

Reaching for the goal

Notes on the Bible readings

- Paul's change of identity from a Pharisee to a follower of Christ would have been life-changing. He says that he is 'forgetting what lies behind'. This is not easy: being able to forget things is hard to do, even if it affects our attitude as we go forward. But rather than looking to the past, Paul speaks here of 'straining forward', of pressing on to reach the goal; it is clear that he knows his calling. Knowing your path and the decisions you make to stay on that path help you to know who you are in Christ and where you are headed.
- How does knowing Christ influence your identity and help give you the confidence in knowing yourself and where you are headed? The challenge for us is how we free ourselves from the past in order to 'press on towards the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus'.

If the hat fits

People often say that they are 'wearing a different hat' to indicate a particular role or job or identity. How many 'hats' (i.e. roles/identities) do you wear during, say, a typical week. What hat(s) might best represent the role of being a follower of Christ.

Questions for reflection

- ▶ What are the goals you are reaching for?
- ▶ How does it feel to see heaven as a 'goal'?
- ▶ What impact does 'knowing Christ' have on your identity?



A prayer for others

*God of one and God of all, we pray:
for those who don't know who they are, who can't understand themselves or their place in society;
for those who don't 'fit in', who are or seem to be different;
for those who don't know where they come from, their heritage or home, their family or bloodline;
for those who feel lost and isolated, confused and afraid, rudderless or homeless, strangers in a strange land;
for those who wish they were someone else, or somewhere else, in some other time and place;
In your great mercy, Lord, hear our prayers and grant surer journeys for them all. Amen.*

A prayer for all ages

*O God, help us to:
see Christ in all things,
hear Christ through all things
understand Christ from all things,
know Christ in all things. Amen.*

A personal prayer

*I am me, Lord, and I know I get things wrong.
I also know I get some things right.
I am me and I know you love me.
Help me to follow the way you would have me travel. Amen.*

Live your faith

Try to be aware of the different 'hats' you wear during your day (see If the hat fits above). At the end of each day, think about whether you have worn any hat that fits the role of being a follower of Jesus. If not, think about how you might do so the next day.