

WITH HEARTS WIDE OPEN

PHILIPPIANS 3:12-14

BACKGROUND: please read **Philippians 3:7-11 and fn 3:8**

PRESS ON. The bond of salvation between Jesus and believers is so incomprehensible that it may be compared, but not perfectly, to the bond between children and parents. Paul emphatically states that he wants to understand this bond. As children of God, we receive enumerable blessings when we open wide our hearts to try to grasp the depths of our Father's love for us. (**Philippians 3:12, fn 3:9-10, I Timothy 6:11-16, fn 6:11-12, I Corinthians 9:24-27, fn 9:24-27, II Corinthians 5:17, fn 5:17**) *If you are born again, what was it like when Christ first took hold of you?*

FORGET AND STRAIN. Not only are we not to indulge our hearts and minds in past forgiven sins, we must place our "achievements" in the same category and not gloat over them. When we take the past out of the present, our open hearts can stretch our faith to a deeper relationship with Jesus. (**Philippians 3:13, fn 3:13-14, Luke 9:62, fn 9:62, Galatians 4:8-9, fn 4:15, Hebrews 10:16-17, fn 10:17**) *What would it take for you to forget your past achievements or lingering sin and guilt and have a heart wide open to experience a deeper relationship with Jesus?*

PRESS ON! "God's call is a calling from above and a calling to a heavenly reward. In his encounter with the risen Christ, Paul experienced God's call from above. As a result he pressed on all his life with the eager anticipation of the future prize of being with Christ and knowing Christ in the heavenly realm, free from all earthly limitations." G. Walter Hansen, The Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Letter to the Philippians, p. 257. With all diligence, like Paul, we must press on to know Jesus, to experience the Holy Spirit's presence, and to be filled with the awesome anticipation of meeting Jesus face to face. (**Philippians 3:14, fn 3:12-14, Ephesians 3:12-21, fn 3:12, fn 3:19, I John 3:1-3, fn 3:2-3, Philippians 3:21, fn 3:21**) *In your quiet times in God's Word, how could you keep remembering what it will be like when you first see Jesus?*

Are you taking time to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit with the Living Word teaching you and giving you His joy, His love, and His peace?