

October 8th – Pressing On

*“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14).*

Unfortunately, I know many people that are bound in shackles and chains. No, you won't find them in the local jail or state penitentiary. Their chains are not physical, rather they are mental and emotional. Too many people are imprisoned by the events of their past. Some people were victims of unspeakable abuse. Some people have experienced a life-altering tragedy. Others are imprisoned by the sins of their past. I've know more than one person who believe that God can no longer use them.

If anyone had a past it was the Apostle Paul. In his letter to the Philippians, he tells us all about his strict Jewish upbringing. In fact, he was known as a “Hebrew of Hebrews” – a zealous Pharisee who had climbed to the top of his national ladder. In his zeal, he would go from town to town persecuting Christians. We know he was present when Stephen was stoned to death because the Bible says “the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul (Paul)” (Acts 7:58).

After Jesus saved him on the road to Damascus (Acts 9), Paul's life was radically changed. He was transformed from a murderer to a missionary. Yet, Paul could have allowed his past to dictate his future. Instead, he chose to “forget those things which are behind” while “reaching forward to those things which are ahead.” As a result, he became the greatest missionary the world has ever known. *Don't sacrifice your future on the altar of the past!* What do you need to leave behind today?