

Use the following thoughts and questions to have a spiritual conversation as a family. Don't emphasize having the right answer, but focus on spending time discussing the Word as a family.

Scripture

Philippians 3:7-21

Session Summary

Paul had taken the gospel throughout the Roman empire and was writing from prison, but he wasn't complacent or coasting to the finish line. Too often, we can have the attitude that we have "arrived," but Paul taught that we never arrive in this life. Rather, we make every effort to live for Jesus as much as we can now, trusting that because Jesus has "taken hold of" us (Phil. 3:12), we will reach the heavenly prize of resurrection. One way that we can fight an attitude of complacency is to stop comparing ourselves to others. It can be easy to look at where you are compared to someone else and think you are doing great, but we must keep our eyes on Jesus. In a 5K or marathon, most runners aren't competing against each other, but against their personal best. Their focus is on their own time, not someone else's. This is how we should be spiritually. We should run the best race we can, focusing on our own progress and the hope of the finish line—not how we are doing compared to someone else.

Paul said to forget what is behind and reach forward to what is ahead (Phil. 3:13). We often spend too much time looking in the rearview mirror of life. Crippled by the guilt and shame of the past or impressed by our past successes, we can get off course in the present. Past successes will not secure future victories, and past failures do not define your future. Keep pressing ahead and living for Jesus one day at a time, with the finish line in mind. Our Savior is coming with rescue and reward. He will transform our bodies from death to life and trade our shame for glory. This hope, this heavenly prize, makes the cost of following Jesus worth everything.

- How can we overcome the attitude that we have "arrived" spiritually?
- Why do we struggle with the tendency to compare ourselves to others?
- How can we move beyond our failures and keep them from defining our future?
- What are some goals you have and how can we help you accomplish them?

Paul described the Christian life in terms of a race. We should run with our eyes on the prize. Offer each family member a great prize you know they will want if they handle all of their responsibilities this week. At the end of the week, discuss how the hope of a reward motivates us to do things that may not be easy or pleasant, but are important.