

MINDSET OF THE SPIRITUALLY MATURE

Phil. 3:12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after (**PRESS**) , if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Phil. 3:13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, **forgetting** those things which are behind, and **reaching forth** unto those things which are before,

Phil. 3:14 I **press** toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Phil. 3:15 ¶ Let us therefore, as many as be **perfect (mature)**, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

Phil. 3:16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

I. I am sure that we each understand that the Apostle Paul was spiritually mature in his personal walk with God & ministry

A. At the same time, Paul still had a **mindset & hunger to continue to spiritually mature** beyond the point where he presently was:

1. vs 12 “Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected (matured)”

2. vs 13 “Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended..”

a. This type of mindset kept arrogance out of Paul’s life

(1) which helped him be an effective witness and minister

(2) by enabling Paul to : “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: **I am made all things to all men**, that I might by all means save some. 1 Cor 9:22

B. In this passage of scripture The Apostle Paul gives us **three keys** for not losing our passion and hunger to continue to grow & mature spiritually:

1. **PRESS ON**

2. **FORGET THE PAST**

3. **REACH FORWARD INTO YOUR FUTURE**

II. Phil. 3:12 but I **follow after (PRESS)** , if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

A. **Def. Press:** pursue

1. spiritual maturity does not automatically come into our lives:

a. it has to be pursued ... put forth an effort ... press toward

2. Paul was in pursuit ... following after what he classified as the most important thing / person in His life:
 - a. Jesus Christ
 - b. we can easily discover how important Jesus is in ur own life and the lives of others by simply watching whom / what they are pursuing in life
 - (1) When Jesus Christ is no longer just your Savior
 - (2) But also Lord of your life
 - (3) and the first love of your life
 - (a) you will do everything to follow after / pursue Him before anyone or anything else
3. This "**Press**" really comes down to what we are hungry for and it also deals with our priorities ... whom & what we choose to put first in our life:
 - a. Paul made a choice to "follow after (PRESS) , if that **I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended** of Christ Jesus.
 - (1) **Def Apprehended**: seize, possess, overtake, lay hold of
 - b. Could you imagine the depths that Our Lord Jesus Christ pursued after Paul while he was yet lost in his sin:
 - (1) blinded by the spirit of religion
 - (2) persecutor of the church
 - (3) held the garments of those who stoned Stephen ... yet Jesus pursued and apprehended Paul as he walked in his sin & spiritual darkness
 - c. Paul like each of us go through life pursuing the wrong things & become apprehended, possessed & overtaken by the wrong things
 - (1) But now that Paul's life has been apprehended by Jesus ... he determined pursue The Lord Jesus Christ and serve God the way that Jesus said every believer should:
 - (a) Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, **and** with all thy soul, **and** with all thy **strength**, **and** with all thy **mind**; **and** thy neighbor as thyself.
3. **Everyone is apprehending something** ... everyone is chasing, spending their life to lay hold of something or someone ... have you determined to pursue The Lord ... be a God chaser?
 - a. As a believer, have you made the decision like Paul to chase after God to the same degree that He pursued & has apprehended you?
 - b. or if not a Christian ... how long are you going to continue to try to apprehend, lay hold of the **peace** you are looking for... when it can only be found in Jesus

- (1) How long are you going to pursue **money, success** to satisfy your soul .. when only Jesus can fill that void in your heart
- (2) How long will you continue to try to feed that hunger of your heart by **chasing men / women, drugs, alcohol or what ever form of sin** ... when only Jesus can satisfy the longing of your soul

B. Phil. 3:14 I **press** toward the **mark for the prize of the high calling of God** in Christ Jesus.

1. When Paul had his encounter with Jesus, he quit pressing toward:
 - a. the prize & all the world had to offer
 - b. he quit pressing toward the call the devil & the world had for his life
2. and began to press toward:
 - a. **‘THE MARK’** / THE GOAL that God had planned for his life
 - (1) what mark / goal are you aiming at in life?
 - (2) Have you made God’s goal / dream / purpose & destiny: your mark that you are aiming for for
 - b. Paul understood that if he was going to hit God’s mark / goal for his life & ministry that he had to keep his eyes on the **PRIZE**:
 - (1) he had to keep his eyes off of the distractions that come in life
 - (2) he had to look beyond what the world had to offer
 - (3) and look at the Prize, the destiny, the plan & will of God for his life: and make that his mark / goal / his focus in life
- (a) “ press (pursue) the mark (goal) for the prize of the **high calling of God in Christ Jesus**”
 - (1) **Def High calling**: upward calling, heavenly calling
 - (a) This High Calling is God’s vision / God’s dream / God’s plan / God’s will, God’s purpose, God’s destiny for your life by which you will bring God glory
 - (1) **Phil. 2:13** For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good **pleasure**.
 - (b) there is no higher calling we can press toward, pursue & devote our life to than the high / heavenly call of God that rests upon your life
 - (1) there is no office / no position / no career ... no greater honor to pursue other than the “high calling of God in Christ Jesus”
 - (a) that will come to pass as you lay hold of / apprehend that calling
 - (b) that will come to pass as you press / pursue that calling
 - (c) that will manifest as you take up your cross and follow Jesus

