

Pressing On – Philippians 3:12-21.

I. That I May Lay Hold: 12-16.

Paul wrote from such spiritual maturity and humility that we might expect he believed that he had conquered all spiritual difficulties and saw himself as having arrived at near perfection. Yet he assured us this was not so.

*"Just as a little child is a perfect human being, but still is far from perfect in all his development as man, so the true child of God is also perfect in all parts, although not yet perfect in all the stages of his development in faith."
(Muller)*

Not relying on past victories or being hindered by past losses, but committing to go for the things ahead that God has for us ...there's so much more ahead.

Because Paul realized that he had not arrived, there was only one option open for him, **pressing on** (we can easily choose to stay the same or go backwards).

Paul pressed on for what Jesus wanted. His effort was put forth to do God's will, not his own. Jesus laid hold of Paul to make him a new man, to conform him into His image and to make him a witness.

Those who are really **mature** will have this **mind**. If they do not, Paul trusted that God would reveal the necessity of having it. Keep following the LORD, never give up

Luke 9:62 – *But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."*

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 – *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus, not with uncertainty. Thus I fight; not as one who punches the air. But I discipline my body and bring it under subjection, lest when I have preached to others, I myself shall become disqualified.*

II. Follow Godly Examples: 17-19

Paul knew he was a good example for others to follow. As well, Paul wasn't so proud to think that he was the *only* one who could be such an example; we have so many godly examples to follow.

With great sadness, Paul realizes that there are many who **walk** in a manner contrary to what he teaches. He regards these people as **enemies of the cross of Christ**; their lives hinder the witness of the Gospel.

1 Corinthians 11:1 - *Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.*

Hebrews 12:1 – *Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.*

III. Focus on heaven.

"Just as the Roman colonists never forgot that they belong to Rome, you must never forget that you are citizens of heaven; and your conduct must match your citizenship." (Barclay)

As citizens of heaven we are under oath to serve heavenly interests and to store up our riches in heaven.

This world is not my home, I'm just passing through, my treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue.

Hebrews 11:16 – *But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God for He has prepared a city for them.*

Matthew 6:19-21 – *Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither rust nor moth destroys, and where thieves not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*