

New Year's Sermon 2025 - Pressing On

Philippians 3:13–14

Context: In this passage, Paul evokes imagery drawn from the annual athletic competitions familiar to the Philippians in order to compare our present life in Christ to a race to be run with vigor and persistence. Paul emphasizes the importance of forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, urging believers to pursue their calling in Christ with determination and focus.

To effectively press onward...

I. _____ the guilt of the past (vs. 13)

- A. Don't spend too much time looking in the rearview mirror. A much bigger piece of glass called the windshield should have your focus because where you're going is a lot bigger than where you've been. (Tony Evans)
- B. Instead of dwelling on things lying behind him, both his discarded credentials in Judaism (vv. 4–6) and his apostolic service to Christ, Paul sets his sights ahead, toward the objective of knowing Christ fully and reflecting Christ's perfect maturity (cf. Eph 4:13). (Dennis Johnson)

II. _____ to gain the prize (vs. 14b)

- A. Vs. 13 tells us that Paul "strained" forward to obtain the prize. Pursuing God's glory takes diligence and hard work.
- B. The prize is the fullness of blessings and rewards in the age to come, most especially being in perfect fellowship with Christ forever. (ESV Study Bible)