

So far in our study of Phi chapter 3, our corrected translation of verses 10 – 14 from the original language looks like this: ***“that I may come to know Him, and the power of [behind] His resurrection and the participation of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; if, in some way, I may attain to the resurrection away from the dead ones. Not that I have already obtained it [the resurrection life or the ultra supergrace status], or have already reached the objective, but I continue pressing on that I may attain that [or overtake that, or gain that, arrive at the objective] on account of which I was overtaken by Christ Jesus. And then so far we have in Brethren, I evaluate myself as not yet having attained the objective [the ultimate objective in time is living in resurrection life]; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”***

We continue with verse 13 and the phrase ***but one thing I do***, in the Greek this phrase denotes something very vital, intense and important, and the translation should read ***“but one thing I concentrate upon.”***

Paul is going to point out the importance of the ultimate spiritual objective in time which is living in resurrection life by using a verb, showing that he will not be handicapped by his past failures. Whatever failures we have in the past, they should never handicap us. The only thing that should ever handicap us from going forward and moving on is death. As long as you're alive, God has a purpose for your life. Therefore, the principle is to advance and keep advancing, not getting involved with all the nonsense around Christianity today.

Continuing in verse 13 Paul writes ***“forgetting what lies behind”***

This means to forget something that has already happened that can be regarded as a failure. What is Paul and by application we to forget? It is not to forget something we have done that's wrong? Rather to neglect or forget the guilt and the condemnation that would come from the fact of some form of backsliding. Therefore living in failures and mistakes for a period of time. Paul is not going to forget his failure as such, because he obviously writes about it from time to time, but he is going to forget and not allow it to be a handicap to spiritual growth. Paul is not going sulk or pout or feel sorry for himself, he's not going to blame people.

We have two choices when we fail: continue to blame the world for our stress and present situation or take responsibility for own decisions and reactions and go forward in the plan of God.

The apostle Paul has the humility and objectivity to learn from mistakes and failures rather than looking for someone to blame. Paul has forgotten his failures and mistakes in Jerusalem and he continues to do so as he goes from supergrace to ultra-supergrace or to the maximum form of the experience of resurrection life in time.

We will never forget certain decisions that we have made in life, this is important because "forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead" does not mean that we are going to have all of our bad memories wiped away. Our traumatic experiences will only be totally wiped in the eternal state.

Rev 7:17 ***“For the Lamb in the center of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes.”***

This all begins with the principle of rebound. As a part of the Pre-Designed Plan of God, rebound demands that you operate in the precise correct procedure documented for us. A right thing must be done in a right way to be right. There are several areas of precisely correct procedure related to rebound.

1. Name it, 1Jo 1:9.
2. Isolate it, Heb 12:15.

You will face injustice, but you must not react and remain in the status of victimization. The seed of bitterness is planted by unjust treatment or refusal to take responsibility for your own decisions and therefore blaming others and becoming bitter against them.

To carry a grudge is like being stung to death by one bee.

Once you are forgiven, the danger is not over because you can get right back out of fellowship by becoming bitter toward others.

Whatever reaction you have to injustice reverses your capacity for life, so that you have no capacity at all. Whenever you get into the blame game that reverses your capacity for life, so that you have no capacity at all. A person can fail many times, but he isn't a failure until he begins to blame somebody else. Pro 24:16 ***"For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, But the wicked stumble in time of calamity."***

3. Forget it, Phi 3:13. ***"forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,"*** Recalling past failures can only cause guilt reaction, denial, projection, dissociation, and a multiple personality disorder.

The greatest problem is self-absorption related to guilt. Feeling like your a victim or victimization always sets it off.

