on edge. Time kept ticking.

Frazier had a left swollen eye, barely able to see. Due to this, and past injuries, his trainer decided to throw in the towel. Frazier protested. After some persuasion, he conceded. As the bell rang for the final (15th) round, his trainer threw in the towel, indicating surrender.

Almost at that very moment, Muhammad Ali slumped in his corner.

Frazier's greatest regret was that he should have taken just one more punch in that 15th round.

That could have changed the course of history.

Ali, who later said it was the closest he ever came to dying, told his biographer:

“If Frazier hadn’t quit just before the last round, I didn’t think I could fight anymore!”

Don’t give up. Keep fighting.

Q: How can we express diligence in our Christian living?


Q: Apart from heaven, what are the things a non-diligent Christian may lose?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pastor Isaac T. Adeola is a minister of the gospel with a passion for revival and sound doctrine.

He serves as the Lead Pastor of Victorious Army Revival Movement, Lagos.

To invite or contact Pastor Isaac:

 +234 816 928 2908 | 