

Some Helpful Instructions

(Philippians 3:12-15)

Introduction:

1. In Philippians 4, the Bible mentions "*the peace of God*" (vs.7) and "*the God of peace*" (vs.9).
2. After looking at the front of today's bulletin, "peace" came to mind.
 - a. The picture of the stream in peaceful.
 - b. The verses are designed to help us have peace with God.
3. In our lesson we are concentrating on "some helpful instructions" written by the apostle Paul in Philippians 3:12-15.
4. The first point we need to make is that . . .

Discussion:

- I. PAUL WAS NOT SATISFIED WITH HIS PRESENT SPIRITUAL CONDITION (vs.12)
 - A. Paul had a goal that he was striving to achieve (vs.10-11).
 1. He realized that he had not reached that goal and that he was not perfect.
 2. His goal led him to make improvements in his life so he could achieve it.
 - B. There is a sense in which Paul had learned contentment (4:11-12); however, he was not satisfied with his spiritual condition.
 - C. Because Paul was not satisfied with his present spiritual condition, he was led to do one thing (vs.13) which actually consisted of 2 activities.
- II. THE FIRST ACTIVITY WAS FORGETTING THOSE THINGS THAT WERE BEHIND
 - A. We must remember that Paul was warning the Christians in Philippi against certain Jewish teachers (vs.2).
 1. These teachers boasted of their accomplishments in the Jewish religion.
 2. (vs.4-6) Paul listed his accomplishments as a Jew.
 3. Vs. 7 teaches us that these are the things that Paul forgot.
 - B. In forgetting these things, did he completely remove them from his memory?
 1. No, he was still aware of them.
 2. "Forget," as it used here, means "to neglect, no longer care for."
 3. In forgetting these things, Paul neglected them (he no longer cared for them, and they were no longer important to him).
 - C. Perhaps the most difficult thing for Paul to forget was his persecution of the church before he became a Christian.
 1. (vs.6a) He had been zealous in persecuting Christians.

2. Paul remembered what he had done, but he did not allow what he had done in the past to control him.
3. He had been forgiven when he obeyed the Gospel, and he knew that God had taken away his sin (Acts 22:16; Psalm 103:12).

D. After forgetting those things that were behind, . . .

III. PAUL REACHED FORTH UNTO THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE BEFORE

A. (vs.11) Paul's goal was to attain unto the resurrection.

B. Paul was diligent in achieving this goal.

1. (vs.13) He used the expression "*reaching forth.*"

2. (vs.14) He also used the expression "*pressing toward the mark*" [stretching to cross the finish line].

C. It is imperative for us to understand what Paul did because . . .

IV. WE ARE TO IMITATE HIS EXAMPLE

A. (vs.15) We are to be "*thus minded.*"

B. (vs.16) We are to "*walk by the same rule*" and "*mind the same thing.*"

C. Let us:

1. not be satisfied with our present spiritual condition
2. forget those things which are behind
3. reach forth unto those things which are before.

Conclusion:

1. Many years ago, a wise preacher said that "peace of mind" is a special blessing.
2. By following these instructions in Philippians 3 we can enjoy this blessing.