



'Back to Basics for Believers Series'

Sermons in the Epistle to the Philippians

Message 17 – 'Pressing on Toward the Prize' Philippians 3: 14 - 16

Paul is continuing in his urgent appeal to the Philippians to press on. He has been explaining the characteristics that are marked in his attitude and they have been such that he is urging the Philippians to make them marks in their own lives. He had a holy dissatisfaction with his own state, he desired more, he knew he was not where he was, but he knew there was more to come in his spiritual life. He was certainly devoted, 'one thing I do', illustrates the focus of his life to press on after Christ, and the desire to be conformed to his Saviour's likeness. He was set in the right direction, knowing that there was the glory to come, that wonderful day, and that was ever in his sights. Yet we can see two more characteristics in these verses:

1. Paul was a man who was DETERMINED - The Lord had wonderfully worked in his life, and he was determined to give his all for his Lord. As we apply ourselves to the things of heaven, pursuing Christ, so God is able to work in us and mature us, strengthening us for the race that is set before us. We need to have a determination to press on, to pursue Christ, so that increasingly we will see Him working in us. Why should we press on with such determination? Firstly, for there will be many spiritual battles along the way so we must be determined. Secondly, for there is a great and glorious end awaiting those found in the Lord Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ has made Paul His own, and as a result, Paul presses on towards the goal of life in glory. Isn't that a wonderful thought! There is more to come, that is far greater, far richer, than we can ever imagine! Once the Lord has completed His wonderful work of grace in us we shall be incorruptible and eternal; we shall live in honour and glory bestowed on us by grace; we shall live in God's presence and power; we shall live in perfect righteousness and purity; we shall live worshipping and serving God eternally.

2. Paul was a man who was DISCIPLINED - Growth in grace and the progression to maturity in spiritual things are obviously given by God, but the Lord gives to those that seek Him. Maturity is not just something that happens, but we need to be disciplined in our pursuit of spiritual things. Paul is not saying that you can lose your salvation, that is impossible for God is the author of salvation, but he is saying that the believer needs to remember and live according to the Word of God, the 'spiritual rules' laid down. It is a shocking thing for any believer to have to admit that they have grown little in their knowledge of Jesus Christ. You may know little, you may know much, you may regret years that have passed with little growth, but this is a real challenge to all of us, that we need to look at our lives and see what are spiritual condition really is. Come to the Lord and plead with Him to renew you, to renew your zeal, to set your heart ablaze. May it be that we burn for His glory. This is not a dress rehearsal as it were, this is the here and now, the reality, and Christ calls for those who will follow Him with all of their being. We are to grow, to press on, so that a difference can be seen.



Penzance Baptist Church

'Upholding the Ordinary Means of Grace'

Pastor Jonathan Stobbs