

PHILIPPIANS #7 The Joy of Pressing On

Phil. 3:8-16

I. Resurrection

- A. Every human who ever lived & died will be raised again to bodily life (Jn. 5:28-29; Heb. 9:27)
- B. Resurrection to Life or Resurrection to Shame & Contempt (Jn. 5:28-29; Dan. 12:2-3)
- C. Two Judgments
 - 1. “The Great White Throne” (Rev. 20:11-15)
 - 2. Christ’s Judgment Seat-- “We must all appear before Christ’s judgment seat” (2 Cor. 5:9-10)
- D. Christ’s Believers raised at His Coming (1 Cor. 15:20-23)
- E. Christ’s Judgment Seat, not regarding eternal salvation, but regarding rewards (crowns) (2 Cor. 5:9-10; Luke 14:13-14; 19:15-17; 2 Tim. 4:7-8; 1 Pet. 5:2-4; Rev. 2:10)

II. Paul’s Incentive to Press On (2 Cor. 5:9-10; Phil. 3:11, 13-14)

- A. Like an Athlete: “forgetting...& straining forward... I press on toward the goal for the prize” (3:13-14)
- B. Forgetting the Things Behind (3:13)
 - 1. Paul’s pedigree, past accomplishments & experiences (positive & negative)
 - 2. Our past achievements, past failures, mistakes, past hurts, injustices, etc
 - 3. “Don’t let your past failures define you...”
 - 4. The Example of Joseph (Gen. 41:51-21)
- C. Straining [stretching] forward...I press on toward the goal (3:13-14)
 - Not content (complacent), not satisfied with the past or the status quo
 - Are you Straining [stretching] forward, seeking to I press on?—
 - As a Church are we forgetting (moving beyond) what we should leave behind?
 - As a Church are we advancing, making progress? Being fruitful?

PHILIPPIANS #7 The Joy of Pressing On [Supp. Material]

Phil. 3:8-16

“...that I may gain Christ and be found in him, ...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible [if perhaps] I may attain the (out-) resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect [mature], but I press on [pursue] to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining [stretching] forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. Only let us hold true to what we have attained.” (Phil. 3:8-16)

I. Resurrection

F. Every human being who ever lived & died will be raised again to bodily life

- “An hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear [Jesus’] voice & come out, those who’ve done good to the resurrection of life, & those who’ve done evil to the resurrection of judgment.” (Jn. 5:28-29)
Note: Jesus reaffirms the resurrection on the last day. *Those who have done good...those who have done evil* does not imply that people’s deeds in this life are the basis on which judgment is pronounced (that would contradict John’s strong emphasis on belief in Jesus as the way to gain eternal life: see Jn. 3:16; 5:24-25; etc.). Instead, good works function as evidence of true faith, and if good works are lacking they show an absence of true faith. All those who truly believe will be brought “from death to life” (Jn. 5:24) and as a consequence will do good and will therefore enjoy *the resurrection of life*. ESV
- “It is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment” (Heb. 9:27) Note: Every person has but a single life before eternal *judgment*. This repudiates reincarnation & any idea that there will be a 2nd chance to believe after death, since immediately after the reference to the fact of death comes the phrase “*and after that comes judgment*,” with no hint of any intervening opportunity for change of status. The final judgment will take place when Christ comes again—he died *once* for the *sins of many*; he will appear a 2nd time in judgment, when he will *save* his followers--*those eagerly waiting for him*. ESV

G. Resurrection to Life or Resurrection to Judgment/Shame & Contempt (Jn. 5:28-29)

H. “At that time...those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, & some to shame & everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; & those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever & ever.” (Dan. 12:2-3) Note: Daniel foretold of *A time of trouble* (Dan. 12:1) unlike any other...some connect it to the “great tribulation”. Sometime after there will be a resurrection of the dead. Those who were faithful in life, *everyone whose name shall be found written in the book* (Dan. 12:1; cf. 7:10), will rise to *everlasting life* in glory. Others will rise *to shame & everlasting contempt* (12:2 cf. Jn. 5:28-29). This makes faithfulness worthwhile for the saints, even if it costs their lives (Dan. 11:33). The ultimate outcome is they’ll *shine brightly like the stars forever & ever* (Dan. 12:3). ESV

I. Two Judgments

3. “The Great White Throne” “I saw a great white throne & [God] was seated on it...I saw the dead, great & small, standing before the throne, & books were opened. Then another book was opened...the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they’d done. ...If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” (Rev. 20:11-15) Note: *Books* recording people’s deeds will be opened (Dan. 7:10), providing the grounds on which each is judged (Rom. 2:6-11). God keeps an accurate record of every human deed, & will reward & punish with perfect justice. *another book, the book of life. They were judged...according to what they’d done. Unbelievers will be condemned for their sins (cf. Rom. 3:23; Rev. 20:15). Believers, whose names are in the “book of life” will enter into “a new heaven & a new earth” (21:1) because the names in that book are of those who have been redeemed by “the Lamb who was slain” (Rev. 13:8; cf. 21:27) for their sins (1:5).* ESV

