

Characteristics of a Victorious Christian Life

By Ron DeGarde

sermonaudio.com

Bible Text: Philippians 3:13-14
Preached on: Sunday, January 3, 2010

Bible Baptist Church
2724 Margaret Wallace Rd.
Matthews, NC 28105

Website: www.biblebaptistministries.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/biblebaptist

Is Jesus precious to you? We need him every day.

Philippians chapter three this morning. We will read a passage of Scripture and then I will pray and ask the Lord to bless our time together as we look at, really, an important passage of Scripture.

As we begin this new year it seems like my thoughts are centered around this passage every January first. And I think about this passage and the context and what it means to me as a Christian, as a believer and a child of God and how God wants me to live to the new year.

Would you look at Philippians chapter three? Would you begin reading at verse 13 and read verse 13 and 14?

Paul said this.

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.¹

Father, thank you for this passage. Lord, I pray that you would help us to live life this next year the way that you want us to. Lord, would you speak to every heart this morning. Thank you in advance for what you will do this morning. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen.

Before we dive into the message this morning, I would like to encourage every one of you to come back tonight. If God had full control of your time, where do you think he would want you to be tonight? He would probably would want you to be in his house worshipping him. Tonight we have a very special evening planned for you. I am going to share a DVD tonight that is 14 minutes long of my trip to Cameroon, Africa. Mark Herbster was one of the preachers that was with me in Africa. He was actually here last

¹ Philippians 3:13-14.

night staying in our prophet's chamber as he was on his way to the Lyle's to minister up there. And I popped in the DVD and he just sat there and he just wept and he cried as the things the Lord had done over in Cameroon, Africa and really 14 minutes won't do it justice. So I encourage you to come and see some life changing video and footage that will really be a blessing to you. I cannot even stress to you how much the Lord has done during that time.

I will be preaching a very special message tonight entitled "Characteristics of a Conqueror," from the life of David and how he had victory over Goliath a champion of sin. And giants still roam this land and they are the giants of fear and of anger and of discouragement and of many different sins. And you can have victory as we look at characteristics of a conqueror. Make sure you make your plans to be back here tonight.

America loves the stories that are centered on the theme of rags to riches. We love the stories of someone who pressed against incredible odds and in the face of despair and destruction prevailed against all odds and won the day. We love the stories of Eric [?] who is blind and who climbed Mount Everest and surmounted the greatest obstacle on the face of this planet. People love to read biographies of great people, hoping that they will discover the secret that made them great. And the *New York Times* best selling list is chock full of books basically around those ideas.

Several years ago a man by the name of Collins wrote a business book entitled *From Good to Great*. He took companies that were mediocre at best, that were good and how they became great corporations and how they made millions upon millions of dollars and he has separated characteristics that transformed these companies lives and really that can transform your company and it was a *New York Times* best seller. People flocked to the book. We love success stories. We want to find those simple truths that will allow us to prevail and to have success.

Really in Philippians chapter three we are reading Paul's biography of success. In Philippians chapter three verses one through 11 we see Paul's past. In verse 12 to 16 we see his present. In verse 17 to 21 we see his future. In verses one to 11 as he centers around his past, we meet Paul the accountant as he discovers rich new values, as he has come to know who Jesus Christ is. In verses 12 through 16 we see Paul the athlete and we see his spiritual vigor as he is pressing toward the finish line and the great race called life. In verses 17 to 21 we see Paul the alien as he has his citizenship in heaven.

In this passage and I want to center around Paul the athlete in Philippians chapter three verse 12, really to 16, verse 13 and 14 I want to center on. Paul is telling us not how to be saved. In the Greek games you had to be a citizen in order to run in those races. He is not telling us how to be saved. He is telling us how to live the Christian life. And notice, in verse 13 he said... he uses the word "brethren." He uses that to capture their attention and it says, "Brethren, listen to me," in verse 13.

"I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do."²

² Philippians 3:13.

You know what I am a brass tacks kind of guy. I love the bottom line. Don't take 15 minutes to tell me the bottom line. Just come out and start there. And don't beat around the bush. And, really, that is exactly what Paul is doing. At the end of this book he is saying, "Listen, Christian. You can have the victorious life."

