

Aiming For Heaven

Philippians 3:14-16

Introduction: Do you want to go to heaven? I hope we all agree that obtaining heaven is our most important goal in life. At the same time, we all recognize that our desire to go to heaven will not get us there. We must do the things required by the Lord to get us to heaven. We must live our lives aiming for our goal. If we ever lose sight of our goal, we could lose our hope of salvation.

I. We understand the need to set goals and objectives.

A. First, we must set a goal (Phil. 3:14).

1. Paul's goal should be our goal (Phil. 3:15-16).
2. Solomon stated our goal like this (Ecc. 12:13).
3. Jesus said, *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you"* (Matt. 6:33).
 - a. First doesn't mean later.
 - b. One man told me it would be his goal later in life. For now he wanted to enjoy life.
4. If we fail to set heaven as our goal, we will perish! *"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he"* (Prov. 29:18).

B. Our goal should be subdivided into objectives. Objectives are like mini-goals that we strive to accomplish in order to obtain our goal. In order for me to obtain heaven as my goal, I must accomplish many other things in my life. For example:

1. I must be baptized (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16).
2. I must have a will to do His will (Jn. 7:17).
3. I must be faithful to the Lord (Heb. 3:12-14).
4. I must use my time wisely (Eph. 5:15-17).
5. I must deny myself (Matt. 16:24-27).

II. In order to accomplish our goals and objectives, we must plan ahead. In other words, we must aim to accomplish our goals and objectives.

A. Hopefully, every step of the way, we will allow the Lord to direct our plans (Prov. 16:9).

B. Jesus warns us that a lack of planning will cause us to lose our souls (Luke 14:25-33).

1. If heaven is our goal, nothing else will precede that goal. Not family and not ourselves!

2. Like a contractor, if you aren't serious about completing the building, you shouldn't have tried.
3. A lack of planning is like aiming at a target with our eyes closed.

III. How is our aim?

A. In order to hit the target, we must aim at it! [Draw "HEAVEN" target on the board.]

B. If this is our target, where would you aim to hit this target? Would you aim at the center of the word heaven or would you aim for the edge? Aiming for the edge sounds ridiculous! [Explain aiming for the center verses the edge using my shot group and Dad's shot group.]

1. Are we aiming for heaven if we haven't been baptized?
2. Are we aiming for the edge or the center when we miss services?
3. Are we aiming for the center or edge as we raise our children?
4. Are we aiming for the edge or the center by our conduct?
5. Are we aiming for the center or the edge by how we treat our spouse, family, friends and acquaintances?

C. Paul said, "*Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth*" (Col. 3:2). In other words, always aim for the center!

D. Aim as though you are in a competition (1 Cor. 9:24). Your goal is to win (Heb. 12:1-2)!

Conclusion: I've asked to sing #39, "Is Thy Heart Right with God?" as the invitation song. That song is fitting because it is in essence asking are we aiming for heaven. If you haven't become a Christian though you want to go to heaven, you are in essence aiming with your eyes closed. You must see your target; you must be baptized for the remission of your sins, if you are even going to have a chance of hitting the target. Or if you are aiming for the edges, perhaps you need to ask forgiveness of the misdeeds you have committed.