

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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June 4, 2023

“Keep Going”

By T. Sean Sullivan



God's word encourages faithfulness always (Hebrews 10:35-39). Some quit the Lord during difficult times, some are led away by distractions, and others seem to drift away for little reason if any.

In order that we might stay the course, we are encouraged by God, through His divine word. The Apostle Paul speaks of this kind of determined effort in the 3rd chapter of Philippians.

In the context of verses 12 through 16, we will consider three statements: "I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me" (v. 12). "...reaching forward to those things which are ahead..." (v.13). "I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (v.14). We will then consider verses 15-16 in our conclusion.

Let's look closer at Paul's inspired statements.

"I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me"

For some, the life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus was a complete waste. Those people do not recognize their own need; and certainly, do not see their lost condition. Paul, however, realized why the hope of Christ was so important: Paul understood that he had sinned and his sin separated him from God (Romans 3:23). Paul understood that he was not able to fix this problem by himself; he was condemned, but God's hope was available (Romans 5:1-10).

Paul was determined to receive all that Christ intended for him (and you and I) to receive-"*the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Romans 6:23).

We can lay hold of the hope of salvation. But we must understand we are not there yet. Sometimes we want the rewards of faith to be all known in this life. Paul said, "*Not that I have already attained, or that I am already perfected.*"

Reality is that this life will continue to be a challenge for a Christian (Romans 5:1-4). But we face those challenges with reason to rejoice and a greater hope (Galatians 5:22-25; 1 Peter 1:6-9). The ultimate goal of Christianity is not realized in this life-the goal of entrance into Heaven must be diligently sought (Hebrews 10:35-39).

Knowing that we are not "there" yet we continue, like Paul, to "press"!

"...reaching forward to those things which are ahead..." (v.13).

Reaching is effort! Think of this as stretching, grasping, and hoping; this is the idea. What would we do if someone we loved was slipping into a hole just an inch from the limit of our reach? We would be desperately stretching, grasping, and hoping that we could get hold of them. This same effort needs to be applied daily to our goal of Heaven.

What could be in the way of this needed effort? Paul says, "*One thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind...*" The things seen as "behind" for Paul were any of the things before Christ and the way of truth (Philippians 3:4-11). This life can distract us from our reaching. The things of our past can distract us (Luke 9:62).

The things of our present can distract (Matthew 13:22). Or, even our future earthly goals can keep us distracted (Matthew 16:26; James 4:13-15).

We need to be "reaching" with a sense of desperate need. Reaching with diligence (2 Timothy 2:15). Reaching with endurance (Hebrews 10:35). Reaching always (1 Thessalonians 5:6-11).

Knowing the hope of Heaven, we continue, like Paul, to "reach"!

"I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (v.14).

What could possibly compete with the sound of God's voice saying, *"Well done good and faithful servant..."* We have learned that we should be "pressing" and "reaching"-this effort is not without reason. We are "pressing and reaching" for "the upward call".

We are called to "hope" in this life (John 20:30-31), but our "upward call" is far greater-it is our forever welcome in (Matthew 25:21). We are called to leave sin and seek Christ's glory in this life (2 Thessalonians 2:14), but our "upward call" is far greater-it is our forever entrance into His glorious presence (Revelation 21:23).

We are called to "walk worthy" in this life (Ephesians 4:1-6), but our "upward call" is far greater-it is our welcome to walk into the gates forevermore (Revelation 21:24-25).

We must be prepared to hear the "upward call". By seeking and doing the will of God (Matthew 7:21). By continuing in the faith (Colossians 1:19-23). By watching daily (1 Thessalonians 5:1-8).