Bible Baptist Church, don't just live an apathetic Christian life and just exist. God wants you to live the abundant life and excel. And against this four characteristics of how to do that, how to run this great life or this great race that we call life.

Would not notice in verse 13 as we read that he says:

"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."³

You know that many of you know that two years ago I ran my first marathon. It is 26.2 miles and it took me four hours. To be honest, I don't know what possessed anybody to run four hours. But for some reason I found myself running this marathon, 26.2 miles and, really, as we look at the Christian life as a race, really, that marathon taught me a lot of things. And, really, I see it paralleled in this passage, the very first characteristic of someone who will make it in 2010, of someone who will carry through their resolutions that maybe you have made already this year is, number one, you need to have a frank assessment of your spiritual life. You need to have a frank assessment.

He says that:

"I count not myself to have apprehended."⁴

The word "to apprehend" is a present active infinitive. It literally means to take hold of when it is used with this certain word. It literally adds certainty to that idea and Paul is saying, "I do not reckon. I do not count myself to have apprehended."

If there is anybody that can walk in these doors and say, "You know what, gang? I made it," it was the apostle Paul. He was a Hebrew to the Hebrews. This man had all the credentials. This man touched the lives and really shook two continents for the glory of Christ. And do you know what this man said? I haven't made it. And you haven't either.

And the very fact is this morning that every single person in this room, you are not perfect, so stop pretending like you are. There is not a person in this room who is living life perfectly. All of us need to make some resolutions. All of us need to identify the areas in our life that don't please God, where we need God's mercy, his grace and his forgiveness. And do you know why God used the apostle Paul? He had a frank assessment. He looked into the mirror of God's Word, how brutal that may be. He took a

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

full gaze into the mirror of God's Word as it reflected to Paul what he was really like and he saw his own depravity. He saw his own sin.

This was the same man in Romans seven he tells us, "The bad things I don't want to do, that is what I am doing. The good things that I want to do, I am not doing them." And he says:

"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"⁵

He is totally defeated. That is the apostle Paul. He says, "Folks, I haven't made it."

And the fact is, you haven't either. In fact, Jim Collins in his book *From Good to Great*, do you know what he tells these companies? If you want to go from good to great, you have to take an honest assessment of your company. You have to be willing to look at all the thorns among the roses. And you have got to take the hard look at what needs to change, on what is not working. And really, do you know what? He is stumbling upon a biblical truth that is found here in this passage.

If there are people spiritually who could not take a loving criticism to help nurture them and nudge them in their Christian life, they will never grow. They will never grow, but do you know what our mode of operation is? As soon as someone confronts us, we point the finger back to them.

Oh yeah? Well, you are not qualified to tell me my shortcomings and my failures. Look at what you do. Look at how you respond. Look at your own consistencies.

That is why it is hardest to live for Christ among our own families because they know all your failures. And in a certain sense Paul says, "Take off the mask in 2010 and just have a frank assessment."

In James 1:25 the Bible says:

"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."⁶

When you wake up every morning do you know what you do? You go to the mirror. You want to check out the damage that has been done over night. And so you go over to the mirror and you look at yourself and many of you think, man, there is no way I am going out dressed like this.

I remember when I was a student at Bob Jones University I got up late one morning and the bell rang. We had 10 minutes to get to class. I rolled out of bed at 7:52. I had not taken a shower. I had not gotten dressed. I ran into the room across the hall. I ran in there and I was on my way to the showers if I am going to make it at class at eight

⁵ Romans 7:24.

⁶ James 1:25.

o'clock. And I took a shower, got dressed, ran all the way up to the administration building and was sitting in my seat at 7:59. And, of course, I was pouring sweat and the shower didn't do much good, but, you know, really we don't... we take a great concern and a care for how we walk out the door, do we not?

Did you do that spiritually this morning? Did you do that spiritually last year? Many times we are masters. God's people are masters at giving excuses. And really revival is when God's people stop giving reasons and we start taking responsibility.

Well, if I had a different job or it is my boss's fault or if I had a different wife, if she hadn't of said that then I wouldn't have done this.

