

Upwards!

Phil 3:12-21



Background: We are a people of direction and that direction is Upwards! As we begin this new year and jump back into our series in Philipians, we will see Paul instruct us to forget what lies behind and to press on for the prize of the Upward Call of God. But what does that look like in a season when it feels like our entire lives have been placed on hold? And how do our life goals fit into this? The answers to these questions greatly depend on which future we're living for. Come join us as we press on toward our goal - the Upward Call of God!

Sermon Text: Phil 3:12-21

I. The Upward Call of God

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

II. Right Thinking leads to Right Living

¹⁵ Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. ¹⁶ Only let us hold true to what we have attained. ¹⁷ Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

III. Two Mindsets & Two Futures

¹⁸ For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. As you reflect on the sermon, what stands out to you most?
- b. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- c. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?

2. Sermon questions (pick 3)

- a. What good news did you hear from the service Sunday?
- b. As you enter 2021, do you find yourself “angry and bitter” and distracted with your circumstances or are you focused on Jesus? Why or why not?
- c. Is it easy for you to “*forget what lies behind and strain forward to what lies ahead*”? Why or why not?
- d. “*Press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*” Share practical ways for what this would look like in your life this week and beyond.