The easiest thing to do is to find is fault. Jud 1:16 ***"These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage."***

4. Get back to advancing Phi 3:14 ***"I keep advancing toward the objective for the prize of the upward call from God in Christ Jesus."***

5. Stay on the playing field, 2Jo 8-9. ***"Look out for yourselves that you may not lose your momentum which you have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. No one has fellowship with God who keeps advancing out of bounds and does not remain on the playing field through the doctrine of Christ."***

We can draw several principles from Phi 3:13:

1. It refers to Paul's withdrawal from the grace and plan of God for his life as well as any past sin that might cause him to have a guilt complex.
2. Our past failures are never to be a deterrent or a hindrance in our spiritual advance.
3. These failures and mistakes are handled by the rebound technique and the doctrine of recovery. You don't walk around with a guilt complex.
4. Reversionism or backsliding is handled by persistent positive volition related to the daily function of perception, metabolization and application of doctrine.
5. The recovery is completed when the believer has reached the maturity barrier and breaks through into supergrace. Paul has followed this pattern, recovery, reentry into the supergrace status, and therefore, the prison epistles, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, represent doctrine of the advance.

But Paul doesn't stop there, for a while he has not yet reached that objective, he states very clearly that there is an ultra super-grace objective. That ultra-supergrace objective is living in the maximum form of the experience of resurrection life in time.

In ultra supergrace Paul eventually wrote three books. The Pastoral Epistles, First and Second Timothy and Titus. These are the ultra super grace epistles. When Paul wrote these, he was in the highest status that any believer can enjoy in time because he had the right attitude toward his failures and mistakes.

It all began with not blaming others, and Paul had plenty of people he could have blamed.

He could have blamed the other believers in Jerusalem,

Act 21:17, or James, Act 21:18, or he could have blamed the legalistic pastors in Jerusalem, Act 21:18.

He could have blamed the four men who were under a vow; Act 21:23, or the Jews from Asia, Act 21:27, or the people of Jerusalem for mistreating him, Act 21:30.

He could have blamed the high priest Ananias who commanded those standing beside him to strike him on the mouth, Act 23:2.

He could have blamed the Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Act 23:6, or the forty Jews who formed a conspiracy against and vowed to kill him, Act 3:12.

He could have blamed the chief priests and the elders who conspired against him, Act 23:14, or Felix the governor, who held him in prison for a long time expecting some money from Paul as a bribe, Act 23:24.

He could have blamed Festus who was a man-pleaser and wanted to do the Jews a favor by persecuting Paul, Act 25:9.

Paul had a lot of people who could have pointed the finger at but he did not. He took responsibility for his own decisions.

He had the right attitude.

The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day.

We cannot change our past or the fact that people will act in a certain way. We are in charge of our attitudes.

As believers we certainly adhere to the principle of not quitting, but there are times that we should quit. We should quit blaming the past for our present! We should quit complaining and making excuses, procrastinating, blaming others if things don't turn out right! Quit doubting yourself and your relationship with God. Quit basing your life on what other people say or think! Quit refusing to get up after a fall!

Paul could have written in the book of Philippians how everyone mistreated him but he doesn't mention a thing. Paul has learned a great lesson: nothing happens unless the Lord allows it. Our Lord has supreme authority and HE is the supreme administrator of the universe. Nothing happens unless He allows it.

What a comfort to know that despite all appearances the sovereign control of history is still in the hands which bear the nail prints from the Cross, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If we truly believe that, then why blame others.

So we must understand that we can never blame others for our misery, unhappiness, or suffering. You take full responsibility yourself, based on your own wrong decisions related to your associations, your activities, your motives, your functions in life.

To find faults and blame others is easy, to do better is much more difficult and virtuous.

No one even grows up as a human being until they take the responsibility for their own decisions, especially the bad ones.

It's not someone else's fault.

Adam blamed the woman.

The woman blamed the serpent.

Adam even blamed God.

Two perfect people blaming someone else for their failures, and that is a waste of time.

No matter how much fault you find with another, and regardless of how much you blame him, it will not change you.

The final phrase in Phi 3:13, "***and reaching forward to what lies ahead,***"

Here is the contrast intended in the fact that not only is Paul going to constantly forget the things that lie behind, he is also going to reach forward to what lies ahead.

This means to stretch out after something, to stretch out farther, to reach out toward something, to strain for something.

That's exactly what we have here, "pressing, pursuing vigorously."

This is not works. This is a part of your love for God, if you truly do love Him. It is a part of our love for God.

This word is used for becoming a winner in the Christian life after you're saved in 1Co 9:25. The Christian way of life is striving to be the best that you can be not only as a reflection of your love and gratitude and thankfulness to The Lord Jesus Christ but because of your true desire to know Him. And whether you like it or not, that takes work.

