

EQUIP

PRESSING ON TO PERFECTION

STRIVING FOR MATURITY IN THE FAITH

➤ **PHIL 3:12-16**

EQUIP

THEME

Christian Maturity Is Developed By Striving For Conformity To Christ

Phil 3:12-16

12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,

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

15 Let us therefore, as many as are aperfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you;

16 however, let us keep alive by that same standard to which we have attained.

1ST CHARACTERISTIC: THE NEED TO PRESS ON

*12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become **perfect**, but I **press on** so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.*

Acts 9:13-16

But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake."

2ND CHARACTERISTIC: HOW TO PRESS ON

*13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but **one thing** I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,*

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

G. Walter Hansen

By addressing the Philippians as his spiritual siblings, Paul “reaches out, places both hands on their shoulders, looks in their eyes, and says, ‘I really mean what I just said, I’m not perfect yet.’ ” Paul is not feigning humility. He is speaking sober reality, which is as true of every believer on earth as it is of Paul himself.

G. Walter Hansen

(He) did not keep turning over in his mind the good old days of active service before he was imprisoned; he did not constantly remind himself of all his achievements nor continually recount those special high points of his intimate relationship with Christ.... He is not distracted by the trophies of the past.... Forgetting is not a passive loss of memory; no, it is an active, continuous discipline of the mind and heart. Although he did not actually forget the past, he emphatically chose to disregard it.

3RD CHARACTERISTIC: PRESS ON FROM WHERE YOU ARE

*15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to **you**;*

*16 however, let us **keep living** by that same standard to which we have attained.*

Dennis Johnson

Paul is no postmodern relativist, timidly offering his perspective and then inviting his friends to express theirs, as though neither has a take on truth that trumps other viewpoints. He does not say, "If in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to us." Rather, "God will reveal that to you." In other words, "God will show you that your perspective is out of sync with the norm that God has revealed through me, his apostle." But Paul realizes that he and his brothers and sisters are still "in process," so we don't all grow at the same pace or in the same places in our convictions and affections and attitudes and actions.

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CONCLUSION

➤ **PRESSING ON**

What will pressing on with a persecuting type of fervor look like for you this week?

➤ **GOALPOST**

Which is currently more distracting for you, keeping your eyes off the goalpost?

Your sin or your comforts?

➤ **PRAY**

If you are willing, share a friend or family member with the group you believe needs to grow in their understanding of sanctification so that you can pray for them.