

February 14

Scriptures: Read Philippians 3

Key Verse: "...forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13 & 14)

Overview

Paul had powerful motivation. It was rooted in his belief in Jesus, and its energy was derived from his hope of "the upward call of God." Paul was a man with a dream, a man who was going somewhere — and he knew who was taking him there. But Paul was also methodical. He very effectively contributed to the upward call by determined effort. Here is how he analyzes his contribution:

1. He forgets the past. If anyone had reason for regretting his past, it was Paul; especially as it related to his earlier treatment of Christians. Paul's behavior is recorded in the Book of Acts, "Then Saul, still breathing threats of murder against the disciples of the Lord . . ." (Acts 9:1). But he chose to forget his past, not because he was callous, but because he had truly repented and knew he'd been forgiven.
2. He dreams a dream ("reaching forward to those things which are ahead"). He chooses to pursue the far horizon, to stretch his mind and challenge his heart. He rejects complacency and embraces vision.
3. He keeps on going ("I press on . . ."). He had every reason to quit. As we've already seen in 2 Corinthians, he had undergone more aggravation, persecution, hassle, and life-threatening situations than all of us put together. He was a doer and no quitter.

He forgets, he dreams, and he keeps on plugging. Why? Because he valued the upward call more than life itself. What's more, he trusted Jesus — "for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day"

Prayer

Lord Jesus, we pray for Your help in enabling us to forget those things that are behind and reach forward to those things that are ahead, the goal of the prize of the upward call of God in Yourself. Reveal to us Your thoughts and clarify the goal for which we need to aim.