4. Christ's Judgment Seat-- "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he's done in the body, whether good or evil." (2 Cor. 5:9-10)
 - "The time came for the dead to be judged & for rewarding your servants, the prophets & saints, & those who fear your name, both small & great..." (Rev. 11:18)
- J. Christ's Believers raised at His Coming--"Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who've fallen asleep. For as by a man [Adam] came death, by a man [Christ] has come the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ." (1 Cor. 15:20-23) "All in Christ"= believers
- K. Christ's Judgment Seat, not regarding eternal salvation, but regarding rewards (crowns) 2 Cor. 5:9-10

Note: The "judgment seat" (Greek: *bēma*) was the tribunal bench in the Roman courtroom, where the governor sat while rendering judicial verdicts. *So that each one may receive what's due for what he has done...whether good or evil.* This underscores the principle that present-day actions have eternal consequences. All Christians will appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive "*what is due*" to them for the deeds that they've done in their earthly life. It is debated, however, (1) whether the aim of this judgment is to determine the measure of reward that the Christian will receive in the age to come; or (2) whether the aim is to provide demonstrative evidence regarding who is lost & who is saved. ESV

 - "When you give a feast, invite the poor, crippled, lame, blind, & you will be blessed, because they can't repay you. But you will be *repaid at the resurrection of the just* [righteous]." (Luke 14:13-14)
 - Jesus' Parable "When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered the servants he'd given the money to be called know what they'd gained. The first, said, 'Lord, your mina has made 10 minas more.' He said, 'Well done, good servant! You've been faithful...have authority over 10 cities.'" (Luke 19:15-17)
 - "I've fought the good fight, I've finished the race, I've kept the faith. Henceforth there's laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, & not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:7-8)
 - Elders "shepherd the flock of God, exercising oversight...willingly...eagerly... being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory." (1 Pet. 5:2-4)
 - "You'll have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, & I'll give you the crown of life." (Rev. 2:10)

II. Paul's Incentive to Press On

- "...we make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before Christ's judgment seat, so that each one may receive what's due for what he's done in the body..." (2 Cor. 5:9-10)
 - "...that by any means possible I may attain the (out-) resurrection from the dead." (Phil. 3:11)
 - "One thing I do: forgetting ...& straining forward... I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:13-14) Note: Paul emphasizes the need for progress in Christian living, presenting himself as one who continually reaches ahead for God's kingdom... Paul stresses he's not *already perfect*—he's still involved in the struggles of life in a fallen world & he still sins; the full glory of resurrection remains in the future. *I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.* There's a balance of faith & works, God's call & believer's response. ESV
 - Like an Athlete: *Goal* (Greek: *skopos*) could refer to the finish line in a race or an archery target. Paul's life is purposeful, for he constantly aims toward a heavenly goal. *The prize* is the fullness of blessings & rewards in the age to come, most especially being in perfect fellowship with Christ forever. ESV
- D. Forgetting the Things Behind (3:13)
 5. Paul's pedigree, past accomplishments & experiences (positive & negative)
 6. Our past achievements, past failures, mistakes, past hurts, injustices, etc
 7. "Don't let your past failures define you..."
 8. The Example of Joseph (Gen. 41:51-21) After his hardships & afflictions Joseph had 2 sons
 - Manasseh ("making to forget") 'God has made me forget all of my hardship and all my father's house.'
 - Ephraim, (fruitfulness or twice fruitful) 'For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.'
 - E. Straining [stretching] forward...I press on toward the goal (3:13-14)

- Not content (complacent), not satisfied with the past or the status quo
 - Are you Straining [stretching] forward, seeking to I press on?—in your knowledge of God’s Word, in prayer, in experiencing the Lord, in equipping yourself for service, in the gospel?
- F. As a Church are we forgetting (moving beyond) what we should leave behind? Are we advancing, making progress? Being fruitful?

Forget & be Fruitful—Joseph’s Example

“The past isn’t your past if it is still affecting your present.”

A personal past. We all have one. And sometimes they are not very glorious.

In some cases, painful pasts are consequences of our own bad choices. Self-inflicted wounds.

Often however, the heartache from the past has been caused by others. Betrayal. Unfaithfulness. Deceit. Broken trust. Slander. Needle-pointed thorns that have lodged in our hearts and festered into ugly infected wounds.

