

March 1st, 2023-Wednesday

Safe Harbor Baptist Church

“Principles for Pressing on”

Philippians 3:15-21

Introduction:

The word “Therefore” in Vs 15 directly connects us back to Vs 14 where Paul is declaring his passion and desire to press toward the mark!

The word “Press” means to run swiftly in order to catch a person or thing, to run after. To press on: figuratively of one who in a race runs swiftly to reach the goal, to pursue.

We are certainly in a race, and by the grace of God we need to finish!

Hebrews 12:1-3 *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

I Corinthians 9:24-27 *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.*

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

In these verses we note some **“Principles for Pressing on”**

End of Introduction.

I. The Exhortation we must Receive. Vs 15-17

1. We note **Christian Maturity**. Vs 15

“15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect,”

Perfect- Complete- Whole- Mature.

2 Peter 3:18 *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

Hebrews 5:12-13 *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

2. We note a **Centered Mindset**. Vs 15

“be thus minded:”

This little phrase takes us back to Vs 13-14

A. We must be **Focused**. Vs 13 *“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do,”*

B. We must **Forget**. Vs 13 *“forgetting those things which are behind,”*

C. We must go **Forward**. Vs 13-14 *“and reaching forth unto those things which are before,*

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

You will not finish the race, if you do not make up your mind to press on!

3. We note a **Convincing Manifestation**. Vs 15

“and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.”

Some no doubt disagreed with Paul’s “all out” passion for Christ. They might have thought that Paul was taking it “to far”.

They were saved, but they were not fully committed to Christ.

Paul did not waste time disputing this crowd but rather stated that if these people are saved by the grace of God, and the Spirit of God indwells them then God will convict them about submission and consecration.

John 16:7-13 7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

Don't lag behind!

I Corinthians 1:4-8 I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is no excuse for being the caboose!

4. We note a **Conduct Maintained**. Vs 16

“16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.”

Paul turns his attention to those who are “thus minded” and encourages them to keep on keeping on!

These verse also teaches that this Race has a Rule. *“let us walk by the same rule”*

This word “Rule” means a rod or straight piece of rounded wood to which any thing is fastened to keep it straight.

Our “Rule” is the Word of God. It is what keeps us in line!

5. We note a **Choice Made**. Vs 17

“17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.”

Paul is not trying to lift himself up to promote himself, nor he is bragging on himself!

Paul was to be an example to the church. The reason Paul was an example was because he followed Christ!

This following speaks of influence!

I Corinthians 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*

Ensample-Greek word “Tapor” Primary word for making an impression made by a blow.

“Some brand marks, or impressions, had already been made upon Paul, and those impressions were what others were seeing when they looked at him. Since they were “the marks of the Lord Jesus,” the apostle could say, “Brethren, be followers together of me.” Paul carried enough scars on his body to place his loyalty to Christ beyond question. Any Christian who is ashamed to bear suffering or reproach for our Lord’s sake is a poor example and one not to be followed.”- Lehman Strauss

Galatians 6:17 *From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.*

We need to be careful about following someone who has not been faithful and consistent in their service for the LORD.

Psalms 37:37-38 *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.*

38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

Another way we know that Paul was not trying to lift himself up, was because he encourages the Church to mark others that walk right.

“and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.”

If you are going to press on and finish right then you better run with the right crowd!

II. The **Enemies** we must **Recognized**. Vs 18-19

Beginning in Vs 18-19 Paul makes a parenthetical statement concerning those who would distract and deter the believer from continuing in the race.

1. Spoken Proclamation. Vs 18

“(For many walk, of whom I have told you often”

Considering the context of Philippians 3 it is commonly agreed that Paul is speaking of the Judiazers. Those who added works to grace.

These men were “walking” but they were walking in a contrary manner.

2. Somber Passion. Vs 18

“and now tell you even weeping”

No doubt Paul knew these men that were attacking him like dogs (Vs 2).

And in this verse we see the heart of the Apostle Paul as he begins to weep over these men that he once knew and served with before his conversion.

Paul wanted them to see the light and be saved, but until that occurred Paul had a responsibility to warn the Philippian church.

3. Satanic Position. Vs 18

“that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:”

Why was Paul weeping?

Because he knew that these men were enemies of the Cross of Jesus Christ.

Enemies- Hated, odious, hateful, hostile, hating.

The Cross was a place where love and forgiveness was put on display for all the world to view. But when man brings his good works to add to salvation, he just opposed and became hostile towards the finished work of Calvary.

4. *Sad Plight.* Vs 19

“Whose end is destruction,”

Paul took no joy in the ending destruction of these false teachers who were going contrary to the truth.

Because of what they believed, they were destined for hell.

5. *Selfish Pleasure.* Vs 19

“whose God is their belly,”

These people only lived for the gratifying and pleasing the flesh.

Romans 16:18 *For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*

6. *Shameful Promotion.* Vs 19

“and whose glory is in their shame,”

“The heart of man must have something in which to glory, and if a man does not know Jesus Christ so as to glory in Christ’s Cross, as did Paul, he will glory in the very things of which he should be ashamed”.- Lehman Strauss

II Thessalonians 2:11-12 *And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:*

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

7. *Sinful Priorities.* Vs 19

“who mind earthly things.)”

They only thing about the temporal, and never of the eternal.

POINT: We understand in context that these people that we have identified in Vs 18-19 are lost individual, but those that are saved can be guilty of living for the flesh, glorying in sin and keeping their mind focused on the things of the world.

Colossians 3:1-3 *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

III. The **Expectation** we must **Remember**. Vs 20-21

In contrast to the lost crowd in Vs 19 that mind earthly things. He reminds the believers who desire to finish right to keep our minds set on the eternal.

1. The **Conversation**. Vs 20

“20 For our conversation is in heaven;”

Conversation- Citizenship.

Paul reminds the believers that we do not belong to this world, but our home is in the glory world!

John 15:18-19 *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.*

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Hebrews 11:13-16 *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

2. The **Confidence**. Vs 20

“from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:”

How do we keep pressing on?

Titus 2:11-14 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,*

12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

(If time allows give the illustration about the earnest of the Spirit from Bro. Jack Tripp)

I Corinthians 1:21-22 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

Earnest- money which in purchases is given as a pledge or downpayment that the full amount will subsequently be paid.

Illustration: A man see's a car for sale and stops to enquire about the car.

He tells the owner that he is interested but he has to be somewhere and that tomorrow he will come back and complete the purchase.

If he left \$1 as earnest money that would tell the owner that he's really not serious and may not be back.

But if he left \$500 earnest money, he's got too much invested not to come back!!

Jesus is coming!!!!

3. The *Change*. Vs 21

“Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, “according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”

Not only do we have the confidence that he is coming again, but we also will enjoy the change when he comes!

I John 3:1-3 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

I Corinthians 15:51-58 *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Conclusion:

How do we press on in these last days with so much wickedness and apostasy all around us?

Just keep looking for Jesus!