

Sermon Notes

Going for glory

The Bible Reading

Philippians 3:12-4:3

¹² Not 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. ¹³ 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, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵ All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. ¹⁶ Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

¹⁷ Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. ¹⁸ For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like

his glorious body.

^{4:1} Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

² I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. (NIV)

A prayer

Almighty God and loving heavenly Father, guide me and teach me about you from your Word. Help me and others to see the wisdom and value of living life according to your word the Bible; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

The Bible Study

Questions:

Read Philippians 3:12-16

1. What truths about the past, present and future does Paul draw out in vs. 12? To what extent are you able to share his perspective?
2. What specific things from the past do you think Paul might urge you to forget? As you run towards the

finishing line, what may be slowing you down, and how you might speed up?

3. How would you answer someone who suggested that all this talk of activity runs counter to Paul's teaching about justification by faith alone?

Read Philippians 3:17-21

4. Do you think the church has largely forgotten the doctrine of the Lord's return? What are the practical effects of such memory loss?
5. What particular blessing will the return of Christ bring for his followers? Great though this blessing will be, it is not Paul's primary focus as he contemplates Christ's return. What is his primary focus, and why?
6. How does considering your future life in Christ's kingdom after he returns encourage you to live as a citizen of that kingdom today?

Read Philippians 4:1-3

7. How does positively and consciously standing firm in the Lord in the light of his return pull us out of conflict with each other? Do you need to take any decisive steps to make peace with a fellow believer? How will you do that today?