Conclusion:

In Philippians 3:12-14, Paul shares his personal example of devoted pressing. His example is to be followed by all those who would desire their own welcome into the forever home of Heaven. In the next two verses Paul says, *"As many as are mature have this same mind..."* (Philippians 3:15-16). It is our necessity to press on toward the apprehending of perfection, just beyond the upward calling of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

To one day hear the "upward call", you must first hear "the call of the gospel". Do you hear it? The opportunity to be moved to obedience by and to the gospel message is yours right now. Come to God through Jesus Christ, obey the gospel, and then begin to press on to your welcome home in Heaven. Your opportunity begins with your decision right now.

"Patterns"

By Heath Rogers

Some have the idea there are no patterns set forth in the Bible regarding things like worship, the organization of the local church, or even the plan of salvation. They mock the idea of brethren having lists of things which must be done (the five acts of worship, the steps of salvation, etc.). To some, the New Testament must not be viewed as a legal document but as a love letter from God. It doesn't really matter what we believe, as long as we are sincere.

This promotes a subjective view toward the Scriptures (the meaning of the Bible is established by the reader, not the author). Such a view allows each person to determine for themselves what is authorized in religion. However, this turns God into the author of confusion and chaos, which the Bible says He is not. "For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints" (1 Cor. 14:33).

The New Testament is not a nebulous love letter, saying one thing to one person and something different to another. Instead, it produces a singular pattern to be followed alike by all believers.

Paul commanded Timothy to *"hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus"* (2 Tim. 1:13). The truth taught by Paul was a "pattern of sound words" to which Timothy was to "hold fast."

The word pattern is translated from the Greek word *hupotuposis*. This is a compound word. The prefix hupo means "under." The other part of the word, tupos, refers to a model for imitation or writing. It is likely that all of us have traced over something before to make an exact copy. This is the idea behind hupotuposis.

The "pattern of sound words" delivered by Paul and the other apostles are not a rough outline, leaving believers to fill in the details as we see fit. These sound words are a complete form or model which we must trace over and copy perfectly in our personal beliefs and practices.

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Sam Johnson, J F Dancer, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Jamie Jones, Janet Boren, David Boren, Fred Johnson, and Todd Bryan.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Doug George
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: *"You Can Understand The Bible"*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Fred Johnson
Colossians
Author: Donnie V. Rader
Starting Page & Question: *Page #49, Question #9*

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Paul Johnson
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Russell Briggs
Scripture Reading: *1 Samuel 20:14-17*
Song Leader: Lee Busby
Lord's Supper: Jerry Kennemur
Assisting: — —
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: *"Kindness Paid Forward"*
Closing Prayer: Nathan Meade

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

June 7, 2023

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Johnson
Workbook: Ezekiel
Author: Dan King
Starting Page & Question: *Page #16, Question #17*
Invitation: Russell Briggs
Song Leader: Tim Harris Sr.
Closing Prayer: Paul Busby



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“You Can Understand The Bible”

Lesson Text: **Ephesians 3:3-5.**

I. There Are People Who Say You Can't Understand It On Your Own.

- Some Say It's Because Its A Mystery- **Ephesians 3:9; 5:32; 6:19.**
- Some Say It's Impossible To Understand Without Help- **Acts 8:31.**
- Some Say We Can't Understand It Without The Holy Spirit- **John 16:13.**
- Some Say It Is Not Understandable To The Carnal-Minded **1 Cor. 2:14; John 3:1-9.**

II. God Requires Us To Understand His Word.

- **Ephesians 5:17** Stated positively, As If We Are Expected To Understand.
 - Other Scriptures That Show Us An Understanding Is Possible:
 - 1. Psalm 119:130.**
 - 2. Nehemiah 8:1-3.**
 - 3. Acts 17:11.**
 - 4. 1 Thessalonians 2:13.**
- Why We We Need To Know:
 - Salvation Is Too Important To Misunderstand- **John 6:44-45; Romans 10:17.**
 - We Must Understand God's Will To Be Obedient- **Matthew 7:21; 7:24-27.**
 - **Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16.**
 - Sadly, Those Who Are Teaching Faith Alone Saves, Do Not Understand Salvation.

