

## Field Guide and Leader Guide 3.15.26

### Scripture Reference - Philippians 3:12-21

#### Synopsis

There are moments in life when something decisive happens in an instant, but learning how to live inside that new reality takes years. Marriage is one of those moments. Two people stand before witnesses, say “I do,” and everything changes in a sentence. They belong to one another. Yet the next morning they wake up realizing they are now learning how to live out a covenant they already possess. The status is settled, but the journey of becoming begins.

In **Philippians 3:12–21 (ESV)**, the Apostle Paul describes the Christian life in the same way. Through Christ we already belong to Him - justified, redeemed, claimed. Yet we are not finished. Paul says he presses on, straining forward toward the life Christ has for him. Joy in the journey is not found in perfection but in direction - forgetting what lies behind and running toward the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

#### Questions

1. Paul says he is “forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead.” What kinds of past things - failures, regrets, successes, or accomplishments - can keep people from moving forward in their walk with Christ?
  - Follow-Up 1: Why do you think both past failures *and* past successes can become obstacles in the Christian life?
  - Follow-Up 2: What might it look like practically to stop letting the past define your identity?
2. Paul describes the Christian life as pressing toward a goal and running for a prize. What does it practically look like in everyday life to “press on” toward Christ instead of drifting spiritually?
  - Follow-Up 1: What habits or rhythms help keep someone moving forward spiritually when motivation is low?
  - Follow-Up 2: Have you ever experienced a season where you felt like you were drifting spiritually? What helped you regain direction?

3. Paul reminds believers that “our citizenship is in heaven.” How should remembering that we belong to another kingdom reshape the way we think about success, priorities, and purpose here on earth?
  - Follow-Up 1: What are some subtle ways our culture pulls our focus toward earthly priorities instead of eternal ones?
  - Follow-Up 2: How might your daily decisions change if you intentionally lived with heaven as your true home?

### **Scripture References**

2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV) | Hebrews 12:1–2 (ESV) | Colossians 3:1–2 (ESV)

### **Conclusion**

The Christian life is not about arriving - it is about pursuing. Paul himself admits he has not obtained perfection, yet he refuses to stop running. He refuses to be trapped by the past or distracted by the present. Instead, he fixes his eyes on Christ and presses forward toward the finish line God has placed before him.

And that is where joy is found on the journey. Not in flawless faith, but in forward faith. We belong to Christ already, and because of that we keep moving - step by step, mile by mile - toward the day when the Savior we await will transform our lowly bodies and make all things new. Until then, the question remains simple and searching: Are you still running?