Listen, folks. It is not your boss' fault. It is not your spouse's fault. Revival begins when we take responsibility for our own shortcoming and really when we have a frank assessment. It says, "You know what? I get angry. Do you know what? Sometimes I lose it with my kids. You know, sometimes I am undisciplined and I am not in God's Word."

Do you know it is true sometimes that I lust in my heart and it becomes to the point when whatever sin you struggle with, that you get honest with God and really have a frank assessment, because, listen. Victory will never happen until you see the need.

God tells us:

"I will pour water upon him that is thirsty."⁷

And it is about time that we get thirsty for the Spirit of God to overtake our lives. But I will tell you the Church at Sardis, he says, "You have a name that you are living and you are dead."

They had a reputation without reality. The Church of Laodicea, they thought that they were wealthy. They thought that they didn't have... they had need of nothing. But he says, "You are poor and you are miserable. You are wretched. You are naked and you are blind."

Samson after he fell with Delilah the Bible says he went out as before time. He thought he had the power of old, but it had left him. And I tell you, friend, that describes the churches in our country in America. As we travel this country we see churches where the power of God is gone and they don't even know it. You have got to have a frank assessment.

In Acts chapter 18, one of my favorite passages, we read of a man named Apollos. He was a fantastic preacher. Remember the Bible says in 1 Corinthians some were of Paul, some were of Apollos? This man, quite arguably, was the most gifted preacher that we find in the Bible. The Bible says he was mighty in the Scriptures. It is the only time even in Scripture that we find a man connected with being mighty in the Scriptures.

⁷ Isaiah 44:3.

There are several words that are only used in the Bible found here in Acts 18 describing this man Apollos. He was eloquent in his tongue. He was a passionate preacher. He was fervent. The Bible says that he overwhelmed the crowds taking the Old Testament Scriptures, showing that Jesus was the Christ. And these people were overwhelmed and they came to Christ by the hundreds. He commanded respect that of the apostle Paul.

But do you know in Acts chapter 18 there was a tent maker and his wife that was willing to take them into their home and say, "Listen. There are a few things that you don't know about. Jesus is risen. The Holy Spirit has come." And they taught him more perfectly, the Bible says, the ways of God, the way of God more perfectly.

He could have jumped back and said, "You are a tent maker. What do you know about God?"

But he walked in that tent and sat down and he soaked it up like a sponge. And that is why God used that man because he was willing, many times to have a frank assessment.

He said, "God, there is a need in my life. I need change. Oh, God, would you help me?"

You know what? That is half the battle. To say, "God, whatever you are struggling with. God I get angry. God, I lust in my heart. God, I have a problem with the media that I watch. God, I have a problem with music. I have a problem in my marriage and in my relationship with other people. God, there is a need."

That is half the battle, folks, is just taking the frank assessment.

He says, "I haven't apprehended. I haven't attained." And you haven't either. But notice we need a frank assessment. We see his dissatisfaction.

But, number two, he had a forgetful attitude. Would you look back at verse 13?

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind..."⁸

He had a forgetful attitude. We see here his direction. The word "forgetting" what it means to forget, to neglect or to disregard, to care for nothing, to be overlooked. And Paul is saying, "Listen." He is giving the imagery of a race. And he says, "We are all running this Christian race and you need to have a frank assessment and you need to be dissatisfied where you are as a runner and there needs to be growth and things put in place."

He says, "But there ought to be a forgetful attitude." He says, "Forget those things which are behind."

⁸ Philippians 3:13.

As I was running this marathon I came to the point where it was 13.1 miles, half way. There was a huge sign. Half marathoners this way. Full marathoners to the left. And there was like 90 percent of the people going off to the right and two other idiots like me going that full marathon. But I remember when I crossed that 13.1 mile marker, you know what it thought to myself? The 13 miles I had just run the last two hours, none of that matters anymore. It doesn't matter how well I did. I am the first 13 miles, how fast I had run it. I had another 13 that were set before me.

And Paul says, "Folks, if you are going to have victory in 2010 you have got to have a forgetful attitude, but number one, you have got to forget your past failures."

