

15. The words of verse 21 are often used at funerals. How do they remind us that the resurrection of the dead is not just spiritual but bodily? What is said here about the difference between our present body and our resurrection body?

16. We might be proud to be British, or whatever, but how should our citizenship in heaven shape our attitude to the kingdoms of this world?

## Pray

In Advent (the weeks leading up to Christmas) we think not only about the birth of Christ at Bethlehem but that He will come again as He promised. Pray that this important truth would shape the lives of Christians.

Pray for help to be good citizens in this world whilst remembering that our true citizenship is in heaven.

Pray for Christians involved in civic life and politics, whether nationally or locally, that they would make sure that they put Christ first.

Pray that as a Church we would remain steadfast in upholding the faith once delivered to the saints.

Pray that we would not be content to sit still but want grow in faith, be renewed in our minds, sanctified in our conduct and always pressing on and straining forward with Christ.

*David Phillips,  
November 2018*

# Philippians

## Study 8 : Straining Towards the Goal Philippians 3.12-21



"To win people for Christ and to build them up in Christ."  
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## Pressing On

### Read Philippians 3.12-17

1. In what different ways do these few verses describe the need for perseverance, to keep going in the faith? What do you think they mean in terms of our attitude and conduct?

*These verses remind us that whilst we are saved through faith in Christ, true saving faith is ultimately only seen by the fact that it bears fruit and endures to the end.*

2. What is the goal and prize Paul says he is pressing on towards?

3. There can be a danger that people think that pressing on means leaving behind the simple faith which Jesus commends. What does Paul say here that shows the importance of what we already have?

4. Churches can often seem to be a refuge for those resisting change in a fast moving society. Why do you think this is?

5. How can we ensure, as individuals and as a church, that we both stir one another up to hold true to what we have attained (v16) and at the same time to press on and strain forward (v12-13)?

6. The Bible sets before us the example of many ordinary people, their faithfulness and the failings. (For example in Hebrews 11.) From your own life in what ways has the example of others helped you in your faith?

7. **Read Hebrews 11.39-12.2.** What is said in these verses about how the example of past believers can help us to “press on” and in “straining forward”?

8. Have you read much Christian biography? If so what value have you found in this? If not, why not?

## Warnings

### Read Philippians 3.18-19

9. Although Philippians is a very positive letter, with little sign of trouble in the Church, we see a few times where Paul mentions problems. What do you think he means when he says that people “walk as enemies of the cross of Christ”?

10. **Read 1 Corinthians 1.22-24.** In what ways do we see people today, whether in the world or in churches, thinking that the cross is foolishness? Should we therefore change what we preach?

11. Paul often had to confront the error of others. What are the dangers we can face when we have to do this? What particular example do we see in **Luke 18.10-14**?

12. As Paul wrote about error in these verses what was his attitude?

13. Whilst we must beware self-righteousness what do we read in verse 18 and 19 that shows the seriousness of error? If you see someone heading for destruction should you keep quiet?

## Citizens of Heaven

### Read Philippians 3.20-21

14. In verse 20 Paul reminds us that Christ will come again, what particularly does he mention as happening when Christ returns?