

Pressing Toward the Goal (Phil. 3:12-21)

I. Striving For the Goal (12-19)

A. Focusing on the “one thing” (12-14)

1. Striving to be what you are (12-13a)

a. Paul had not yet reached perfection

i. Passive voice (“not yet been perfected)

- God does the perfecting
- Paul hasn’t yet been made perfect

ii. Paul has not yet attained the resurrection

- A perfect fellowship with Christ
- A perfect reflection of Christ
- A perfect obedience to Christ

b. Paul strives to reach that perfection

i. He pursues what he was given

- He has perfection in Christ
- Yet He pursues perfection in Christ

ii. He strives to grasp what grasped him

- He is given position of perfection
in Christ / by Christ
- He pursues a practice of perfection

iii. He honestly Assesses His Progress

- Does not consider himself to have attained
- Still pushing – not giving up

2. Striving With a Single Focus (13b-14)

a. Paul Lives a Single Minded Purpose (“one thing”) (Target)

i. He forgets Everything Behind Him

- Participle present middle – continuing process
“continually forgetting”
“He himself (middle) continually forgets”
“He fights for it (part of striving)”

ii. He reaches out for things ahead

- Participle pres. – continually reaching
“He fights for it”
Stretching out for
Trying intently to grasp something

b. Paul Lives for the Goal of God’s Call

i. He continually strives

- chasing God’s call
- Chasing after the calling
- made holy and becoming holy

II. The Characteristic of Striving (15-19)

A. A Lifestyle of Striving (15-16)

1. The Mindset of Believers (15)

a. Those born again must think this way

i. Those who are perfect – “in Christ” – position

- ii. God will discipline any other thinking
 - If you think holiness is not important
 - antinomianism / legalism
- 2. The Lifestyle of Believers (16)
 - a. Striving to be who we are
 - i. Striving to live up to the standard
 - we have already attained the standard
 - we are still striving toward the standard
 - ii. We are so we ought
- B. A Lifestyle of Discipleship (17-19)
 - 1. Follow those who follow Christ (17)
 - a. Imitate Paul in his striving
 - i. Not a super apostle with everything going on
 - ii. A servant who is chasing Christ
 - b. Observe Carefully those walking this way (18)
 - i. Chasing Christ though caught by him
 - 2. Don't Follow those Following other things
 - a. They are enemies of the cross
 - i. Legalists and antinomians
 - ii. Paul continually warned them
 - b. They follow their own way (19)
 - i. Any other master (own way) regardless of morals
 - end is destruction (where it leads)
 - their god is their belly
 - their own appetites
 - their own desires
 - their glory is their shame
 - their hope is in works
 - *all their works condemn them
 - *all their works tainted with sin
 - their hope is in grace
 - *grace changes life (Titus 2:11-12)
 - *their grace leads to more sin
 - Their minds are set on earthly things
 - want "right now" over eternity

III. The Goal of Striving (20-21)

- A. Believers strive in Expectation of the King (20)
 - 1. We are citizens of Heaven
 - a. not set on earthly things
 - b. not following another master
 - 2. We are awaiting the Savior
 - a. We seek to please him
- B. Believers Strive in Expectation of Transformation (21)
 - 1. He will transform our bodies
 - a. here we are not devoid of sin
 - b. here we must fight

2. He will make us like him
 - a. His glorious body
3. He will transform us by His power
 - a. The same power that transforms the world
 - i. new heaven and new earth
 - ii. no more sin and death