



With Our Eyes on the Prize

PASTOR MIKE YODER • PHILIPPIANS 3:12–21

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.

Philippians 3:12

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,

Philippians 3:13

I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:14

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.

Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

Philippians 3:16

*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.*

Philippians 3:17

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.

Philippians 3:18

Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things.

Philippians 3:19

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Philippians 3:20

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.

The authenticity of faith in Christ cannot be measured only by the intensity of one's initial decision to receive Christ. Receiving Christ is a lifetime adventure.

Walter Hansen



Believers pursue Christlikeness,
neither having arrived nor
accepting mediocrity. (3:12–16)



David Butler II — USA TODAY Sports

Paul's dramatic imagery of his race cuts both ways: perfectionists who claim to have already arrived at the goal and libertines who have dropped out of the race are both called to get back on track and *press on*.

In Christ every believer has a once-for-all *positional* holiness, and from this new identity every Christian is commanded to grow in the ongoing-for-your-whole-life *process* of holiness. Sanctified is what we are and what we must become.

Kevin DeYoung

Salvation does not equal glorification, but it does guarantee it.

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed — not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence — continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,

Philippians 2:12

*for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to
fulfill His good purpose.*

Philippians 2:13

Christians rest in the Gospel, but never rest in their battle against the flesh and the devil. Striving, fighting, working — these are good Bible words.

Kevin DeYoung

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.

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.

Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air.

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.

For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near.

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.

Paul envisions not perfection in the Christian life, but progress towards a prize.

I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I hope to be in another world; but still I am not what I once used to be, and by the grace of God I am what I am.

John Newton



Believers think otherworldly,
recognizing earthly disqualifiers
and ultimate victory. (3:17–21)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,

*fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.
For the joy set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its
shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Hebrews 12:3

When we as believers find little or no longing for our heavenly home, it is likely because we have become too comfortable in this world.

Matthew Harmon

The enemies of the cross followed the natural inclination of residents in Philippi to look to the emperor in Rome to exert his sovereign power to solve their problems, satisfy their appetites, rescue them from trouble, and protect them from danger...

Walter Hansen

But the Christian who followed the example of Paul looked to Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Savior. Their hope for the future is not fixed on Caesar, the savior and lord of the Roman Empire, but on Jesus Christ, the heavenly Lord and Savior.

Walter Hansen

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:1

Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

Colossians 3:2

For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:3

When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Colossians 3:4

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Romans 8:22

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

**To follow Jesus means to see
clearly and live intentionally.**