Over 50 times in the Scriptures the Bible calls the devil the accuser of the brethren. Do you realize that the Hebrew word "Satan" literally means accuser? And the devil wants to take you and say, "Do you really think you can have victory in your sin? Do you really think you have victory in the backbiting or the gossip or the sin of your tongue? Look at last year. Look at the things you did last year. Do you really think you will have victory? Huh. Boy, look what you did three weeks ago. Look at that past failure you had over this Christmas break. Do you really think God is going to use you in 2010?"

And, my friend, the next time the devil reminds you of your past as a blood bought believer and a Christian, you return the favor. Remind him of his future. He will spend eternity in a place called hell and be damned forever. He knows that he will lose and he wants to drag you down with him. You have to have a forgetful attitude. Forget your past failures. But notice. You have to forge the failures of others.

You are never going to have victory if you go through 2010 carrying the burden of bitterness and anger upon your back. You can't forget your past failures if they haven't been forgiven.

The Bible gives us the imagery of a race in Hebrews 12. He said:

"...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us."⁹

Maybe somebody has genuinely wronged you. They have done you dirty. And there is that burden. There is that pain and there is that hurt in your heart. It is not wrong to hurt, but it is wrong to hate. And if you don't forgive that person and forget about it, do you know what? You will never prosper. We can never really forget. Does God ever really forget your sin? He says that he will remember your sins no more. How is that? God is omniscient. He knows everything.

Do you know what he is saying? He will choose not to hold you accountable for that sin when it has been forgiven.

1 John 1:7:

⁹ Hebrews 12:1.

“...the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”¹⁰

There is not one sin that you have committed that God can't forgive, but one. Do you know that? There is one sin God will never forgive and that is rejecting Jesus Christ as your personal Savior.

But, Christian here this morning, any sin you have committed God can forgive it and you are to forget it and you ought to press on for greater things. Yes, Paul had the opportunity to save continents for the glory of Christ, but what about Africa? What about the British Isles? What about India? What about the outward regions of the Roman Empire and going to preach to the Celts, going to preach in Scotland and Ireland? There was much of the world that needed to be reached and he forgot those things which were behind and he pressed forward for greater things. Forget your past failures and the failures of others. But in another sense, you have got to forget your past victories.

And it is so easy for you to sit back and think, well, I had this victory. As a young person I went to the wilds. I went to camp. I made this decisions. Man, I had a mountain top experience that summer. This past summer I made this victory or this decision. Man, I have seen growth in this area. We look back and we think, “Man, I am doing pretty good.”

We ought to always remember what the Lord has done for us. Keep a journal. Write it down. You will forget it and it will be a wonderful blessing to your heart. The Bible says that David, he mused on the work of the Lord that he remembered what God had done, but listen. One of the most dangerous things that Bible Baptist Church can do in 2010 is coast and rely on the past victories.

Pastor Arrowwood isn't sitting in that seat anymore. Pastor Philips is not sitting in that seat anymore. Well, we had great revivals 15 years ago. I am thrilled about that, but what is God doing now? If you rest on the past, on the victories of the past, you will never press on for greater things in the future. Forget those past victories. Press on for greater things. Have the frank assessment. Be dissatisfied right now with where you are spiritually. If you are satisfied, there is a problem.

Have a forgetful attitude. It shows the direction he is going in.

No runner runs a race, a sprint or a marathon looking over his shoulder, looking behind him. Don't live life looking in the rearview mirror.

You know, a lot of the sports cars, a lot of the Ferraris, a lot of the Lamborghinis... I never driven them, I wish I could. They don't have rearview mirrors. They don't need them. All they are doing is trying to go as fast as they can and they are flying down the road. And, really, we should not live life looking in the rearview mirror. We ought to press on for greater things. Forget your past failures. Forget your past victories in a certain sense.

¹⁰ 1 John 1:7.

