

Pressing On

Gaining the Prize

Philippians 3:12-16

Paul's Lifegoal

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Philippians 3:10-11

1. To know Christ – relationally (not know about him)
2. To have a relationship with the living Christ
3. In both power (dunamis) and fellowship of suffering (koinonia)

1. To Know Christ: a work in progress

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.

Philippians 3:12

- » "I have not obtained this..."
- » I still have resistance
- » I have spiritual blocks
- » Encouragement for us who also experience resistance

Motivation for Paul's Pursuit

- » Christ has apprehended him
- » "Christ Jesus has made me his own"
- » He has been claimed by Christ
- » Even as he has claimed us

- » This speaks to the positive motivational energy that we are accepted by God
- » We belong to God
- » We are not running to make the team; we are already on the team
- » I belong to this race

2. Run with Determination & Focus

Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,

I press on towards the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:13-14

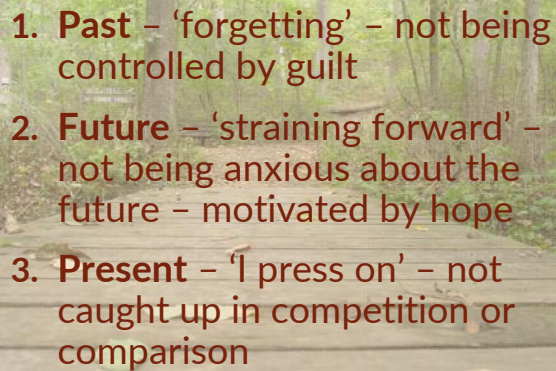
- » Repeated language of 'pressing on' (v12,14)
- » Language of the race/ the runner
- » Keep running the race

- » "this one thing I do" (v13)
- » Speaks of focus, awareness, not giving in to distraction
- » "to will one thing" (Kierkegaard)
- » Pursuing the goal with determination

Three Tenses of Life

"Forgetting what lies behind (past) and straining forward to what lies ahead (future), I press on (present)"

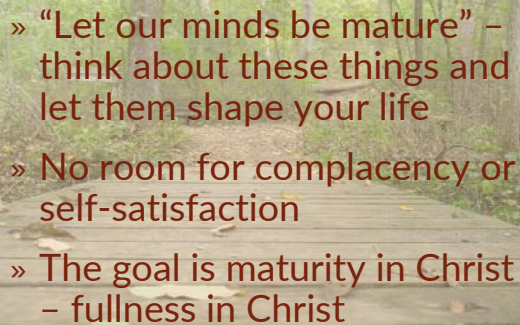
Earl Palmer

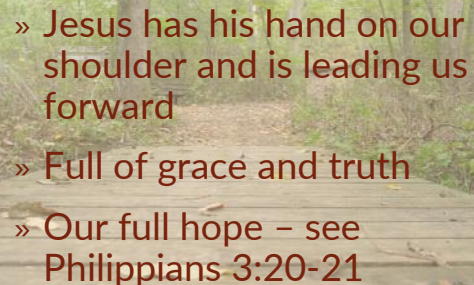
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1. **Past** – ‘forgetting’ – not being controlled by guilt
 2. **Future** – ‘straining forward’ – not being anxious about the future – motivated by hope
 3. **Present** – ‘I press on’ – not caught up in competition or comparison

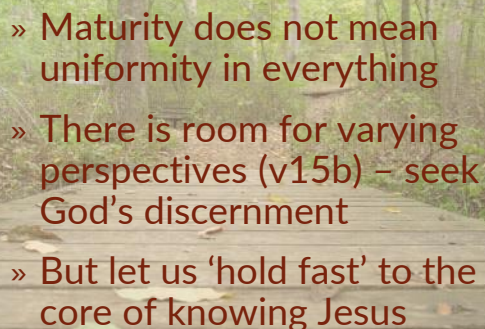
3. Towards Maturity

Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you. Only let us hold fast to what we have attained.

Philippians 3:15-16

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- » “Let our minds be mature” – think about these things and let them shape your life
 - » No room for complacency or self-satisfaction
 - » The goal is maturity in Christ – fullness in Christ

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- » Jesus has his hand on our shoulder and is leading us forward
 - » Full of grace and truth
 - » Our full hope – see Philippians 3:20-21

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- » Maturity does not mean uniformity in everything
 - » There is room for varying perspectives (v15b) – seek God’s discernment
 - » But let us ‘hold fast’ to the core of knowing Jesus