



SUPER JOY - A STUDY IN PHILIPPIANS (Week 9) - How To Leave the Past Behind

**Introduction | Norfolk Invitational | keeping
our focus | what causes us to lose our focus**

Philippians 3:12-15

12 Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect,
but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made
me his own.

**We have it, but we don't have it. We're being
shaped, but we're not fully shaped. We're**

being developed, but we're not fully developed.

We are fully accepted, but we're not fully formed. We are a work in progress. Don't dwell on what you're not. That shows we're only focused on self anyway. Dwell on Christ and you'll forget about what you're not. Think about what you will be because of Christ.

Why did Paul press on? Because he was Christ's.

Now he addresses things that can prevent us from moving forward, from pressing on, that can slow us down in our race.

13 Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own.

1. Some of you get sidetracked by examining your progress. Some of you just get discouraged because you feel like you're not far enough along. You feel like you haven't grown enough, matured enough, so you figure — "What's the point? Why continue on? I don't seem to be going anywhere. I don't seem to be moving forward."

The point is never, "How mature am I?" The point is — are you pressing on?

But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,

Think of Paul's past. He was instrumental in ruining the lives of Christians before he met Jesus on the road to Damascus. He was the reason many Christians lost their lives. Most of us don't have that weight to bear regarding our past.

2. Some of you stall because of your past. You feel like you've made these choices that have marred your life and now you will never be able to experience life in its fullness because of missed opportunities. "I nearly did this with my life, but I made another choice. I'll never get that chance again." If only, if only, if only becomes the motto of our life.

Or we sit and stew about how many years we have wasted. "If only I knew then what I know now." Our regrets are based on what might have been.

MLJ said, "To dwell on the past simply causes failure in the present."

He was merely echoing the thoughts of Jesus who said, “Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?” (Luke 12:25)

- I believe this kind of thinking ruins more marriages than anything else.

The death of hope seems so final in life, because death appears so final to us. Most of us have experienced the death of a dream or the death of hope or the death of a relationship or the death of an experience. It's the “You can never pass this way again” syndrome.

- **Ruby's Resort**

14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- **The resurrection of Christ is the beginning of God's promise to restore all things. The resurrection is the guarantee that your future is unimaginably good. Not just good — better.**
- **Pie in the sky vs. Reality in the sky**

- **Timothy Keller said, “The resurrection is proof that you will miss nothing.”**
- **Missed opportunities? The resurrection means you will miss nothing. The resurrection is about the restoration of all things. God is making all things new.**

21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

- **Do you feel like you've missed out on romantic love? That chance is not lost. In heaven you will have love beyond all that you think you've missed and it will be better than you could ever imagine and it will be that way with everything.**
- **Is there something in life that you feel like you have lost and can never get back? You will get it back in heaven.**

15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.

16 Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

You can leave the past behind when you realize that because of the resurrection you're not going to lose anything.

17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

Listen to what Paul wrote to the Corinthians.

I Corinthians 4:3-4

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me.

MLJ said concerning this verse, “As Christians we must leave our judgment to Him. He is the judge and you have no right to waste His time or your own time and energy in condemning yourself. Forget yourself, leave the judgment to Him; get on with the work.”

18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

3. Many are sidetracked by the cares of the world, worried about how much happiness they are experiencing at any given moment, which actually robs them of their happiness.

20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly

body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

There will be no room for regret in heaven. So, if you are a citizen of heaven, why do you think there is room for regret now?

If you believe that Christ was raised from the dead, if you believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, then why don't you believe in your own resurrection? Because His resurrection is the guarantee of your resurrection. And His resurrection is your guarantee that you will lose nothing.