

“Forgetting the Past”

Philippians 3:12-16

Sept. 25, 2011

1. You are not perfect –now or ever in this life.

*“Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect...” (12a)*

*“Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;” (13a)*

2. You need to press on.

*“But I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.” (12b)*

3. You need to put the past behind you.

*“...forgetting what lies behind...” (13b)*

4. You need to reach forward for the Prize.

*“I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” (14)*

5. You need to listen for and follow God’s plan for your life. (15-16)

- God reveals His unique will to those who listen.
- God reveals His general will to all of us.

**Application:**

1. Are you “stuck” in the past? Are there regrets that overwhelm you and paralyze you? What have you learned from this passage that helps you take the next step?
2. If you decide today to “press on” what changes need to be made? What new ways of living will you begin this week?

**Bible Study Questions/ Discussion**

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1. Share a time you forgot something important-an anniversary, an appointment, a name, etc. Share something in your past you would like to forget. Why?
2. According to Paul in Phil. 3:12, no one is perfect. What does John say about this? (I John 1:7-9) Do you have a “perfectionistic” tendency? Where does that come from? Is that healthy? When Paul looked at himself what was his conclusion? (Phil. 3:13) What should be our daily practice? (2 Cor. 7:1)

3. When will the Christ follower be perfect in every way? (I Cor. 13:12; I John 3:2)
4. Paul shared that he made a decision every day to “press on.” Is the Christian life hard work? (Why?) (Col. 1:29; 2 Tim. 4:7)
5. Review the two charts- “What we possess in Christ” and “What we need to Become.” Read the Scripture and ask the Lord for His help in becoming what He wants you to become.

#### **What we Possess in Christ**

- 2 Cor. 5:17 –
- Ezekiel 36:26 –
- Rom. 7:22 –
- I Cor. 2:16 –
- Rom. 8:1 –
- Rom. 8:9 –
- Acts 1:8 –
- I Peter 1:4 –
- 2 Cor. 5:21 –
- Heb. 4:16 –

#### **What We Need to Become**

- Rom. 8:29 –
  - 2 Peter 3:18 –
  - Eph. 4:16 –
  - Matt. 5:48 –
  - Col. 3:1 –
  - Acts 1:8 –
  - I Cor. 14:1 –
6. Paul says to “forget what lies behind.” (Phil. 3:13) What does this not mean? What does it mean? (Review 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 4:9; Lk. 9:62) What should we learn from Lot’s wife? (Lk. 17:32)
  7. What is the “prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus?” (3:13-14) (Compare Matt. 25:23)
  8. How can we make progress in growing to maturity in Christ?
    - I Peter 2:2 –
    - 2 Cor. 13:9 –
    - I Cor. 4:16-17 –
    - I Peter 5:10 –
    - I Peter 4:10-11 –
  9. What was on Paul’s mind as he ran the race for Jesus? (2 Tim. 4:7) Pray that the Lord will help you this week to “forget the past and press on to what lies ahead.”