

JCI #182 March 2017
Philippians 3:14 Pressing On #3

Philippians 3:10-14 ...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind and reaching forward to those things that are ahead, ***I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.***

In our third study in Philippians 3:12-14 we move from
Putting the Past in the Past and
Possessing the Person to
Pressing on for the Prize

Putting the Past in the Past Stop re-reading the last chapter of your life and get started on a new one!
Possessing the Person It's about Christ! He is not the means to what we're after; He is what we're after!
Pressing on for the Prize Keeping on the life-long race to lay hold of what Christ laid hold of us for!

Philippians 3:12-14 ***That I may know Him*** and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. ***Not that I have already attained***, or am already perfected; but ***I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.*** 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.***

The Pressing On

#1 God has a purpose for your life that is definite, life long, worthy, and all-important.

Definite Goal – “*I press on for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*”

God's call on our lives is a call to complete obedience with heartfelt love. We are running a life-long marathon to hear the “well done” as a faithful servant of our Lord. We are not wandering around; we are running for the prize. We know ***Who*** we are following, ***where*** we are headed, and ***why*** we are running!

#2 You haven't and won't achieve it until your last breath – lifelong pursuit

Humble Perspective – “*not that I have already attained*” (arrived, taken hold of)

Paul had been running the race for over 30 years as he wrote this letter from prison in Rome. He admitted that he had not yet attained the goal. If he hadn't, we haven't either! It is a life-long race. There is no retiring from the race. But there is also a note of hope-filled joy in the anticipation of finishing well.

#3 You should never let it go, let up, slow down or back off from it! Be persistent!

Persistent Passion – *I press on*

Paul was in prison, but was still running the race. There is simply no excuse, no exception, no exclusion from running hard after Christ's calling! We must never quit this holy pursuit. It takes endurance. It calls for energy, desire, effort, focused involvement. If your race is boring, pointless, or fruitless, you got off the track! Get back on with Spirit infused renewal in your heart.

#4 You have a purpose worth every ounce of difficulty involved with obtaining it!

Defined Purpose – *to lay hold of the purpose for which Christ laid hold on me*

The goal is to know Christ and to make Him known. The goal is to make more and better disciples. The goal is to follow Christ and make followers. The goal is to run hard after Christ and to make runners. The goal is to grow as disciples and go make disciples. And we have a race laid out for each one of us by Christ Himself Who has determined the distance, difficulty, and destination for His greatest glory.

In the book of Philippians Paul uses many metaphors to describe God's call to us in Christ.

It's described as a **race to be run,**
a mine to be worked,
and a light to be shined.

Work out... Shine bright... Press on

WE NOT JUST SAVED **FROM**, BUT WE ARE SAVED **FOR** !

WE ARE SAVED **FROM** WRATH Romans 5:9 And this is glorious.

BUT WE ARE SAVED **FOR** WORSHIP, WALK AND WORK

Philippians 2:12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

Paul says we are to work out what He has worked in us! The riches of His grace.

It's the concept of a gold mine. Christ has placed the ore in us – new desires, new power, new passion, new purpose in life. However, we are to mine out that treasure and bring it to the surface where it can be used to the greatest good. We do not work for our salvation... we work it out! God has already given us this salvation. We are called to see to it that every ounce of this treasured salvation is brought out and used to the fullest here and now!

Shine as lights!

Philippians 2: 14 Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

Self-Check

- 1) How has God strengthened you to keep on running the race for Him this last month?
- 2) Which of the following tends to make you stop running? Discouragement with yourself, or discouragement with others, or disappointment with life's difficulties?
- 3) Who can you share your struggles with so that you can be encouraged to get back on track in the life-long race for Christ?

For Further Study

Write out a description of how life is a marathon to be run, a mine to be worked and a light to be shined.

"Lord Jesus Christ, You have called us to run the race for Your glory, to mine the treasure of your salvation, and to shine the glory of Your grace to others. Give us the endurance, the focus, the faithfulness, the energy, the stamina, the strength, the endurance, the persistence, the concentration, the perspective and the heart we need to never let up, slow down, give up, or get off track until we hear the "well done" as the finish line of our entrance into glory. We pray in your saving, sustaining, sanctifying, and fully satisfying Name, Amen."

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.
Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4 Ron& Val

Seeing The Invisible,
embracing The Unapproachable,
declaring The Unexplainable,
changed by The Immutable,
running after The Irresistible
with inexhaustible joy
in our inexpressible sorrows,
spending our time on eternity,
owning nothing yet possessing everything
that matters and lasts.
We are Pilgrims in Paradox.
Welcome to THE JOURNEY