

**CLOSING THE GAP BETWEEN WHERE WE ARE AT
AND WHAT GOD IS CALLING US TO BE**

(Rhema Family Church – 19/11/2000 – EKB)

Reading: *Phil 3:14*

“I press towards the goal, for the prize, of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Mat 25:21,23 – His approval is our prize.

“Well done good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of the Lord.”

1. **The actual** is where we are at now and **the ideal** is what God is calling us to be.
2. **The actual is very important.** Thank and praise the Lord for all He has brought you through, for all His mercy, grace, blessing, provision, faith, truth, guidance and salvation.
3. **Keep your eyes on the ideal.**
Rom 8:29 “.....to be conformed to the image of His Son.....”
1Jn 2:6 “He who says He abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”
1Jn 3:3 “Everyone who has this hope, (of seeing the Lord when He comes), purifies himself just as He is pure.”
Jn 14:12 “He who believes in Me, the works that I do will he do also.”
Eph 3:19 “.....filled with all the fulness of God.”
Eph 4:13 “.....the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”
4. **God is constantly closing the gap as we “follow hard after Him,”** *Ps 63:8*.
 Verse 1 says, “Early will I seek You, my soul thirsts for You, my flesh longs for You, in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.”
5. **Keep busy in the actual.**
Phil 3:16 says, **“to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same...”**. Keep busy in prayer, in God’s Word, in your family, church, among your neighbours and in the community. Form friendships, make contacts, visit the prison, the hospital, spend time with needy people taking every opportunity to sow the Word and speak of Jesus.
6. **God will show you the next step to close the gap,** *2Cor 3:18*.
When we believe in Christ, *Ac 16:31*, **receive Him,** *Jn 1:12*, **put on Christ in baptism,** *Gal 3:27*, **our eyes are opened,** *Mat 13:16*, **and the veil is removed,** *2Cor 3:14*. He is now **in us** and we are **in Him**. As we **look into the mirror if His Word,** *2Cor 3:18*, *Jam 1:22,23*, **we behold His glory,** goodness, salvation, truth and mercy. Then by faith confession **we are transformed into the same image, by the Spirit of the Lord,** *2Cor 3:18*. Jesus said, “If you continue in my Word, you are truly My disciples and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free,” *Jn 8:31,32*. The gap is being closed.
“In Him.” By baptism, we are declaring our place in His death, *Rom 6:3*, in His burial, *Rom 6:4*, and in His resurrection to newness of life, *Rom 6:4,5*. The old nature of sin has been put to death with Christ and we are now free, *Rom 6:1-14*. It is not possible for me to fly like a bird but if I get into a 747 and it takes off, then I am flying. **Because I am in Him,** what He has done, what He is doing, and what He is, is mine too, *1Jn 4:17*.
7. **The next step in closing the gap may be overcoming some remaining hindrance of the old nature** such as anger, fear, pride, inferiority, seeking man’s praise, unbelief, pornography, lying, concern of what man thinks, stealing, cursing, lust and so on. These and many more are removed/overcome by knowing, believing, confessing, *Jn 8:31-36*, *Rom 6:6,11*, *Ezk 36:25-27*, *Col 3:5-11*. If demonic spirits are present reinforcing the sinful habit of the old nature of sin, they will flee from you, as you confess the sin bondage, renounce it in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and resist the demonic influence by the Blood of Jesus. *Heb 2:14*, *Jam 4:7*, *Col 2:15*, *Lk 10:19*.
8. **It may be freedom from some attitude of judgment towards another person,** who may have offended you, hurt you, let you down, been unkind or rude and you are still holding on to that. The judgment or unforgiveness will hold you back. When we hold someone in judgment or unforgiveness, God holds us in exactly the same judgment, *Mat 7:1,2*, *Rom 2:1,2*, *Jam 4:11,12*. God forgives as we forgive others, *Lk 11:4*, *Mk 11:25,26*, *Mat 6:14,15*, *Mat 18:21-35*.
 You see we all fall short in many things, *Jam 3:2*, *Ps 130:3*, *Ps 143:2*. We all need mercy and grace and the cleansing Blood of Jesus each day, *1Jn 1:7,9,10*, *Heb 4:16*. If we withhold mercy and grace from another and judge them, God withholds it from us. He says, “Tear up the IOU you are holding against your brother or sister and I will tear up the IOU I have against you. If you do not tear up the IOU you are holding against your brother or sister then I will not tear up the IOU I am holding against you”. We are only forgiven as we forgive others, *Mk 11:25,26*.
9. Lastly, the next step in closing the gap maybe to enter into a new phase of ministry and service like Pat and Rose and Gilbert and Robyn, *1Pet 4:10*, *Rom 12:4-8*, *Eph 4:11*. Find your gifts and use them. Make a full proof of your ministry, *Col 4:17*.