The Bible says in Luke 9:62:

“No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”¹¹

But notice, number three as you look at Philippians chapter three verse 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.”¹²

Here we see the fervent attempt. We see his devotion. The word there that is used there it literally has the idea to stretch out or to strain. It is a double prepositional compound verb and really it is a verb that means to stretch. And when added to two prepositions it literally has the idea of a runner that is not only looking behind him, but of a runner that is leaning forward. He is coming to that finish line and he is stretching out his hands. He is leaning his body forward and he is straining. He is giving every ounce of energy he can to cross that finish line with as much fervency, with as much energy as he can.

A runner with his steps fixed on the goal attained stretching onward and outward and his body bent forward as he enters the last and decisive stages of the race. And here we see that we have to have a fervent attempt. Living the Christian life is a two sided coin. WE need God. We cannot live the Christian life without God. We can't do it. It is impossible. We need God, but also there is another side to that coin. God is not going to do for you what you could do yourself.

Did God levitate your body this morning and put it in the shower and get it dressed and just show up at church? No, you did that for yourself. God is not going to levitate you in the morning over to the Bible, open up the Scriptures, get out the commentary, get out the resource material and put it all in your brain. It is a process. You have to ask God to help you, but it is something you have to do yourself.

Do you know what? The Christian life takes discipline. It takes exercise. It takes hard work.

People get passion about a lot of things in the day in which we live. You can go to a NASCAR arena and you could see 100,000 people gather at a track and scream at the top of their lungs for their favorite driver which is beyond all common sense to me, but and anyway, I am not a NASCAR fan, but, you know, I mean, you could... they really sit there and they cheer for their favorite driver.

You could have gone to the sugar bowl and we could go to national championship game of college football, see 100,000 people standing and screaming to the top of their lungs for their favorite team. Don't tell me people don't get passionate in the day in which we

¹¹ Luke 9:62.

¹² Ibid.

live. And they get passionate about a race car driver. They get passionate about a football team. They get passionate about a hobby. It is about time you ought to get passionate for Christ.

And Jehu said, "Come see my zeal for the Lord."

Many times we don't give God our best. We give him what is left over. Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. What is important to you? You will find time to do it.

Many times when we are not in God's Word it just shows us where our treasure is. We don't give God our best. We give what is left over.

On the mission field many years ago there was a man that he had ministered in the country where they sacrificed their children to the god of the river. And that is what they did in this pagan country. Many times the crocodiles would eat the children and they would offer their first born. One lady on a particular day, she walked up to the river front. She had twin babies. One was deathly ill, was going to die in just a few days it looked like. The other baby was the picture of perfect health. The missionary thought to himself, she shouldn't throw any in, but at least if she is going to throw one in, she should throw the baby that is going to die. It is going to die anyway, you know, at least, you know, don't throw any in, but at least she ought to throw that one in.

She was astonished that the woman walked over and picked up the baby, the picture of perfect health and walked over to the edge of the river. She drew her hands back and the missionary grabbed the woman's arm keeping her from throwing that healthy child in the river. She turned and looked at him and he says, "Ma'am, what are you doing? That child is healthy. You have a child that is sick, that is going to die. Why don't you throw that child into the river? He is going to die anyway?"

This woman ripped her hands out of the hands of that missionary. She turned in her own language. She said, "Sir, I don't know what kind of God you serve, but my god demands the best."

And, my friend, I don't know what kind of God you serve, but my God demands the best. Have you been giving God your best? Have you been giving him what is left over? There has got to be a fervent attempt. Every energy, every muscle is strained. Do you get out the commentary in the morning? Do you get out the resource tools? You dig into God's Word. You don't just read through a casual reading of the Scriptures. You dive underneath the surface. You mine out the truth of God's Word.

He says, "When you look for wisdom and knowledge you ought to look for an extra hid treasure." And you are mining that out of the Scriptures. There ought to be that fervent attempt. And I tell you. People get passionate about a lot of things and it is about time Charlotte, North Carolina will see Bible Baptist zeal for the God of heaven and the living God.

I will tell you, 2010 is a great day to live. God is alive. He is active. He is advancing his kingdom and he is doing many wonderful things. It is a great day to live, but look, lastly at verse 14.

He says:

“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”¹³

The word σκοπος (skop-os’) is used in this verse and it is the word a mark.

