

# Press On!

Sermon 15 in the Philippians Series

## Philippians 3:11-16

### REVIEW

#### A. Alien Righteousness Explained 3:9

“The law-maker became the law-keeper  
But then took our place and condemnation  
As though he were the law-breaker.” Sinclair Ferguson

1. This Righteousness is Christ’s Righteousness
2. This Righteousness does not come from law-keeping
3. This Righteousness is appropriated by Faith
4. This Righteousness comes from God

“The Gospel to Paul consists precisely in this: that we can do nothing to earn our salvation or to secure it for ourselves. God in Christ does it all.” B.B. Warfield

#### B. That I May Know Him 3:10

1. To Know Him Personally
2. Knowing His Resurrection Power
3. Knowing the Fellowship of His Sufferings

### I. Press on toward the Goal. 3:11-14

*Press on* (dioko) in v. 12 is the same word Paul used to describe his persecution of the church (3:6) *persecuting*

■ Pursue, press forward, persecute, strive to or for a purpose.

We see dioko in the idiom used in v. 14 “I press toward the goal”.

What is the goal? v. 12

We find it in v. 11

The goal is the resurrection from the dead – eternal life.

1. He has not yet attained this goal (the resurrection and perfection)
2. The goal is still before him – so he is still pressing on!

There are 3 related phrases in v. 12-13

Paul wants to “lay hold of” 12a

So he can achieve the purpose for which Christ “laid hold of him”. 12b

“I do not count myself to have laid hold” v. 13

The use of *katalambano* (to lay hold of -- acquire)

An **aoist active** –“I-may-take-hold-of” the final goal – v. 12a

An **aoist passive** – “I-was-taken-hold-of” by Christ – v. 12b

An **active infinitive** – “laid-hold-of-it” perfection/resurrection – v. 13

Salvation comes to us in 3 tenses.

I have been saved from the wrath of God.

I am being saved (sanctified) by God’s Spirit.

I will be saved from sin, self and every evil thing in the eternal state

The illustration of a runner -- pressing on to the finish line.

He’s not looking back – **v. 13**

He’s willing to forget the past – (all his human achievements that he gained by his own efforts) **v. 4-7**

From an internet article on why runners should never look back

The *only* reason a runner looks behind them is to **see if the gap is big enough that they can ease up their pace.**

We are running our own race (not a competition with others) and...there is to be “no easing up or slacking off”

The finish line is the resurrection.

**1 Corinthians 15:19** -- If we who are [abiding] in Christ have hoped only in this life [and this is all there is], then we are of all people most miserable *and* to be pitied. (Amplified Bible)

## II. The Mind of the Mature -- 3:15-16

The Ultimate goal is Perfection – which we will never attain in this life.

Paul is not yet perfect (*teteleiomai*) **v. 12**

But an attainable goal in this life – by the grace of God -- is maturity. v. 15

(*teleioi*) most likely a term used in the early church for spiritually mature Christians

<sup>12</sup>Not that I have already obtained this or **am already perfect**, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.

<sup>13</sup>Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,

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

<sup>15</sup>Let those of us **who are mature** think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. <sup>16</sup>Only let us hold true to what we have attained. (ESV)