



BIG IDEA: The mature aren't the ones who've arrived. They're the ones who know they haven't, and keep pressing.

1 NOT THAT I'VE OBTAINED IT (PHILIPPIANS 3:12)

- Paul refuses the claim of arrival. The signature of arrival is the confession of non-arrival.
- Persecutor turned pursuer. Same Greek verb in 3:6 and 3:12 — same intensity, same fire, redirected toward Christ.
- Reciprocal grip. Paul presses on to lay hold of Christ because Christ first laid hold of him on the Damascus road.

Philippians 3:12 CSB *“Not that I have already reached the goal or am already perfect, but I make every effort to take hold of it because I also have been taken hold of by Christ Jesus.”*

Philippians 3:6 CSB *“...regarding zeal, persecuting the church...”*

KEY TRUTH: Maturity does not look like a man who is finished. It looks like a man who refuses the claim of finished.

FILL IN THE BLANKS — SECTION 1

Phil. 3:12 — “Not that I have _____ reached the goal or am _____ perfect...”

Phil. 3:12 — “...I _____ to make it my own...”

Phil. 3:12 — “...because I also have been _____ by Christ Jesus.”

2 FORGETTING AND STRAINING (PHILIPPIANS 3:13–14)

- The mature life is the one-thing life. The cure for tossed is single-eyed.
- Forgetting isn't amnesia. It's refusing to let the past — failure or faithfulness — dictate the present pace. The runner has no rear-view mirror.
- Straining forward. Imagine the runner at the tape, body arched, eyes locked on the line. The prize is Christ himself.

Philippians 3:13–14 CSB *“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead, I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus.”*

Hebrews 12:1–2 CSB *“...let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith...”*

KEY TRUTH: The mature church doesn't sit. It leans.

FILL IN THE BLANKS — SECTION 2

Phil. 3:13 — “But _____ : Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead...”

Phil. 3:13 — “_____ what is behind...”

Phil. 3:13 — “..._____ toward what is ahead...”

Phil. 3:14 — “I pursue as my _____ the _____ promised by God's heavenly call...”

3 THINK THIS WAY (PHILIPPIANS 3:15–16)

- The mindset is the maturity. Paul says “think” — not “do.” Settle the mind, and the body follows.
- The mature (v. 15) are precisely those who refuse the claim of completion (v. 12). Mature means humble enough to keep pressing.
- Grace for the slow learner. God keeps revealing. Hold what you've attained and trust him with the rest. A mind locked on Christ is not blown around.

Philippians 3:15–16 CSB *“Therefore, let all of us who are mature think this way. And if you think differently about anything, God will reveal this also to you. In any case, we should live up to whatever truth we have attained.”*

Ephesians 4:13–14 CSB “...until we all reach unity...growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ’s fullness. Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching...”

KEY TRUTH: A mind locked on Christ is not blown around. That is what tossed-no-more looks like.

FILL IN THE BLANKS — SECTION 3

Phil. 3:15 — “Therefore, let all of us who are mature _____ this way.”

Phil. 3:15 — “...God _____ this also to you.”

Phil. 3:16 — “...we should _____ whatever truth we have attained.”

APPLICATION

Pick one. Set the mind this week.

- One thing** — Name the one thing your life is leaning toward right now. If it isn’t Christ, settle on him before Monday morning.
- One backward glance** — Pick one piece of past (failure or faithfulness) that’s setting your present pace. Refuse to let it steer the run.
- One forward strain** — Choose one act of leaning this week. A prayer, a hard conversation, an obedience you’d rather skip. Lean.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Paul refuses to claim arrival even from a Roman prison cell, decades into ministry. Where in your life are you most tempted to fly the “I’ve arrived” flag? What does taking it down look like?

2. Same Greek verb describes Saul persecuting the church (3:6) and Paul pursuing Christ (3:12). What passion or fire in you used to chase the wrong thing? How might it be aimed at Christ now?

3. “Forgetting what lies behind” includes both past failure AND past faithfulness. Which side pulls you backward more — shame over what you’ve done, or pride over what you’ve built?

4. Paul lands on “one thing.” Most of us are leaning in fourteen directions at once. What’s your one thing right now? If you had to name it out loud, would it be Christ — or something Christ-adjacent?

5. The cure for tossed is a settled mind. Where are you most tossed this week — what voices, currents, or pressures? What would setting your mind on Christ look like in that exact place?

MY TAKEAWAY

ANSWER KEY

S1: already · already · press on · taken hold of

S2: one thing I do · Forgetting · straining · goal · prize

S3: think · will reveal · live up to