

# Straining Forward

**Philippians 3:12-16 NIV** *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. <sup>13</sup> 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, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> Only let us live up to what we have already attained.*

## Four Reasons We Must Continue Seeking God

### 1. To Know Him

**Philippians 3:7-8 NIV** *But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ . . .*

### 2. To Confirm Our Justification

**Philippians 3:8-9 NIV** *...that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ--the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.*

### 3. Because We Are So Imperfect

**Philippians 3:12 NIV** *Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal,*

### 4. Because Christ Has Made Us His Own

**Philippians 3:12** *...but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.*

**Philippians 2:12-13 NIV** *--continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.*

## Three Steps in Pursuing God

### 1. Develop a Holy Dissatisfaction With Your Spiritual Life

**Philippians 3:12-13 NIV** *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. <sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it.*

*"Wherever there is true grace  
there is a desire for more grace."*

Matthew Henry

### 2. Forget the Things Which Lie Behind

**Numbers 14:3-4 NIV** *Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?" <sup>4</sup> And they said to each other, "We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt."*

**Luke 9:62 NIV** *Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."*

### 3. Strain Forward to What Lies Ahead

**1 Corinthians 9:24-27 NIV** <sup>24</sup>*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. <sup>25</sup>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. <sup>26</sup>Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. <sup>27</sup>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.*

**I want to persuade you that the continued pursuit  
of God is not optional even after you have  
accepted Jesus Christ as Savior.**

David Fannon, Associate Pastor, Whitehall Campus  
New Life Church/December 27, 2020

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