II. Next Paul reveals **KEY #2** of the spiritually mature: **FORGET THE PAST**

A. **PHILIP 3: 13** “**but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind**”,

1. **DEF FORGETTING**: to lose out of mind
 - a. this is not telling us to forget all of life’s precious memories
 - b. Rather, it is instructing us to forget all the past:
 - (1) failures, disappointments, betrayals, losses, at times it even means to be able to forgive yourself
 - (2) these things are the chains that Satan ... the accuser of the brethren, uses to keep you imprisoned to the past
2. If you want to fulfill the high calling of God upon your life ... if you want to be able to grow & mature spiritually, you are going to have to:
 - a. **let go of the past** ...
 - (1) can’t run around in life blaming your mama & daddy
 - (2) can’t be blaming the white man, black man, brown man, red man or the yellow man for what they may have done to you in the past
 - (3) cannot spend all of your time talking about what might be today, if this did not happen to me yesterday / yesteryear
3. Those who live in their past live a life **filled with excuses**
 - a. When we make excuses we take an exit from where God wants us to go
 - b. Excuses shrink your stature ... make you smaller in life
 - c. Excuses are the quicksand of the land of the living & eventually take you under
 - d. Excuses cause you to fail to show up for your responsibilities in life & ministry
 - e. It is easier to go from failure to success ... than it is to go from excuses to success
 - f. Excuses will cause you to live in the prison of in forgiveness & hold you back from God blessings, plan & destiny for your future

B. In order to forget & move beyond your past you must learn to **arrest your thought life**:

1. **2Cor. 10:5** Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into **captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ**;
 - a. **Def Captivity**: a prisoner of war ... to arrest your thoughts
 - (1) **Prov. 23:7** For as he **thinketh in his heart**, so *is* he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee. / **DWELL !!!!!!!!**

III. **Key #3** for maturing spiritually: **BY FAITH: REACH FORWARD INTO YOUR FUTURE**

A. PHILIP 3:13 “**reaching forth** unto those things which are before,”

1. You cannot reach forward unto those things God has set before you ... for your future while holding on to the past
 - a. let go of the past
 - b. and reach out by faith into your future by:
 - (1) standing on ,claim and confess the promises of God
 - (2) decree your prophetic word that was spoken over your life
 - (3) declaring your vision / dream
 - (4) speak your God given dream to the mountains & obstacles hat stand in your way

B. **IT IS IN THE MIDST OF OUR darkest hour of the trials of life**, that by faith we must “**REACHING FORTH UNTO THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE BEFORE US**”

1. When the devil is telling you it is over
 - a. there is no way out
 - b. things will never run around
 - c. learn to do what Jesus did:
 - (1) **Heb. 12:2** 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.
Heb. 12:3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.
 - (a) As Jesus hung on Calvary’s cross gasping for His last breath of air
 - (b) As the powers darkness celebrated at Calvary’s Cross mistakenly thinking they have defeated Jesus Christ & abolished mankind’s hope for of salvation
 - (c) As He became sin & for the first time did Not since the presence of God & cried out: My God, My God why have you forsaken me
 - (1) Jesus was able to endure the Cross & it’s shame
 - (2) by: reaching forth unto those things which were before Him
 - (a) Jesus reached forward into the promises of the Word of God that prophesied of His resurrection

- (b) Jesus seen Himself descend to the depths of hell & take the keys of hell & death from the devil
- (c) He seen Himself ascending into heaven & presenting His sinless shed Blood on the altar of heaven
- (d) He seen heaven's gates open to mankind as He became the new and living way by which mankind can come unto God & obtain eternal life
- (e) He seen Himself raising from the dead & ascending unto heaven & sit at the right hand of God the father
- (f) He seen Himself coming back to earth for a glorious bride ... the church of The Lord Jesus Christ
 - (1) Because Jesus understood that God the father was a God of resurrection
 - (a) Who not only resurrected Jesus from the grave
 - (b) Who not only resurrects every Born Again believer from the grave
 - (c) But also resurrection dreams that have died
 - (d) Who resurrects families that have given up
 - (e) Who resurrects bodies afflicted with sickness & brings forth healing
 - (c) Who resurrects carriers that have failed
 - (d) Who resurrects ministries that have altered
 - (1) and it can happen in your life if you are willing to REACH ORWARD

C. Regardless of what you may be facing today ... looking beyond those circumstances:

1. and **Look unto Jesus** ... the author & finisher of your salvation
 - a. Don't let the devil write your life's story for this world & eternity
 - b. Look unto Jesus ... He is the author of your life destiny
 - c. and He is the finisher of what God has in store for your future in this world & eternity
 - a. Look unto the **Promises of The Word of God**
 - b. Look unto the **Prophecies** spoken over your life & do a good warfare
 - c. Look unto the **vision / dream/ destiny & purpose** that God has for you
2. You will go from living in defeat
 - a. You will go from living a carnal life
 - b. You will go from being as a babe tossed to & fro by the winds & storms of life
 - c. To becoming a spiritually mature believer who understands:
 - (1) **Phil. 4:13** I can **do all things** through Christ which strengtheneth me.
 - (a) **PRESS ON AND FOLLOW JESUS**

**(b) FORGET YOUR PAST THAT WANTS TO HOLD YOU BACK
(C) AND REACH FORWARD TO YOUR GOD GIVEN DESTINY**

IV. PHIL 3: 16 “... TO THE DEGREE (LEVEL) THAT WE HAVE ALREADY
ATTAINED (ARRIVED) LET US WALK BY THE SAME RULE:

A. Time to take a **look** at our **walk with God**

1. Take a **look** at our **mindset**

a. Take a look and **examine our heart** to see if we have the **MINDSET OF A
SPIRITUALLY MATURE BELIEVER**

2. TO WHAT DEGREE OF SPIRITUALITY ARE YOU WALKING IN?

a. Lost in your sin & need saved?

b. living in carnality & walking in the flesh

c. living in the past ... & filled with excuses for the outcome of your life

d. or living in victory ... the abundant life that only Jesus offers because
you have the mindset of a spiritually mature believer

(1) Are you walking by faith

(2) Pressing on ... to live your God given dream

B. Altar Call