“I press towards the mark.”¹⁴

It is the only time it is used in the Scripture, right here in this verse. And it literally has the idea of a marker that is in the distance that the runner is focused on or a goal marker.

When he says, “I press toward the mark,” it means to put to flight, to pursue, to continue, to press forward or to run. It has the idea of an intensive labor. But here we see that you have to have a focused ambition. We see here his determination, a focused ambition.

There was a goal. There was one thing. This one thing I do. D L Moody said, “I wan to say ‘This one thing I do,’ not ‘These 40 things I dabble in.’”

We ought to do. There is a great danger in being, you know, a jack of all trades and a master of none. And Paul was saying, “Don't do that. Listen. Be singular. Be focused in your Christian life. This one thing we do. Forge those things. Reach forward to the things that are before and press toward the mark. That is Christ likeness.”

We will not reach that until we get to heaven, perfection, but we can certainly need to be on that journey right now. And he says, “This is my one focus. I am running right toward that mark.”

It is like the book of Proverbs says:

Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.
Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not
to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.¹⁵

And he is saying, “Look at the goal and follow it.”

Any pursuit that gets you off that track, it is useless. Do not follow it.

¹³ Philippians 3:14.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Proverbs 4:25-27.

Run a 26.2 marathon. You want to make sure that you follow the route. You don't want to end up running an extra 10 miles. That would be horrible. But they are focused on the finish line.

Folks, I want to challenge you in 2010. Think about this. Live life as if you were dying. This year would you do that? Right now if you had 24 hours to live and you had cancer and it was going to overtake your body in a matter of moments, what would you do in then next 24 hours? Maybe you would pick up the phone and call somebody you had a strained relationship with for years. Maybe call a wayward son, a wayward daughter. Maybe you would walk into work and give the gospel without fear and without reservation or a hesitation to the people in your workplace. Maybe there would be some wrongs that you would need to right from your past.

What would you do in the next 24 hours if you knew you were going to be slipping away to eternity? Live life as if you were dying, because you know what, friend? We all are dying and there is one event that happens to every person and it is called death. It is the great equalizer and you may have 50 years. You may have five years. You could have five minutes. Your life is a vapor. Have a focused ambition.

As we look at this passage, Paul urges us to have a frank assessment. Be honest where you are spiritually. Maybe you just need to come and say, "God I have this struggle. God, I need your help." That is half the battle.

You have a forgetful attitude, a fervent attempt and a focused ambition.

1928 the world's most successful financiers met at a Chicago hotel at the Edgewater Beach Hotel there in Chicago. Present at this meeting was the president of the largest independent steel company, was the greatest wheat speculator. Present at this meeting was the president of the New York Stock Exchange, one of the members in the president's cabinet at the time, the greatest bear on Wall Street. Present at this meeting was the head of the world's greatest monopoly and the president of the bank of international settlements. For years the world and the media exalted these particular group of men at the idea and the picture of success. Follow these men. Follow their steps and you will sure, too, to have success in your life.

But 25 years later you go back and you see what happened to these men. The president of the largest independent steel company, his name was Charles Schwab. He lived on borrowed money the last five years of his life and he died penniless. Are you listening to Chuck? It is interesting to me. He died penniless.

Arthur Cotton the greatest wheat speculator, he died abroad penniless as well.

Richard Whitney was the president of the New York Stock Exchange. They released him from Sing Sing, a prison.

The member of the president's cabinet. His name was Albert Fall. He was pardoned from prison so he could die at home 25 years later.

You look what happened to these men. The president of the bank of international sentiments, Leon Frasier, he committed suicide. The head of the world's greatest monopoly, [?] he ended his life and committed suicide as well.

All of these men they learned how to make money. Not one of them learned how to live. My friend, do you realize right there, right now in 2010 Paul has just given you the keys for success. Paul has kept the faith. He has finished his course and right now he is rejoicing in heaven and he has made it and he was successful and he is giving it to you right here.

But what are you going to do with it? Have the frank assessment, the forgetful attitude, the fervent attempt and the focused ambition. And the question I am going to ask you this morning in 2010: Will you fail or will you be a successor? Will you have victory or will you have be a victim? It is your choice this morning.