

Week 8 - PHILIPPIANS 3:12-21; 4:1
Marks of Christian Maturity

“To know the incomprehensible greatness of Christ demands a lifetime of arduous inquiry.” (Hawthorne, 1983)

“A divine dissatisfaction is essential for spiritual progress.” (Warren Wiersbe, 1981)

vv 12-15 Run the Race to Win the Prize

Paul is persistent in his zealous pursuit of the crown of joy. It is a life-long journey that is always within sight – so long as our eyes remain fixed on Christ.

vv 16-17 The Model of Discipleship

Accomplishing the goals and objectives of spiritual formation is an impossible task if one has to do it alone. But as Dallas Willard notes, “no one *has* to. God gives us others to share the pilgrimage, and we will be met by Christ in every step of the way. ‘Look, I am with you every instant,’ is what Jesus said; and it is also what he is doing” (Willard, 2006)

vv 18-19 Contrasted with the Immature and Unregenerate

Self-destructive	vs.	Christ-Conformed (Rom. 8:29)
Self-indulgence	vs.	Self-Controlled (Gal. 5:23)
Self-affirming	vs.	God-approved (Matt. 5:21)

vv. 20-21; 4:1 Citizens of Heaven

Eternal kingdom that existed for millennia before this one and will exist for all eternity after this one; and *God’s sovereign reign over the affairs of humanity has been and will always be found true.*

“Enter into the joy of the Master.” Matthew 25:21
His good pleasure and our good fellowship.

Philippians 3:12-21; 4:1 English Standard Version (ESV)

Straining Toward the Goal

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. ¹⁶Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

¹⁷Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of

Christ. ¹⁹Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. ²⁰But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

4 Therefore, my brothers, ^[a] whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

