



Pastor Derrick Shields “Philippians 3, Pt. 2: Lengthen Your Stride” 8/29/2021

Key Verses:

- Philippians 3:12-14, 20-22

Key Thoughts:

- The church of Philippi was in a Roman colony that was founded by Paul. The church had many Gentiles that were not well-versed in the Jewish tradition. Paul is in a Roman jail at the time of writing and Epaphroditus brought Paul aid and apparently gave him an update of what had been going on in the church.
1. *“Now that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.” – 3:12*
 - What is “all this” that he is referring to? In 3:10, he says he wants to know Christ fully and embrace the power of the resurrection. That’s “all this”.
 - Paul also says here that Christ has taken hold of him. Earlier in the chapter, Paul walks through all the things that made him somebody before he says that he counts all of that as rubbish. The difference is that he ran into Jesus and that changed his perspective. Can you mark the time when Christ took hold of you?
 - This verse is about **being on the team**.
 2. *“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,” – 3:13*
 - This verse is a matter of persevering through the fight. How is your attitude about our current situation? If we’re not careful, we’ll feel like everything is falling apart.
 - We can keep dwelling on all the bad that’s happened and that can keep us from moving forward. Paul says here that it’s vital to strain towards what is ahead.
 - When marathon runners see that the end is near, they lengthen their stride to get there. They know that the finish line is near, and their focus is sharply on getting there. They are unaffected by the things going on around them.
 - This verse is about our **attitude**.
 3. *“I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Jesus Christ” – 3:14 – (effort)*
 - Paul says here that he presses on toward the goal.
 - This verse is about our **effort**.
- This chapter ends talking about our citizenship being in heaven. If we’re going to finish the race well and run through the finish line, it’s key to remember that our citizenship is not in this world. Our ultimate goal is to know Christ and become like him.

Discussion Questions:

- Have you accepted Christ's invitation to take hold of you? If so, when was that moment?
- How has your attitude been about where we are right now? What needs to shift?



- Paul talks about pressing towards the goal. Pastor Derrick likened this to the effort that we need to put into the journey ahead of us. How does your effort need to change?