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## Pressing the Advance

**Phil 3:12** Not that I already obtained or have already been perfected, but I press forward, if also I shall lay hold of *[that]* for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

**Phil 3:13** Brothers *[and sisters]*, I do not consider myself to have laid hold, but forgetting indeed one *[thing]*, the *[things]* behind, but reaching out to the *[things]* ahead.

**Phil 3:14** I press forward toward *[the]* goal, for the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul's objective was conformity to Christ in his living and dying.

Paul's definition of his life:

- Recognition of the call of God
- The acceptance of the call of God
- The execution of God's call for his life to win and attain the goal

The Lord Jesus Christ doesn't just want to share what He has but also what He is. The apostle Paul has enjoyed in his life what the Lord has prepared for him in the eternity past and will continue to enjoy everything in the presence of the Lord (2 Peter 1:3-4).

The high calling of God refers to:

- "Much more" grace blessings after salvation
- Believer's positive decisions in time making himself available to greater blessings, greater glory, and greater rewards.

The very first thing a believer must do to grow beyond where he is at the moment is to be honest with himself. He has to honestly evaluate his spiritual standing and accept the needs for his advancement.

The term "obtained" from *lambano* which means "to take to oneself" refers to the act of self evaluation.

The phrase "have become perfect" (*teleioo*) meaning, not having attained spiritual perfection. *Teleios* in the early church refers to martyrdom. A martyr was said to be perfected by the sword. The day of martyrdom was call the day of perfecting the saints.

Paul was saying; “I am not yet qualified for martyrdom, I have not yet attained the status of being a friend of God. The apostle was saying, “All the events in my life are unfinished, incomplete until this last event had taken place”.

As long as we are alive in this life, we have to advance to the next step forward and upward. You have not reached your objective until the last event has taken place.

The word “press on” (dioko) which means to pursue or to strive denotes two things:

- In military sense, it means to attack the enemy, to press the advance
- In athletic sense, it means to go for the win as a winner

How? The apostle Paul shows us what to do:

- Paul wanted to live just as Christ has lived
- Paul wanted to serve just as Christ has served
- Paul wanted to die just as Christ has died

Paul’s personal sense of destiny drove him for the finish. There are basic things that you must draw from your metabolized doctrine in the soul:

- The decision or the ever-increasing positive volition toward Bible doctrine.
- The determination or the motivation pursues the desire of your positive volition toward doctrine.
- The discipline to carry out your motivation to the finish line.

To win the race (Hebrews 12:1-2) is to set your undivided attention on the goal. Do not focus or concentrate on yourself, teammates, competitors, adversaries or difficulties but on your goal.

Undivided attention or full concentration is a mental attitude of endurance. Concentration is the strenuous pursuit of the objective. Concentration demolishes complacency, apathy, boredom, laziness, indifference or arrogance.

The word “regard” means count up and weight out all the reasons. Philippians 3:11 is occupation with the person of Christ. Paul was saying; “I have considered everything as incomplete until I have finish all things the Lord Jesus Christ had set for me, I intend to win this crown and all the fabulous blessings that he laid for me”.

The secret to lasting success is to keep lasting. The invisible assets are designed to make the Church Age believer continue his momentum until the goals are attain.

There are three basic decisions of the volition that you have to make your success lasting:

- You have to set aside everything else except your goals.
- You have to decide what the priority of your life is and keep focus on it.
- You have to cast aside everything that stands in your way and carry on with the things that are not hindered.

In the spiritual realm, the believer makes positive decisions from the point of strength and God the Holy Spirit executes the actions that produce changes, results and attain goals.

In the believer's forward and upward climb, carry on with the essential and beneficial things (things which do not hinder your momentum) and lay aside the non-essential and non-beneficial to your relationship with God.

The terms "things" and "I do" were not in the original text but supplied by the translators. The original term is "hen de" translated as "but one". The apostle Paul was saying; "I don't consider myself the ultimate winner yet as powerful and the most advance as far as spiritual maturity and impact, but one..."

The statement is concise, there is no verb in the Greek original text since it is not necessary. Two things are expressed here:

- Singleness of mind and purpose
- There is concentration of effort

The words "lay hold" means to grasp, and "apprehend" (katalabano) means to lay hold of in order to make one's own". It was used of someone coming into possession of inheritance.

Every believer is laid hold of by the Lord Jesus Christ to receive tremendous blessings:

- Blessings of the mature believer in time
- Blessings and rewards in the eternity.

Every Church Age believer (member of royal family of God) has a personal responsibility to drive on toward the goal to take hold of the purpose and destiny with Christ took hold of Him. How?

- By forgetting past experiences (both victories and defeat)
- By forgetting the past sins

The word "forgets" (epilanthanomai) means to forget completely. How do you forget the past?

- Confess your sins –claiming by faith the forgiveness and the cleansing of God.
- Leave the past behind (victories and defeat). Do be a historian for the devil. Whenever you are reminded by Satan of your past, remind him of his future.
- Focus on the objective. Do not let anyone or anything hinder your momentum.

