

# Faith Talk - Mar. 8, 2026

**Series:** Philippians: Together for the Gospel

**Sermon:** Perseverance: Press on for the Gospel

**Scripture:** Philippians 3:12-21

## Philippians 3:13-14

*Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead, I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus.*

## Sermon Summary

In Philippians 3:12-21, Paul teaches that spiritual maturity is a lifelong pursuit and that even he, after 30 years of ministry, had not “arrived.” His call is for believers to press on—to keep growing, keep reaching, and keep pursuing the purpose for which Christ has taken hold of them.

To mature, we must admit our need to grow, forget the sins and failures that try to define us, and reach forward to God's heavenly calling. Paul warns against following worldly or self-righteous influences (Judaizers) and reminds us that our true citizenship is in heaven. Therefore, we should live our heavenly calling. Christians persevere not in their own strength but with their eyes fixed on Christ, the humble and true Savior.

## Key Points

- Admit and take hold: spiritual maturity begins with admitting we need to grow.
- Forget and reach forward: refuse to let the past limit God's future for you.
- Follow mature examples: humility leads to righteousness; arrogance leads to sin.
- Live as citizens of heaven: our lives reflect God's heavenly calling.
- Press on toward the purpose for which Christ has taken hold of you.

## Discussion Questions

### Conversations with Adults

1. What part of your spiritual life requires the most “pressing on” right now?
2. How does forgetting what is behind you help you better pursue what lies ahead?
3. Who are the mature believers you are intentionally walking with, and how are they shaping your pursuit of Jesus and your heavenly call?

### **Conversation with Students**

1. What's one area of your faith where you've felt stuck or discouraged?
2. Why do you think Paul compares following Jesus to running a long race rather than a sprint?
3. Who influences you most—people pressing toward Jesus or people focused on worldly things?

### **Conversation with Kids**

1. What is something you tried to learn or do that was hard at first, but you kept going? (*Connect it to how we keep growing with Jesus even when it's challenging.*)
2. What's one thing Jesus does that makes you feel safe, loved, or close to Him? (*Reinforces the idea that Jesus has "taken hold of" us with love and purpose.*)
3. Who in your life shows you what it looks like to love Jesus—and what do they do that you want to copy? (*Help kids identify real-life spiritual role models.*)

### **Closing Prayer**

Father, thank You for taking hold of us through Jesus and for calling us into a life filled with purpose and hope. Help us to let go of the past, to grow in the ways You've already shown us, and to reach forward toward everything You desire for us. Give us strength to persevere, joy to follow You faithfully, and humility to admit our need for You every day.

Today, we commit to pressing on, trusting Your Spirit to mature us, and for you to use us to spread the Gospel. In Jesus' name, Amen.