

Focus

Story: Why do people quit? They get tired, get frustrated, things become too difficult, they don't feel valued, they feel disrespected, they get overwhelmed, they have unmet expectations ("this is not what I signed up for"). Some might have been over committed when they signed up, others might have never been committed from the very beginning.

In all these examples people lose focus of their goal or they never had a focus to begin with. By nature, we look for the path of least resistance. Quitters ultimately get distracted. Something else comes along that is worthier of their attention. People quit their team, they quit their job, they quit their marriage, life is full of quitters.

All through life we fight the feeling of wanting to quit. Sport seasons are long, seasons of life are even longer. Whatever your goals may be, remember that being focused on that end must be greater than any temporary pain or you will be in jeopardy of quitting.

Questions to consider:

How do you stay focused?

What type of conflicts (external or internal) have you experienced individually or as a team?

Was the conflict addressed or avoided? What was the end result?

Do you naturally ask the question, "Why is this happening to me?" or "What can I learn from this and how can I make the situation better?"

Context: The Philippians were currently facing adversity, both externally (Philippians 1:27-30) and internally (Philippians 3:2). Paul wanted to make sure the adversity pulled them together rather than drive them apart. Paul realized that he himself had not arrived. He had to press on and avoid the outside distractions. It was his responsibility to pursue the "prize" a greater knowledge of Christ, intimacy with Christ, conformity to Christ, and personal holiness.

Scripture: Philippians 3:12-16

1. What was Paul's ultimate goal?
2. Why was it so important for Paul to press on?
3. What kind of attitude and effort do you sense Paul had towards his mission?

A Key Verse: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."
– 2 Timothy 4:7

Anchor to remember:

- Keep the end in mind.
- Stay focused on and endure to the end.
- Consider a focus that is greater than yourself.