The Christian way of life can be summed up in one verse,

Mar 12:30 **“And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.”**

So in verse 13 of Phi 3 we see what lies behind is Paul's past, his failures, his mistakes, his decisions to willfully disobey God the Holy Spirit. What lies ahead is ultra supergrace, living in the resurrection life that God has designed for every believer to experience in time.

No greater goal in the Christian life can exist then in performing all the functions of this passage, which is ultra-supergrace or the maximum form of the experience of resurrection life in time.

This is even greater than passing evidence testing.

Evidence testing is not the ultimate experience of the spiritual life.

Evidence testing is Satan's cross-examination of every witness presented by God in the historical trial of all fallen angels. In human history, man's thoughts, motives, decisions, and actions are entered as evidence, exhibits, precedents, and arguments in Satan's appeal trial.

Every believer who attains spiritual maturity is an argument or witness for the Prosecution against Satan. Evidence testing, then, is Satan's cross-examination of every witness presented by God.

This is not the ultimate experience of the spiritual life, it is a great honor and privilege. The ultimate experience of the spiritual life takes place after evidence testing, Job 42:10, Mat 4:1-11.

The constant function of perception, metabolization and application of doctrine not only causes recovery, but is the means of achieving all of the objectives of maturity.

The comforting point is that whether we are reaping what we sow or going through undeserved suffering we can rest assured that it is the same God who brings both feast and famine, fair weather and rainy. It will help perfect you if you receive it with love and submission.

There are three objectives brought out in this passage, supergrace, spiritual maturity, and ultra supergrace, which is the highest honor in maturity manifested by the maximum form of the experience of resurrection life in time followed by dying grace, the greatest possible blessing in time, the perfect transfer from time to the eternal state.

This brings out the importance of advancing in the spiritual life.

As hungry and growing believers, we need to see the value of pressing on and constantly forgetting the things that lie behind and pursuing vigorously to what lies ahead.

This is not pressing on to "produce." The Holy Spirit instills within our very being a determination that will not be denied, a hunger that must be satisfied.

Our pressing on to His very best is fostered by the fact that we will never be satisfied in ourselves, but we will always be satisfied in Him.

God the Holy Spirit is always drawing us forward as we realize our need for God and our love and desire for freedom and growth.

Thank God for our needs!

They are the primary motivations toward His abundant life.

We have a hope and a fantastic life that goes beyond human understanding.

We were overwhelmed by problems, and not yet aware of His answer to them.

But we continued on in hope and sometimes even in desperation, for deep within our spirit there was the constant yearning for freedom from struggle, and rest in His life.

When our dependence is turned from self and every other false trust that mankind offers, the Holy Spirit begins to prepare us to **rest** upon the written Word and in the Living Word.

Heb 4:10 **“For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.”**

We have entered into His rest because we know the facts; we know our position of freedom through the cross, and life abundant in our risen Lord.

Now we have the assurance that, as we reckon upon these truths, the Holy Spirit will cause us to grow in them daily.

There is rest in the midst of growth.

It is certain that there is no rest of faith as long as we struggle to "produce."

And the believer with positive volition and a hungry heart will not cease striving until the truth of the finished work is seen and counted upon.

This *is the principle of rest*, by which we were born in Him, and by which we grow in Him.

Peter taught this same principle of the constant function of perception, metabolization and application of doctrine not only causing reversion recovery but as the means of achieving all of the objectives of maturity in 2Pe 3:10-18. Here Peter says to "be diligent." This correlates with straining, pressing hard toward the goal, pressing toward the objective or pursuing vigorously the objective. And then the importance of the constant function of perception, metabolization and application of doctrine is given.

This is when we will ultimately realize with Solomon

ECC 1:2 "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity."

Then he went on to say that ECC 1:14 I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and striving after wind.

Without living life with God as the center as our very existence, life is nothing more but a lie!

/We have a JOH 14:27 type peace, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."

We "press on" with more determination than ever, and with an even greater hunger for His best.

We constantly forget the things that lie behind and pursuing vigorously the objective to what lies ahead.