It is impossible to reach and stretch for the future when we live in the pain of the past.

Joseph’s Injustice

The book of Genesis gives us a great example of this principle. Joseph, at 17 years-of-age, was loved by his father Jacob *"more than any other of his sons, and he made him a robe of many colors"* (Gen. 37:3) His brothers *"hated him and could not speak peacefully to him."* (Gen. 37:4) They then conspired against him and *"sold him to the Ishmaelites for 20 shekels of silver"* (Gen. 37:28) who then *"sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard."* (Gen. 37:36) Potiphar’s wife then tried to seduce Joseph, and when he rejected her advances, she falsely accused him and *"his master took Joseph and put him into prison,"* (Gen. 39:20) Many years later, he interpreted a dream for Pharaoh and was released from prison and put *"over all the land of Egypt"* (Gen. 41:43) At 30 years-of-age (13 years after his brothers sold him into slavery) Joseph is given Asenath *"the daughter of Potiphera priest of On"* (Gen. 41:50) in marriage and he fathered two sons.

Joseph’s Sons

What’s interesting is the names he gives his sons. *"Joseph called the name of the firstborn **Manasseh (making to forget)** ‘For’ he said, ‘God has made me forget all of my hardship and all my father’s house.’ The name of the second he called **Ephraim, (fruitfulness)** ‘For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.’"* (Gen. 41:51-52)

Joseph determined that he would not be a prisoner of his past. All that had happened in the “prison” season of his life was neither fatal nor final.

Make a bridge over your past. Release it. Work through it. Stretch for the future & be fruitful. The Apostle Paul expresses the same conviction in Phil. 3:13-14, *"...one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."*

The beauty of a past that has been healed is expressed in Song of Solomon 2:10-12, *"My beloved speaks and says to me: ‘Arise my love, my beautiful one, and come away, for behold the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come..."*

Let go of the past. Press toward the future. It just could turn your life around.

American Association of Christian Counselors

<http://www.aacc.net/2013/07/23/forget-and-be-fruitful-3/>

PHILIPPIANS #7 The Joy of Pressing On [Script]

Phil. 3:8-16

“...that I may gain Christ and be found in him...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible [if perhaps] I may attain the (out-) resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect [mature], but I press on [pursue] to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining [stretching] forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. Only let us hold true to what we have attained.” (Phil. 3:8-16)

PIX: Resurrection John 11

III. Resurrection

- L. Every human being who ever lived & died will be raised again to bodily life
 - **“An hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear [Jesus’] voice & come out**, those who’ve done good to the resurrection of life, & those who’ve done evil to the resurrection of judgment.” (Jn. 5:28-29)
 - “It is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment” (Heb. 9:27) There’s No reincarnation (no second chance to do life over again).
- M. Resurrection to Life or Resurrection to Judgment/Shame & Contempt (Jn. 5:28-29)
- N. **“At that time...those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, & some to shame & everlasting contempt.** Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; & those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever & ever.” (Dan. 12:2-3)

PIX: Resurrection Great White Throne Mountain

PIX: Resurrection Judgment Seat Christ

O. Two Judgments

- 5. **“The Great White Throne”** “I saw a great white throne & [God] was seated on it...I saw the dead, great & small, standing before the throne, & books were opened. Then another book was opened...the Book of Life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they’d done. ...If anyone’s name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” (Rev. 20:11-15)

Is your name in the Book? In the Lamb’s Book of Life! SONG: “When the roll is called”

- 6. **Christ’s Judgment Seat**--“We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he’s done in the body, whether good or evil.” (2 Cor. 5:9-10)
 - “The time came for the dead to be judged & for rewarding your servants, the prophets & saints, & those who fear your name, both small & great...” (Rev. 11:18)

- P. **Christ's Believers raised at His Coming**--"Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who've fallen asleep. For as by a man [Adam] came death, by a man [Christ] has come the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ." (1 Cor. 15:20-23) "All who are in Adam die; All who are 'in Christ' will be made alive (resurrected)"

PIX: Resurrection When Jesus Calls your Name

PIX: Resurrection When the Roll is called up Yonder

- Q. Christ's Judgment Seat, not regarding eternal salvation, but regarding rewards (crowns) 2 Cor. 5:9-10

- Jesus' Parable "When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered the servants he'd given the money to be called know what they'd gained. The first, said, 'Lord, your mina has made 10 minas more.' He said, 'Well done, good servant! You've been faithful...have authority over 10 cities.'" (Luke 19:15-17)
- "I've fought the good fight, I've finished the race, I've kept the faith. Henceforth there's laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, & not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing." (2 Tim. 4:7-8)
- "You'll have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, & I'll give you the crown of life." (Rev. 2:10)

