

## Friday: Press On



**Objective:** Whether we find ourselves on the mountaintop, in the valley, or in the midst of a storm, we are encouraged to press on in our faith journey of following God. God is pressing into our lives and strengthening us to fulfill his mission and his will in the world. We cannot just check out or take the exit ramp off of our faith. We press on and share God's story with the world!!

**Big Question:** What or who in your life has encouraged you to keep pressing on in your faith journey? Who might God be nudging you to encourage or join you in your faith journey?

**Theme Verse:** Philippians 3:13-14 - "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

**Main Story/Text:** Philippians 3:7-14 - Paul's longing and desire to press on through joys and suffering, until the day he meets Jesus face to face.

### **Main Points:**

- 1. Pressing on and remaining faithful requires us to see the big picture.** Jesus makes it clear that following him is not an easy path, where everything will be smooth sailing. Quite the opposite. He promises that we will experience trials, persecution, and suffering, as well as moments of experiencing God's power and glory. While we strive to allow God's kingdom to break through here and now, we need to fix our eyes on the hope of eternal life, where God will make everything new (Philippians 1:3-6, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18).
- 2. Although it can be hard, pressing on in the faith is #WorthIt.** The Apostle Paul had so much going for him from a worldly perspective. He was a religious teacher and leader of the Jewish people. But when he met Jesus, he saw that every worldly accomplishment seemed like garbage compared to having a relationship with Jesus. He knew that following Jesus would be difficult, but he knew it was all worth it. (Philippians 3:7-14)
- 3. Pressing on requires us to approach life differently.** Training for a long-distance run like a marathon is very different than running a sprint. Our faith is the same way. We need to cultivate personal habits and a community that sets us up to press on in faith for the long haul, and we need to "tune in" to our "personal trainer", the Holy Spirit, to guide us on the journey. (Galatians 5:25, Deut. 6:4-9)

### **Apply It:**

1. For sure, include something like this: Now that we've talked about mountaintop experiences, storms, and everyday life in the valley, have campers write down a version of their faith story that includes some of each of those things. Make sure to include how they saw God in each of those areas. If possible, have them read their story to someone else in the group.

**Commented [1]:** Add a direct charge to wrap up the week into a personal testimony that kids could share.

2. When have you been tempted to “throw in the towel” or “take the exit ramp” off of your faith journey? What kept you pressing on until now? What specific habits or community might you cultivate to battle those specific temptations when they come again?
3. What can you do in your life to “tune in” to your “personal trainer”, the Holy Spirit?
4. Name out loud some of the key moments in a person's life journey that might be opportunities to exit the faith? What might someone do when they reach those points to keep pressing on?