

To Live Is Christ | The Prize

Philippians 3:12-16

[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. [15] Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. [16] Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

KICK THE TIRES AFTER SERVICE

I. Introduction — "...I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus Has Made Me His Own."

A. In case recent talks strike you as impossible to walk out...

B. The Great Exchange

1. Philippians 2:5-8: *"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."*

Note: One commentator distills this passage as "regard everybody else as your superior...and their opinions!"¹

2. Philippians 1:29: *"For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake"*

C. This is more than doing what is right...this is about walking in the new kind of life Jesus has for you!

II. 3:12 – 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.

A. Note Paul's humility

¹ Wright, N.T. Paul: The Prison Letters. 97-98.

B. Attained what?

1. Resurrection?
2. Knowing Jesus?
3. Both:
 - a) The Resurrection — the culmination of knowing Jesus
 - b) We get Jesus fully in the resurrection!!!

C. Knowing Jesus — The “J-Curve”

1. Slide 1: J-Curve
2. Slide 2: Remember Sue
 - a) Shame, slander, drama —> Knowing Jesus in ways she never has
 - b) OR...retreating in bitterness —> Resurrection — N/A (revenge, but her soul is darkened...)
3. Slide 3: My expectations for “resurrection”
4. Slide 4: My J-Curve

III. 3:13 – 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,

- A. Again, note Paul’s humility
- B. Forgetting what lies behind
 1. Paul’s supposed ethnic superiority
 2. Paul’s religious accomplishments
 3. Our sinful failures:
- C. What lies ahead

IV. 3:14 – I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- A. “Press on”: Greek terminology for a foot race; also hunting²

² Martin, Ralph P. Philippians. The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. 155.

B. The prize: The call to a life of Jesus-ambition

V. 3:15 – Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.

A. Spiritual Maturity: Conceiving of our lives this way — a cultivated and every-growing world view that holds in isolation the fact that true hope and joy are found only in beholding Jesus.

B. “If any of you think otherwise”?

1. Doctrine?

2. General disputes related to this letter’s call for unity?

VI. Conclusion — 3:16 – Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

A. Walk out what you know...

B. “Behave in a manner consistent with what truth [you] have already received.”³

C. “Growth comes through obedience”⁴...living with Jesus in your J-Curve...

³ Silva, Moises. *Philippians*. Second Edition. Baker Exegetical Commentary On The New Testament. 178.

⁴ *Ibid.*