

Forget the Past. Forge your Future.

Full Package

- When it comes to things in life, we want the full package: full product, full service, full experience, and full access. No one will settle for half a product, half a service, half an experience or half an access.
- In pursuing Christ, the apostle Paul writes:

Passage Context

Phil 3:1-6 *Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you. ² Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. ³ For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh— ⁴ though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless (ESV).*

- Paul was an elite Jew. Hebrews of all Hebrews. Yet this was insufficient for Paul to fully know and experience God.

Phil 3:8-11 *⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— ¹⁰ that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead (ESV).*

- We can see his strong desire to pursue a full relationship, full experience, full access to who Christ is. It's all in or nothing.

Jer 31:34 ³⁴ *And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."* (ESV)

- Here, we see elements of intimate fellowship with God, regardless of status. Everyone who calls on the name of Jesus, can know God.

Main Passage:

Phil 3:12-14 ¹² *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.* ¹³ *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, ¹⁴ **I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus** (ESV).*

- Yet Paul confessed he had not attained these things, not yet justified, and not yet perfected. If the great apostle Paul had not achieved, what hope do we have?
- Greek term "already perfect" = "finished the race, reached the final destination". Every runner sets out to win the race before it starts. "I press on" (*dioko*) = "chase after, run to win".

Principles:

- 1) Forget the past ¹³ *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,*
- 2) Forge your future ¹⁴ *I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

1) I don't care anymore

- Verse 13b *One thing I do: **forgetting what lies behind...***
- Paul had many past regrets (persecuted the early church violently), sins (consenting to murdering the early disciples), hurts (rejection from his own, including his leadership over church in Corinth which he founded), abandonment and isolation (locked in prison, stoned, shipwreck). Think of the emotions Paul had to endure and grapple with.

- One reason God created time was so that there would be a place to bury the failures of the past – James Long
- Forget = *epilanthánomai* (focuses on the consequences that build on the forgetting)

James 1:23-25 ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. ²⁵ But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing (ESV).

Luke 12:6-7 ⁶ Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. ⁷ Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows (ESV).

2) I want it for myself

- Verse 13b *One thing I do...**straining forward to what lies ahead...***
- Some run to win the race. Some run just to finish the race. Are you running to win the race? Are you running to finish the race? Do you really want this? Or are you happy with just half the package?
- *Epekteínomai* ("stretching intensely towards")

3) I can't wait to get there

- Verse 14: *I press on toward the goal for the **prize of the upward call** of God in Christ Jesus.*
- The upward call = A divine invitation.
- *klé̄sis* (*kaléō*, "to call, summon") = God invites us to receive His gift of salvation

1 Pet 2:10-11 ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. ¹¹ For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (ESV).

1 Cor 9:24-25 ²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. ²⁵ Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable (ESV).

Heb 3:1-3 ¹ Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, ² who was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house. ³ For Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses—as much more glory as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself (ESV).