

March 22, 2022

The Lord wants you to experience real and abundant life:

**Phil. 3:13-14** *Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.* (NIV)

We are looking now at the second part of these verses. Remember, we don't need to remember anything that God has already covered and forgiven. If He doesn't want to bring it to mind, why should we? In fact, in 1 Cor. 13, the LORD reminds us that real love keeps no records of wrongs. Beloved, He has covered, forgiven and willfully forgotten all of our sin. He will not keep bringing it up to us. The only one who will, is the evil one. He has no rights in us any longer since we have been bought with the price of the blood of Jesus. And so, it behooves us to take the admonition of scripture here and do what it says. We are to press on. The Greek word is **epekteino** which means *to extend, reach out to grasp, to completely stretch out as to reach something that seems to be just out of reach*. You know the feeling of trying to reach something that is just barely touchable by your fingertips. And yet, somehow, we will stretch just a little farther and finally be able to take hold of the object we are trying to reach. In other words, Paul is admonishing us to not just float along and take whatever seems to be passing by. Instead, we are to strain and push forward. Why? Because we want to reach the goal and attain the prize. We press on. The Greek word is **dioko** which means to run swiftly in order to catch something. It is the extra burst of speed to reach what you need. And then he uses the word **skopos** which is something we see in the distance that we want to see more clearly. We get the words microscope and telescope from this term. It means to bring the prize into focus; to see and realize the prize. Paul also mentions this in 1 Cor. 13:12 when he states: *For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.* (NIV)

Lastly, he runs to win the prize. The term here is **brabion** which is the award given to the victor. These are the crowns given in Heaven to those who finished the race. These crowns are in honor of Jesus Who has given everything for us! **Rev. 4:9-11** *Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to Him Who sits on the throne and Who lives for ever and ever; the twenty-four elders fall down before Him Who sits on the throne and worship Him Who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they were created and have their being."*

**Dear LORD, You deserve all praise and glory and honor. Help us to strain towards the prize so that we will not be found lacking in anything. We are running this race for You. You deserve our very best. In Jesus Name, Amen**