



PRIEST LAKE
COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

FORWARD & HIGHER TOGETHER

PEOPLE | ♦ PURPOSE ♦ | ♦ PROGRESS

REAL PEOPLE.
REAL FAITH.
A BRIGHTER
TOMORROW.

WHEN CHRIST HAS HOLD *of You*

ESCAPING THE PRISON OF YESTERDAY

A SERMON STUDY GUIDE

PHILIPPIANS 3:7-14 (KJV)

*Forward &
Higher
Together*

*"I will never
leave you nor
forsake you."*

HEBREWS 13:5



WORSHIP
TOGETHER



GROW
TOGETHER



SERVE
TOGETHER



CHANGE
TOGETHER

PRIEST LAKE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

FORWARD & HIGHER TOGETHER

WELCOME & HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

WHEN CHRIST HAS HOLD OF YOU

This personal study guide accompanies Pastor Travis M. Tullis's sermon, "When Christ Has Hold of You: Escaping the Prison of Yesterday," preached September 20, 2026. Read the passage, revisit the sermon's six movements, and write your own responses at your own pace.

Our vision: Forward & Higher Together—building on the Foundation of Christ, so we never walk alone.

The central message: Paul did not press forward to persuade Christ to take hold of him. He pressed forward because Christ had already taken hold of him (Philippians 3:12). Our past can inform us without ruling us.

Begin with Scripture: Read Philippians 3:7-14 (KJV). Notice the words loss, know, apprehended, forgetting, reaching and press.

What phrase from Philippians 3:7-14 stands out to you today? Why?

A prayer before studying: Lord Jesus, show me where yesterday still shapes my choices. Teach me to respond to Your hold with trust and surrender. Amen.

THE MESSAGE AT A GLANCE

SIX MOVEMENTS • ONE RESPONSE

1. THE PRISON OF YESTERDAY — Philippians 3:4-8

Pain, disappointment, and even past achievements can become the lens through which we judge tomorrow.

2. CHRIST HAS TAKEN HOLD OF ME — Philippians 3:12

Christ's initiative comes first. Paul's pressing is a response to Christ's hold, not an attempt to earn it.

3. RELIGIOUS APPEARANCE IS NOT SURRENDER — 2 Timothy 3:5

Religious activity can look faithful while leaving control in our own hands.

4. FROM VOLUNTEER TO SERVANT — Matthew 22:1-14

Belonging to Christ means responding to the King. Service does not earn salvation.

5. WHAT HAPPENED TO ME / WHAT GOD IS DOING FOR ME — Romans 5:3-5; 8:28-29

God can form perseverance, proven character, and hope amid hardship. Harm itself is not called good.

6. BECAUSE HE HAS HOLD OF ME, I CAN PRESS — Philippians 3:13-14

Forgetting what is behind does not erase memory; it means the past no longer governs our direction.

1 THE PRISON OF YESTERDAY

READ PHILIPPIANS 3:4-8

Paul's past included both losses and things he once counted as gains. He came to see that neither his former status nor his suffering could be the center of his identity; knowing Christ mattered more.

What experience from yesterday most often shapes your expectations about tomorrow?

Can a past success, title, or familiar way of doing things hold you back as much as a painful memory? How?

1 THE PRISON OF YESTERDAY

CONTINUED • PERSONAL REFLECTION

What is the difference between learning from your past and allowing it to govern your next decision?

What is one way you can acknowledge yesterday truthfully without allowing it to decide tomorrow?

Remember: Naming pain is not denying faith. “Forgetting” in Philippians 3:13 is not a command to pretend something never happened.

2-3 CHRIST'S HOLD & OUR SURRENDER

READ PHILIPPIANS 3:12; 2 TIMOTHY 3:5

Apprehended means “taken hold of.” Christ’s hold pulls us toward His purpose while our surrendered effort presses forward in response. Discipline and initiative have value; surrender places our effort under Jesus Christ’s authority.

Where am I working hard but resisting Christ’s direction?

What might it look like to surrender control without becoming passive?

2-3 CHRIST'S HOLD & OUR SURRENDER

CONTINUED • PERSONAL REFLECTION

How can I tell the difference between a religious routine and a living response to Christ?

Where can I place my effort under Christ's authority this week?

A sentence to carry with you: "I am not pressing to get Christ to take hold of me. I am pressing because Christ has already taken hold of me."

4 FROM VOLUNTEER TO SERVANT

READ MATTHEW 22:1-14

The sermon contrasts helping only when convenient with belonging to the King. Volunteering is valuable; the point is not to criticize volunteers. The wedding-feast parable calls for a response to the King. “Many are called, but few are chosen” (Matthew 22:14) does not mean church work earns salvation.

Where do I approach following Jesus as an optional activity rather than a relationship of belonging?

What would change in the way I serve others if I began with “Lord, I belong to You”?

4 FROM VOLUNTEER TO SERVANT

CONTINUED • PERSONAL REFLECTION

How can our church invite people to serve while also caring for their health, family, and capacity?

What does faithful service look like in my present season of life?

5 GOD CAN REDEEM WHAT HAPPENED

READ ROMANS 5:3-5; ROMANS 8:28-29

Romans 5 traces a progression through tribulation, patience (perseverance), experience (proven character), and hope. Romans 8:28-29 speaks of God's purpose to conform believers to the image of His Son.

Important distinction: Abuse, loss, and evil are not called good, and this message does not say God deliberately caused every painful event. It points to God's ability to work for good amid what happened.

What quality has God been developing in you as you have walked through a difficult season?

How could your experience help you show compassion to someone else without minimizing their pain?

5 GOD CAN REDEEM WHAT HAPPENED

CONTINUED • PERSONAL REFLECTION

What would hope look like in your present situation?

What is one way to receive support or offer care as you continue forward?

6 BECAUSE HE HAS HOLD OF ME, I CAN PRESS

READ PHILIPPIANS 3:13-14

Paul says he has not already arrived. He keeps reaching toward the call of God in Christ Jesus. The goal is not flawless performance but a faithful response to Christ's hold.

What is one thing from behind that I need to stop letting direct my choices?

What is one concrete step of obedience I can take this week?

6 BECAUSE HE HAS HOLD OF ME, I CAN PRESS

CONTINUED • MY NEXT STEP

Who can walk with me as I take that step?

This week, because Christ has taken hold of me, I will:

Prayer for the week: Jesus, thank You for taking hold of me. Give me courage to face yesterday truthfully, wisdom to learn from it, and grace to keep moving toward Your call. Help us care for one another as we go Forward & Higher Together. Amen.