

Dig Deeper into Philippians 3:12-4:3 for individuals and lifegroups...

Phil 3:12-4:3 The Marathon of the Gospel

Press on in the struggle...

...with perseverance (3v12-16)

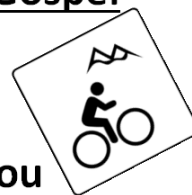
through the grip Jesus has on you

...with perspective (3v17-4v1)

through the hope Jesus guarantees you

...with patience (4v2-3)

through the mindset Jesus gives you



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Here are some questions and resources to help dig deeper into Philippians 3:12-4:3....

1. By way of recap, “what three words” would you use to sum up Philippians?
2. “Straining to what is ahead” (v13). Should the Christian life feel like a strain? What kind of challenges feel like they make the Christian race harder? Are any of these particularly acute for you right now?
3. Is perseverance God’s work or our work? Can a Christian fall away?¹ What help does Paul give us in this passage to help us to keep going?
4. What would you say to Euodia and Syntyche (v2-3) if you knew them both? Are there any relationships you need to attend to currently? What approach will you take?

Pray for one another that God will help you to press on with perseverance, perspective and patience.

Some resources...

- A reminder of some of the themes in **Philippians** is repeated overleaf.
- Here is the **Bible Project’s** introduction and helpful diagrammatic representation of Philippians: <https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-philippians/>
- **“Run to win the Prize”- Tom Schreiner.** A book on Perseverance in the New Testament, feel free to borrow from Charlie, or read the summary [here](#).
- **The three tenses of salvation:**
 - “We have been saved from the penalty of sin (called **justification**);
 - we are being saved from the power of sin (called **sanctification**);
 - we shall be saved from the presence of sin (called **glorification**).”

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¹ Charlie’s talk on Perseverance is available [here](#) or by emailing/texting him.

An introduction to four brief themes in Philippians...

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel Phil 1:27.

A “JESUS MINDSET”...

The word mind (2:2) or mindset (2:5) comes up a couple of times in the book, particularly in the famous chapter 2, when Paul is calling upon the Philippians to have the same humble and other-person-centred thinking of Jesus (also exemplified in Timothy 2:19-24 and Epaphroditus in 2:25-30). The same “mindset” word is also translated *feel* 1:7, *view* 3:15, *mind* 3:19 and 4:2 and *concern* 4:10. It will be fantastic to pray for one another (using perhaps the prayer of 1:9-11) that we will have this “Jesus mindset”. We can pray that the good news of Jesus’ identity (before whom every knee will bow, 2:10), his gift of righteousness (which trumps all worldly forms of status, 3:7-8) and the many reasons he gives us to rejoice even when circumstances are hard (1:18, 4:4), will help us to stand together in partnership in the gospel, becoming more like him each day.

PARTNERSHIP...

The Greek word *koinonia* (meaning fellowship or partnership) comes up in different ways in 1:4, 1:7, 2:1 and 4:14 (translated “partnership” or “sharing”). Paul had a deep relationship with these Macedonian churches, and they were commended for their financial generosity in 2 Cor 8:1-4 above and beyond their means. This theme will be really helpful to us as we consider how we can partner together in the work of loving Jesus, loving one another and loving Huntingdon at CCH. Not only in formal roles on the rota, or generous giving, but in all the small acts of love that happen between church and lifegroup members as we seek to do everything without arguing or grumbling (2:14).

SUFFERING...

Paul is suffering as he writes this letter (likely from a prison in Rome in around AD 62), though he can speak of many benefits that come from that (1:12-26). The Philippians are also likely facing some sort of opposition (1:28) as they seek to live out their faith in the only Lord and Saviour in a very Roman town that would have pressed for loyalty to Caesar. Many in our church are suffering in different ways at the moment. Let’s allow God’s word to help us to see how God can use suffering, but also let’s support and encourage one another as Paul did with the Philippians and the Philippians did with him.

UNITY...

Paul calls the Philippians to stand together as one (1:27) and to be like-minded (2:2). When a church is under pressure, it’s so easy to let relationships suffer, and for little things to get between brothers and sisters (as was obviously happening for Euodia & Syntyche- two workers who had fallen out). In the place of grumbling and arguing, Paul calls for abounding love (v9) and bags of joy! (1:4, 1:18, 1:25, 2:2, 2:18, 2:29, 4:1, 4:4). We have a wonderfully united church, but the book will help a Christ-centred unity to grow despite difference, finding common ground that overcomes relational difficulties.

As you read through Philippians in your own time you’ll spot these and other themes.