

What is “That?”

Phil. 3:12 – Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

Like Paul, every one of us has a “that,” or something that Christ has chosen us to do. Also like Paul, we must press on to apprehend it. Generally speaking, it consists of three steps:

- To know it
- To prepare for it
- To accomplish it

A. To Know it

There are many of us that don't know what our “that” is. If you are committed to knowing what it is, God will reveal it to you. There are two things to remember:

1. It is often hidden in our daily routine
2. We must be faithful with what God puts in our hands now.

How can we know that it is hidden in our daily routine? Because Jesus told a parable that shows us.

In Mark 4: 13-25 we are told of a sower that planted seed. This seed was the word of His Kingdom, sown in the hearts of people. This gives us a clue that what God begins, He begins as seed in our hearts (v. 26-29). God works in us to will and to do of His good pleasure (Phil. 2: 13). So His will and plan begins in the hidden soil of our hearts and our daily lives (Mark 4:28; John 12:24).

B. To Prepare for it

We must be faithful with what God has given us right now. We have various duties and responsibilities in our daily lives and God watches to see how we handle these things (Luke 16:10-11). As we behave ourselves wisely and put Him first, more of God's plan for us is revealed.

Also, our "that" will take time to accomplish.

Mark 4:20 and 4:28 show us that it happens in stages.

v. 20..."hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundredfold."

V. 28..."first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head."

The time period is not something we control. However, we do have responsibilities that we do control.

- Hear the word and receive it (v.20)
- Protect it from Satan stealing it (v. 15)
- Avoid being offended and stumbling (v. 17)
- Avoid being caught up with the everyday cares of life (v. 19)

Once we have prepared ourselves, God will bring the seed forth into visibility. This is when He begins to open doors, send people, and direct our steps.

C. To Accomplish it

The vision should be written down (Hab. 2:2-3). Once written it should be in a prominent or conspicuous place where it is a constant reminder.

This idea of running with it could carry two different meanings, that of a *billboard* or a *telegram*.

A *billboard* is something so clear and plain that someone running by or driving by can read it and understand its meaning. The *telegram* is a message given to someone that is sent to deliver it. The message is so plain that the messenger can recite it by heart once he reads it and tell it to others.

Either way, our vision should be clear to us and others, and we should be able to recite it, much like an “elevator pitch.”

But it’s not enough just to have a purpose. We must have a process as well. There should be steps to accomplish it and a timeline to keep us focused. Of course, God reserves the right to change the timeline but we should still have one. Without one we tend to experience “vision drift.” This is when the cares of this life choke the vision and send it to the back burner, where it stays as other things occupy our time and focus.

Luke 14:28-30 - Here Jesus tells us to count the cost when we intend to build. How many of us have lives and visions like a building that’s only partially finished and left in this condition for years?

Many of us are stuck without an intentional process to move us into “that.” We should be constantly changing, growing, becoming, and accomplishing.

The parables of the talents and the ten virgins remind us that there will always be some among us that don’t get it, that don’t participate, and that are content as they are. Don’t be that guy! We will all be judged for what we have done with the gifts and talents God has given us.

What’s true for our individual lives is also true for our corporate life as a church congregation. The church should have a clearly defined purpose, plan, and process to accomplish it. And when we are truly joined to this purpose, when we make God’s vision happen, He makes ours happen.