PIX: Phil 3 Press forward

IV. Paul's Incentive to Press On

- "if perhaps I may attain the (out-) resurrection from the dead" (Phil. 3:11) Outstanding res.
- **All college students graduate, but in what category? Honours or ordinary? With distinction? 1st class, 2nd class etc. Paul wanted to resurrect "with honours." He says "imitate me." Don't just barely make it; just scrape in; do the bare minimum**
- "...we make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before Christ's judgment seat, so that each one may receive what's due for what he's done in the body..." (2 Cor. 5:9-10)
- "One thing I do: forgetting ...& straining forward... I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:13-14)

PIX: Phil 3 Finish Race

- **Like an Athlete:** *Goal* (Greek: *skopos*) could refer to the finish line in a race or an archery target. Paul's life is purposeful, for he constantly aims toward a heavenly goal. *The prize* is the fullness of blessings & rewards in the age to come, most especially being in perfect fellowship with Christ forever. ESV

PIX: Phil 3 v13 Forget Past Rear-view Mirror

G. Forgetting the Things Behind (3:13)

9. Paul's pedigree, past accomplishments & experiences (positive & negative)
10. Our past achievements, past failures, mistakes, past hurts, injustices, etc

PIX: Phil 3 Why Bad Things Happen

PIX: Phil 3 Why does God Let Bad Things Happen?

PIX: Heather Dorniden

Video: Heather Dorniden falls but wins Race

Perhaps 'bad things' happened to you in the past. You were unjustly or unfairly treated (e.g. the boss was biased against you & favoured another person; someone cheated you in a business deal, etc.).

Some might have been abused verbally or physically. Traumatic things may have happened to you. Things that are difficult to talk about. Bad things may have happened to you, perhaps thro' no fault of your own; or perhaps thro' bad choices you made. Or mistakes you committed; things you later regret.

How can we get over those things, move beyond them? **With God's help (e.g. Joseph).**

It's hard to forget—we easily forget things we ought to remember; but it's hard to forget things that you'd like to forget! E.g. I remember getting “unjustly punished” for my brother falling into the river!

PIX: Phil 3 Your Failures Don't Define You

11. “Don't let your past failures define you...”

12. “Don't be a prisoner of your past”

13. **The Example of Joseph** (Gen. 41:51-21) After his hardships & afflictions Joseph had 2 sons
- Manasseh (“making to forget”) ‘*God has made me forget all of my hardship and all my father's house.*’

PIX: Genesis Joseph Coat

PIX: Genesis Joseph Coat Brothers

PIX: Genesis Joseph Sold

PIX: Genesis Joseph B4 Pharaoh

PIX: Genesis Jacob Blesses Ephraim & Manasseh

Joseph determined that he would **not be a prisoner of his past.** All that had happened in the “prison” season of his life was neither fatal nor final.

“God made me forget...” God can help us move beyond our past.

Did Joseph really forget? Did he absolutely erase it from his memory? No (When his brothers visited Egypt he dealt with them firmly to help them realize their unjust deeds & repent. But Joseph “forgot” in the sense that the bitterness was gone; the

desire for revenge eliminated. The “scar” was still there, but the “wound” was healed. Joseph had “moved on...” He saw God’s hand behind it all—You meant it for evil, but God used it for good.

- Ephraim, (fruitfulness or twice fruitful) *‘For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.’*

When Joseph “moved on” (got over the bitterness), he allowed God to make him fruitful. It took time. The 2 sons were not twins; maybe it was a year or 2 before the second son (fruitful) was born. Let God help you forget & be fruitful.

H. Straining [stretching] forward...I press on toward the goal (3:13-14)

PIX: Phil 3 v14 Running toward God

PIX: Phil 3 Finish Strong

- Not content (complacent), not satisfied with the past or the status quo
- Are you Straining [stretching] forward, seeking to I press on?—

PIX: Bible Read Me

PIX: Bible Read 4 All Its Worth

- in your knowledge of God’s Word

Jake “If the Bible is the same Book to me on Dec, 31 as it was Jan. 1, then something’s wrong!”

What have you learned, realized from the Bible this last year? “The Lord has yet more light & truth to break forth from His Word”

PIX: Praying Woman

- in prayer, **What prayers of yours has God answered?**
- in experiencing the Lord, **What new realizations of the Lord do you have?**
- in equipping yourself for service, **What opportunities have I availed myself of? E.g. Sisters Retreat/ Women’s Weekend?**

PIX: Women’s Retreat

PIX: Witness by Life

- in being a witness for Christ? the gospel?

PIX: Move Forward with God

- I. As a Church are we forgetting (moving beyond) what we should leave behind?
- J. Are we as a Church advancing, making progress? Being fruitful?

