

A Work in Progress

Phil. 3:12-14

Introduction:

- A. This is an exciting week at WH. This week begins our Vacation Bible School, Paul Patrol.
- B. This morning, I want to set the stage for this week by looking at a passage from the apostle Paul that lets us in on why he was so successful as a follower of Jesus.

Paul's Main Goal (Phil. 3:7-11)

- A. Paul's main goal was to know Jesus and attain the resurrection from the dead (vs. 10-11).
- B. Our desire should be to want to know Jesus and to conform to His image.
- C. If we want to have the kind of relationship with the Lord that Paul had, we need to develop the attitude that Paul developed (Phil. 3:12-14).

Paul Didn't Dwell on the Past (v. 13).

- A. To forget in Bible terminology does not mean "to fail to remember", but rather "no longer to be influenced or affected by."
- B. There are two ways in which the past can be problematic:
 - 1. Look at the past and be weighed down by it. Paul had a bad past (I Tim. 1:12-16).
 - 2. Look at the past and become complacent because of it. Paul had much success (Gal. 1:15-16).
- C. We should learn from the past but never live in the past (Acts 2:38).

Paul wasn't Content With His Present (vs. 12-13)

- A. Paul realized that he would never be perfect or complete until the end of time (v. 11-12, 15).
- B. Paul saw himself spiritually as a work in progress. He is saying, "I have not arrived yet."
 - 1. If anyone could have been spiritually content, it would have been Paul.
 - 2. He surrendered not only all he had obtained as a member of the Jewish faith (vs. 4-6), but EVERYTHING for the sake of Jesus (vs. 7-10).
 - 3. He suffered much for the sake of Christ (2 Cor. 11:23-28). These words were penned in prison.
- C. We should be content with what we have (Phil. 4:11-12) but never content with where we are spiritually.

Paul was Motivated by the Future (vs. 13-14).

- A. The phrase, "I Press on" carries the idea of an intense endeavor.
- B. Paul served Christ with a zeal and fervor all the while pressing on to the goal.
 - 1. He was focused on heaven (Phil. 3:20-21).
 - 2. How else could a person experience all that he did without setting his sights on heaven?
- C. We cannot reach for heaven if we are focused on the past or too content with the present (Psa. 27:4).

Conclusion:

- A. Maybe some of you need to forget your past. Others may need to not be so content with the present. Maybe there are some who need to be more focused on the future.
- B. Wherever we are in our lives, we want to continue to be a work in progress for the Lord.