

COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Pressing on Toward the Goal*Joy Made Complete* | Philippians 3:12-16

REVIEW

Paul wrote Philippians for the sake of unifying the church in the enjoyment and advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Unity in the gospel births communal joy that results in the advance of the gospel to the lost. As we partner together in the gospel, the result is **joy made complete**.

In 3:4-11, Paul lays out his impressive spiritual resume. However, instead of placing any trust in his resume for righteousness, he speaks of how he counts everything he has accomplished as loss for the sake of Christ. Paul's position before God is not in any way determined by who he is or what he's done; it's based solely on who Jesus Christ is and what Jesus has done. Paul's righteousness comes by grace through faith in Christ alone. Out of this recognition, Paul erupts with volcanic spiritual longing desire to be fully like Christ in every aspect of his life.

APPLY // PHILIPPIANS 3:7-11

Consider practical ways to apply the text of Scripture. Think about implications at the individual and corporate level remembering God's word shapes our beliefs and our behaviors.

1. Read Philippians 3:1-11.
2. Set the context for Philippians 3:4-11 by noting why we are to put no confidence in the flesh (vs. 3).
3. Pulling from other passages in the Bible as well as Philippians, describe why Paul's pedigree has contributed nothing to his salvation? How does Paul view his accomplishments?
4. How are we tempted to rely on our spiritual resume for right standing before God?
5. Where is Paul's confidence? Why?
6. How might this fuel a confidence in your life given all the ups and downs, disappointments and regrets?

STUDY // PHILIPPIANS 3:12-16

Study the passage of Scripture aiming to faithfully interpret and apply what you observe. Remember we study God's word not just to increase our knowledge, but to increase our trust in and treasuring of Jesus Christ.

1. Read Philippians 3:12-16.
2. What's the main idea of verses 7-11? What's the main idea of verses 12-16? How do they relate to one another? Why do you think Paul makes these comments just after what he says in verses 1-11?
3. How does Paul view himself in this passage?

- a. How does Paul view of himself speak to those who think they are too imperfect to be used by God?
- b. How does Paul's view of himself speak to those who think they have already arrived so they must be used by God?
4. What does "this" and "it" in verse 12 refer to?
5. According to verse 12, what is Paul's motivation for pressing on toward Christ? Why is this motivation important to keep in mind? What are some improper motivations for pressing on toward Christ?
6. What does Paul mean by "forgetting what lies behind"? What is in Paul's past that he might want to forget? Why is it important for him to forget these things?
7. What area of life do you struggle with forgetting what is behind?
 - a. Do you rely on previous success?
 - b. Are you weighed down with sin even though you've repented of it?
 - c. Do past failures deter you from trying again?
8. What does "straining forward" mean? What type of language is this?
9. What is "the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"? How does this prize motivate us to press on toward the goal?
10. According to verse 15, who is supposed to think this way about the Christian life?
11. What does Paul want us to hold onto? How does verse 16 tie back to verse 1 ("to write the same things to you is no trouble for me and is safe for you.")?
12. General Bible study questions:
 - a. What does this passage teach me about the character of God?
 - b. What does this passage teach me about myself and my need for God?
 - c. How does this passage teach me that God has met my needs in the person and work of Jesus Christ?
 - d. How should I respond with my affections and my actions?

ACCOUNTABILITY

Relationships developed and deepened during accountability provide regular encouragement, and when necessary admonition, to spur each other on to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Ask one another heart-probing, clarifying questions, and help each other apply the gospel to your lives.

QUESTION: Are you looking to anything other than Christ for your righteousness?