

Study 9 (Philippians 3:12-21)

Read Phil. 3:12-21

What are some of the images that come to mind when you read Paul's words "I press toward the goal for the prize"? Do these images help you think about how we are to "strain forward" for the "upward call of God in Christ Jesus"?



Paul believed that he had not already attained the resurrection and or that he had already been made perfect. Are there ways you live like you have already reached perfection? How do you accept correction? How does keeping this in mind encourage Christian humility?

In the Christian life we are either growing in our relationship with Christ or becoming more distant. If straining forward equals "mature" (v. 15), how would you evaluate your life right now—moving forward or becoming distant? Why?

How would you describe the "enemies of the cross" Paul discusses in v. 19?

We are citizens of heaven and we await a Savior from heaven (v. 20). Are there ways you are fundamentally identifying yourself with this world and looking for a savior on earth?

C. S. Lewis famously wrote in *Mere Christianity*, "Aim at Heaven and you will get earth 'thrown in': aim at earth and you will get neither." How do these words reflect Paul's thoughts in these verses?

Let's pray this week that God would strengthen us by the power of the resurrection to strain forward as citizens of heaven, having our hope fixed on our coming Savior.