

On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!!!!

Text: Philippians 1:6 (AV), 3:13-14(KJV)

Philippians 1:6

“And I am convinced and sure of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will continue until the day of Jesus Christ--right up to the time of His return--developing that good work and perfecting and bringing it to full completion in you.” -- (Amplified Version)

Philippians 3:13

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,”

Philippians 3:14

“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Thinking ahead, pondering what the future will bring, and envisioning a future state of events has occupied the thoughts of mankind since time began. Remember the passage in the Gospel of John where we find Jesus at the Last Supper with his disciples. His discourse with them is about future events, future mansions. Thomas poses these questions, “....*Lord, we know not wither thou goest: and how can we know the way?*”--John14:5. Jesus answers him in vs.: 6, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*”

Our message this month speaks of a time span beginning with now and the consummation of sometime in the future. In our Phil 4:6, Paul expresses his appreciation to the Church at Philippi for their generous financial aid in the cause of foreign missions, and expresses his confidence in their help in the future. We see current day application of this verse in the lives of all believers in Christ. This passage encourages us that we can be confident that whatever God has laid on our hearts by the Holy Spirit that indwells within us, God will complete it. In short, if you are called to work in his vineyard, whether it is as clergy or laity, he promises to be actively engaged, empowering you to perform it. Many of us are carrying heavy burdens, facing spiritual challenges in our homes, work places, and communities. God is not finished with you yet. Look at your circumstance as a test to deepen

your faith, strengthen your resolve, change egotism into humility, or convert pessimism into optimism. God completes all that he starts with every believer. Every person in Christ has something that God has purposed for them. If you focus on what he has told you to do, all other seemingly insurmountable economic, medical, and domestic home situations will not stop you.

In our second text Philippians 3:13-14 Paul used the athletic analogy of field and track to express the life style of a believer, running, pressing towards a goal. "A Commentary, Critical, Experiential and Practical on the Old and New Testaments - Volume III, by Robert Jamiaeson, A.,R. Fausset, and David Brown, exegetes these passages as follows: vs13- "**forgetting those things that are behind looking** back ends in going back; as with Lot's wife (Luke 9:62). If we cease pulling the oar against the current, we are carried back. God's Word is forward (Exodus 14:15). The Bible, as our landmark, shows whether we are progressing or retrograding...**reaching forth**, stretching out after the things in front, after higher stages of holiness, with the hand and the foot, like a runner in a race, the body bent forward. Christians are humbled by the contrast between what they are and what they desire to be... vs. **14 high calling** the prize is the crown of righteousness (**2 Tim 4:7, 8; Rev 2:10 "crown of life;" 1 IPeter 5:4 "a crown of glory that fadeth not away."**)

I watched the "Track and Field World Championships" in Daegu, South Korea this fall. I was particularly struck by the posture and countenance of sprinters as they set themselves into their starting blocks, placing their fingers on the starting line, bowing their heads low to the ground, in complete silence, waiting, contemplating, praying most likely, and waiting the seemingly endless moments for the sound of the gun to start the race. There was something deeply spiritual about that scene. So my brothers and sisters: Don't be discouraged! Don't give up! Don't quit! Keep the faith!

GET ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, GO!!!

Yours in Christ

Dempsey Scott Harrison, Jr.