

Philippians 3:12-16

- 1) Paul's motivation in striving for maturity—3:12
  - a) Stated negatively
    - i) He denies his own achievement—<sup>12</sup> *Not that I have already received it [lambano],*
    - ii) He denies a present reality—*or have already been completed [teleioo],* (cf. 1:6)
  - b) Stated positively—*but I press forward [dioko] if (3<sup>rd</sup> class condition, probable) I may even secure it [katalambano]*
    - i) Why? *because I also was secured [katalambano] by Christ Jesus.*
    - ii) cf. 3:6, what a change!
  - c) What was Paul trying to secure? The perfection that occurs at the resurrection of the body on the day of Christ.
  
- 2) Paul's persistence in striving for maturity—3:13-14 (illustration from a track race)
  - a) Humble self-evaluation—<sup>13</sup> *Brothers, I (emphatic) do not regard myself to have secured it [katalambano],*
    - i) Even after 25+ years as a Christian and an apostle!
  - b) Single-mindedness—*but this one thing, ...* <sup>14</sup> *according to the goal I am pressing forward [dioko] for the prize (cf. 1 Cor. 9:24) of the upward call (effective call) of God in Christ Jesus.*
    - In contrast to twelve steps or seven laws or five principles or forty days. (Harmon)
    - i) Stated negatively—*on the one hand disregarding those things that are behind*
      - (1) Don't allow your past (sins and successes) to influence or motivate you in the present
    - ii) Stated positively—*and on the other hand stretching out for those things that are ahead,*
  
- 3) Paul's realistic view of maturity—3:15-16 <sup>15</sup> *Therefore,*
  - a) The importance of your thought life—*must be thinking this way*
    - i) Who? *as many of us as are* (relatively) *mature [teleios],* (cf. Col. 1:28)
      - (1) Cf. maturity in 1 Cor. 14:20; Eph. 4:13; Col. 4:12; Heb. 5:13; James 1:4
    - ii) What way? Single-minded, humble pursuit of the things of God
  - b) The importance of God's work in your life— *and ... God will make this known to you<sup>pl</sup> also.*
    - i) *if (1<sup>st</sup> class condition, assumed true) in anything you<sup>pl</sup> think differently,*
      - (1) Apparently there were those in the Philippian congregation who did not share Paul's focused mindset. This was no doubt one of the roots of their difficulties (cf. 4:2-3).
    - ii) If you are thinking differently on this subject—and therefore less maturely than Paul—God will reveal this less mature thinking to you. (Magill)
      - (1) This letter could be the means by which God chooses to act.
  - c) The importance of unity—<sup>16</sup> *Nevertheless,*
    - i) In behavior—*let us keep in step* (cf. Gal. 5:25) *with the same standard [kanon],*
      - (1) A higher level of relative maturity—*to what we have attained,*
      - (2) Don't be distracted by those who do not share a mature mindset. (Harmon)
    - ii) In thought—*let us be thinking the same thing.* (not found in some Greek texts)