III. Jesus Expressed The Father's Will In The Scriptures.

- **Matthew 13:10-17.**
- **John 7:14-17.**
- Some Were Offended By His Words- **Matthew 15:12 (vs. 3-9).**
- Some Rejected His Words- **John 5:39-40.**
- But The Common People Heard Him- **Mark 12:37.**

IV. Examples Of People Understanding God's Word.

- The Jews On Pentecost Understood- **Acts 2:36-41.**
- The Samaritans And Simon Understood- **Acts 8:4-13.**
- The Ethiopian Eunuch Understood- **Acts 8:26-39.**

IV. How You Can Understand The Bible.

- Believe That You Can Understand It- **John 8:31-32.**
- Desire To Understand It For Yourself- **1 Peter 2:1-2.**
- Study It Carefully, Honestly, And Fully.
 - **2 Timothy 2:15. Gr. “Diligence”** - to do something with intense effort and motivatio
 - ‘to work hard, to do one's best, to endeavor.’ Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996).
 - **Acts 17:11.** Be Honest With The Text And Don't Have Preconceived Ideas.
 - Don't Leave Out Anything That Pertains To God's Word- **Acts 20:20.**
- Pray For Wisdom In Understanding God's Will.
 - **James 1:5; Ephesians 1:16-18**

“Kindness Paid Forward”

Lesson Text: **1 Samuel 20:14-17.**

I. The Kindness Shown By Jonathan To David.

- **1 Samuel 10.** God Gives The People A King— Saul, The First King Of Israel.
- God Rejects Saul For His Disobedience- **1 Samuel 13:5-14; 15:1-29.**
- God Chooses David To Be King To Replace Saul- **1 Samuel 16:13.**
- **18:1-4.** King Saul’s Son, Jonathan Becomes The Best Friend Of David.
- **18:6-16.** King Saul Views David As A Threat & Attempts To Kill Him.
- **19:1-20:4.** Jonathan Shows True Loyalty To David Over His Father.
- **20:5-34.** Jonathan Selflessly Risks His Life To Help David.
- The Background For The Agreement— **1 Samuel 20:42.**

II. The Story Of David And Mephibosheth.

- In **1 Samuel 31**, King Saul And His Sons Are Killed By The Philistines.
- **2 Samuel 2:1-11.** The Kingdom Is Divided: David In Hebron— Ishbosheth In Israel.
- First Mention Of Mephibosheth In **2 Samuel 4:4.**
- Ishbosheth, Saul’s Son Is Killed- **4:5-12.**
- **5:1-12.** David Leaves Hebron To Reign Over All Israel In Jerusalem.
- David Defeats The Philistines- **5:17-25.**
- David Brings Back The Ark Of God- **6:1-19.**
- David Is Firmly Established- **2 Samuel 8:15-18.**
- David Fulfills His Promise To Jonathan- **2 Samuel 9:1-13.**

III. What We Learn From This Story.

- We Learn What Kindness Is And How It Is Extended To Others.
- It Is An Intentional Choice To Be Kind.
 - A Way Of Life For David- **2 Samuel 1:17-27; 2:4-7; 10:2.**
- Kindness Defined: “the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate.”
- But Goes Beyond That Definition:
 - Love In Action- **1 Corinthians 13:4;** Lovingkindness (Hebrew word).
 - Showing Mercy- **Joel 2:13.**
 - Extending Forgiving- **Ephesians 4:32.**
 - Helping Others, Even When Not Repaid- **Luke 14:12-14.**
- Kindness Should Be Extended To Everyone!
 - David Was Willing To Show Kindness To Saul’s House, Despite All That Saul Had Done Against David!
 - **Romans 12:20-21.**
- What Destroys Our Kindness?
 - Sin In Our Lives- **Galatians 5:19-21** (All Have No Kindness).
 - Rejection Of God’s Way Of Life- **2 Chronicles 24:20-22; Galatians 5:22-26.**
 - But We Should Refuse To Lose Our Kindness!