

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

Philippians 3:14



BEREAN BIBLE CHURCH

Service of
Worship & Communion

Sunday, 3 March, 2019

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Sunday School 9:30am

Morning Worship - 10:40am | Evening Service - 6:00pm

Midweek Service (Wednesday) - 7:30pm

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ALL ARE WELCOME!

PRESSING ON...



Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. 2 Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. 3 For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— 4 though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 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 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in[a] Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. 10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

12 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. 13 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, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:1-14

Pressing in to Take Hold (3:12b-13a)

Paul realizes that he hasn't attained his potential in Christ, but he doesn't excuse himself by the difficulty of the calling:

“... But I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it.” (3:12b-13a)

Now we see another pair of Greek verbs that describe Paul's unremitting quest for God:

The first verb is **“press on”** (NIV, NRSV) or **“follow after”** (KJV). *Diōkō*, is often translated **“persecute.”** Here it means, **“to move rapidly and decisively toward an objective, hasten, run, press on.”** The root idea of *diōkō* is **“to chase.”**

When I think of this word, I remember a story from David's life (2 Sam 2:12-23). Abner, general for King Saul's son Ish-Bosheth, loses many troops in a skirmish with David's men. Then Asahel, brother of David's general, "chased Abner, turning neither to the right nor to the left as he pursued him." The Bible records, "Asahel refused to give up the pursuit."

It is this kind of dogged determination that is the fire in Paul's belly. With the same zeal that he once persecuted (*diōkō*) the church (1 Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13; Philippians 3:6), he now pursues (*diōkō*) Christ. He will not give up the pursuit of God or take his ease. He must know Christ in all his fullness! It is from this concept that A.W. Tozer penned his classic book, *The Pursuit of God* (1948).

The second verb that describes Paul's quest for Christ is "**take hold of**" (NIV), "apprehend" (KJV), and "make it my own" (NRSV), a sort of purpose clause in Greek. Paul presses in so that he might take hold. *katalambanō* is an important word, since it occurs twice in verse 12b and again in verse 13b. The root idea is "to lay hold of." Here it means, "to lay hold of so as to make one's own, win, attain." There is a deliberate word play between the verb *lambanō* in verse 12 and *katalambanō* in verses 12 and 13.

"12 Not that I have already obtained (*lambanō*) all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of (*katalambanō*) that for which Christ Jesus took hold of (*katalambanō*) me. 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of (*katalambanō*) it." (3:12-13)

Years before, Jesus had laid hold of Paul on the Damascus road at his conversion. Now Paul longs to lay hold of the fullness of this life in Christ and is unsatisfied until he does.

Running Flat Out in the Great Race (3:13b-14)

No, Paul has not obtained his spiritual goal yet, but he is not resting or turning back:

"But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." (3:13b-14)

This passage has inspired me for decades, every time I read it, it speaks to me again. The imagery is from a race, drawn from the key verb "I press on" (*diōkō*), "to chase, run after, pursue," that we just examined in verse 12. Paul is single-minded: "But one thing I do!" (3:13b)

Forgetting What Lies Behind (3:13c)

A runner in a race doesn't keep looking back at who is behind him, lest he trips and falls on his face. Instead, he is intent upon the goal (*skopos*) up ahead.

We can't run the race looking backward. We must turn our minds and hearts to the present race and to our goal. Paul looks toward the goal line, Greek *skopos*, from a root meaning "to look into the distance." Here it is the distant mark looked at, the "goal or end one has in view."

How many times does a coach shout, "Keep your eye on the ball!" In cricket, a batter must keep his eye on the ball. A Christian must keep his eye on the goal – fully surrender to and fellowship with Jesus Christ. If our eyes slip to the temporal world, we lose focus on the spiritual world and lose our bearings. Learn from the past, but keep your eye on the goal!

Order of Service

Ministry of Music – Choir

Invocation

Hymn 390 - Love Lifted Me

Hymn 399 - He Took My Sins Away

Hymn 192 - One Day

1st Scripture Reading: Luke 19: 1 – 10

Hymn 184 - Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

Prayer

Notices & Offering

Ministry of Music – Choir

Hymn 186 - And Can It Be

Sermon - Bro. Trevor Francis

Hymn 514 - The King of Love

Distribution of Elements

Special Offering

2nd Scripture Reading - 1 John 3:11-18

Ministry of Music

Benediction



PLEASE REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR:

- A Pastor or Pastors to shepherd
- The Outreach beginning in March
- The grieving families of our nation who are losing members to violence
- God's guidance for the board and all who are in leadership positions
- For the youth of our church and the wider Hothersal community
- For the healing of the sick and shut-ins
- Employment for the unemployed
- Our Government and economy
- The peace of Jerusalem

DATES TO REMEMBER

Harvest - Hothersal: March 24th, 10:00 am

General Meeting Annual: March 27, 7:30 pm

Harvest - Grazettes: March 31st, 4:30 pm

BIBLE DOCTRINE SURVEY COURSE:

March 25th to 29th and April 1st to 5th

BEREAN FUN DAY April 6th, 1:00 pm - 6:30 pm



March Birthdays



5th - Jenny Lynn Francis

- Zachary Haynes

7th - Carl Ward

8th - Tiffany Brathwaite

- Glen Peters

14th - Lucy Crichlow

16th - Cherise Brathwaite

18th - Roselyn Dixon

20th - Pearlita Franklin

- Delores Ward

24th - Rosalind Conliffe

25th - Eartha Skeete

27th - Joyce Belgrave

30th - Kim Bayley

- Cheryl Branch

31st - Ian Bovell

- Ricardo Parris

Anniversaries



8th - Marva & Victor Springer

17th - Patricia & Trevor Scott

23rd - Hilton & Jenny Piggott