Disregard every memory that comes in importunate moments in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is possible only through residence, momentum and function inside the divine dynasphere.

When you are focused on Christ, you are not distracted by the past failure, inflated by your own past success. The victories of yesterday cannot sustain us today. You need to

win your victories today. The grace of God must be sufficient for each of us, right now, right here.

The term “reaching forward” (epekteinomai) shows the manner of life.. The believer has to set aside self to achieve in the spiritual realm. Pressing on the advance does not depend on people, circumstance, situation or anything.

**Psalm 90:12** So<sup>3651</sup> **teach**<sup>3045</sup> us **to number**<sup>4487</sup> **our days**,<sup>3117</sup> that we may apply<sup>935</sup> our hearts<sup>3824</sup> unto wisdom.<sup>2451</sup>

“Teach us” instruct us in the spiritual path through conflict and competition. “To number our days” assign to them certain values.

Endurance comes by pressing beyond our present limitations. Each day is a gift from God’s grace. Every gift of grace presents us with opportunity to grow and advance in the plan of God. Every day is another opportunity in the plan of God to utilize the divine power system and resources.

The most secure investment in this life is in the spiritual matter not in the material aspect..

There are three types of believers going to heaven:

- Those with souls filled with Bible doctrine as winner.
- Those with souls with some Bible doctrine as loser.
- Those with souls with no Bible doctrine.

“Goals” (skopos) literally means to keep your eyes upon. “Prize” (brabeion) refers to spiritual rewards. The “upward call from God” refers to the ministry of the Holy Spirit. “I hope” (elpizo) means to wait with full confidence. Confidence means safety, security, or stability.

Spiritual stability comes from metabolized Bible doctrine overcoming all forms of distraction. Allowing distractions in the spiritual life is not only perilous but fatal.

How do you live the life that God has destined for you?

- Live one day at a time.
- Live victoriously over the past failure.
- Live winning today’s victory to be victorious tomorrow.
- Live without worrying about anything that never happened yet.

When you have enough Bible doctrine, you are bound to do two things:

- Become the greatest danger to yourself by using human viewpoint
- Face the conflict applying the divine solutions and come out victoriously

Spiritual momentum means:

- Refusal to be distracted by anything and by anyone at all times.

- Carry on the goal of spiritual maturity with endurance
- Prevailing in the midst of adversities and difficulties
- Maintaining staying power (fortitude) to finish the race

“Let your character has its *proven worth*”. Proven worth speaks of character that has been forged in the fire of adversity.

In your momentum there must be:

- Continuous build up of endurance because of the ever-increasing distractions
- Continuous PMA of doctrine because the battles are getting fierce
- Continuous reliance on God’s resources and provisions because the enemies are getting bigger

What we need to see in the life of the Church age believers today is the true willingness to follow God’s plan and unconditional desire for the will of God.

Is your life a testimony to the grace of God? The grace of God will fill every deficiency in your life, if you let Him. Grace will conquer every ounce of human inability, deficiency, frailties, or flaws.

From the sphere of possibility, you have to set it down firmly in the sphere of reality. In the cosmic system everything is possible but nothing will materialize into reality.

- Possibility – the things of the world are essential to spiritual life.
- Reality – only Christ and His Bible doctrine are essential.

How to move from possibility to reality?

- First: mental attitude – everything except Christ and Bible doctrine are essential.
- Second: action – let go of the non-essentials. (Put actions to your decisions)

Note: you do not have to throw away the non-essentials; God will do it for you.

If you continue in your PMA of BD, God will take care of the following:

- Remove the things that you cannot give up
- Remove the things you find impossible to get rid
- Free you from anything that hinders you
- Change the things you cannot change
- Make you accept the things you cannot accept

The life of the believer is either:

- Self-centered – occupation with self and personal agenda
  1. what I want
  2. what I need
  3. what I desire
- Christ-centered – occupation with Christ. Christ reigns in the believer’s attitude, priorities and decisions.

You may have all of Him but Christ may not have all of you. At the moment of salvation God has provided everything in Christ to you (including the 40 gifts of salvation) but the believer has to use those resources and assets in order for Christ to have all of him.

For every human viewpoint status symbol or human celebrityship that you have, there is a corresponding positive decision that you have to make. Every decision will either put you in position to receive or not to receive the blessings of God.

5-Point applications:

- All non-essentials temporal things must be subordinated to the spiritual. The non-essentials must never lead or dictate your life.
- To give consideration to the things of the cosmic system is to your loss.
- Every distraction that you hold enough will become a curse to you.
- Every step of faith that advances in the PPOG requires a little loss of self in order to gain a little more of Christ.
- Every little loss of self is painful because the self dies hard.

At the moment of salvation, you have to overcome the flesh (OSN) eternally, after salvation; you have to overcome the flesh experientially.