

## BIBLE STUDY LESSON

### “PRESS FORWARD”

#### PHILIPPIANS 3:12 – 4:1 (KJV)

**Introduction:** In our last lesson, we discussed the importance of living a Peaceful life. Paul was willing to give up pedigree, prestige, prominence and power to live in Peace. Even though he was imprisoned, his priority was to grow closer in his relationship with Christ Jesus. One would think that after years in prison, Paul’s priority would be to get out of prison. The book of Philippians paints a different picture. It seems that his imprisonment drove him toward God, instead of away from Him. In Philippians 3:12 – 4:1, Paul encourages us to press forward and don’t give up.

#### **II. Press on to Christ not worldly perfection**

**Philippians 3:12-13 (NKJV)** “*Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. <sup>13</sup> Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead.*”

1. Admit you don’t know everything about God.

**Attain** – to take hold of, to grasp, to enter into a close relationship, to make one’s own.

**II Corinthians 3:5 (KJV)** “*Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God*”

2. Admits that there is work to be done in your life.

**Perfect** – to be complete, to finish. Paul was not perfect but was Pursuing perfection. The believer must follow, run and press after perfection.

**I Corinthians 9:24-27 (KJV)** “*Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway*”

3. Don't let your lack of knowledge of God or your imperfections keep you from pressing to God.  
**Press** – to run swiftly in order to catch a person or thing, to lay hold of as to make my own, to win.  
Proverbs 4:25-27 (NIV) “Let your eyes look straight ahead; fix your gaze directly before you. 26 Give careful thought to the paths for your feet and be steadfast in all your ways. 27 Do not turn to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil.”

4. You must forget the past and reach for what is ahead.

**Forget** – not to have remembrance of something; no longer caring for.

Isaiah 43:18-19 (NIV) “Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. 19 See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”

**Reaching for those things** – to stretch out toward.

Hebrews 12:1-2 (KJV) “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

### III. Live for the Goal of God in Christ Jesus

Philippians 3:14 (NIV) “I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

1. Paul is encouraging us to reach for the goal that encompasses all of God.

**Goal** – the object of an athlete is to fix their eyes upon the race.

I Corinthians 9:24-27 (NIV) “Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. 25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. 26 Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. 27 No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”

**Prize** – an award to the victor in the games.

II Timothy 4:8 (KJV) “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”

#### IV. Embrace Your Kingdom Citizenship

Philippians 3:17- 4:1 (NKJV) “Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. <sup>18</sup> For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: <sup>19</sup> whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame– who set their mind on earthly things. <sup>20</sup> For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. 4:1 Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.”

1. Paul encourages the Philippian Christians to follow his examples.

I Corinthians 4:15-16 (NKJV) “For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. <sup>16</sup> Therefore I urge you, imitate me.”

2. Paul instructs believers not to set their minds on earthly (worldly) things, but on the Kingdom of God.

Romans 8:5-8 (KJV) “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. <sup>7</sup> Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. <sup>8</sup> So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.”

I Corinthians 6:9-11 (devotional)

Galatians 5:17-21 (devotional)

3. Lastly, “stand fast in the Lord.”

**Stand fast** – to be firmly committed in conviction of belief.

**Colossians 2:6-7 (NLT)** “*And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. <sup>7</sup> Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.*”

**I Corinthians 15:58 (NLT)** “*So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable. Always work enthusiastically for the Lord, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.*”