

# Philippians 3:12-17

**Philippians 3:12** – “Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.

3756 [e]	3754 [e]	2235 [e]	2983 [e]	2228 [e]	2235 [e]	5048 [e]	1377 [e]	1161 [e]	1487 [e]	2532 [e]	2638 [e]	1909 [e]
ouch	hoti	ēdē	elabon	ē	ēdē	teteleiōmai	diōkō	de	ei	kai	katalabō	eph'
12 οὐχ	ὅτι	ἤδη	ἔλαβον ,	ἢ	ἤδη	τετελείωμαι ;	διώκω	δὲ ,	εἰ	καὶ	καταλάβω ,	ἐφ'
Not	that	already	I have obtained [it]	or	already	have been perfected	I am pursuing	however	whether	also	I might lay hold	of
Adv	Conj	Adv	V-AIA-1S	Conj	Adv	V-RIMP-1S	V-PIA-1S	Conj	Conj	Conj	V-ASA-1S	Prep

3739 [e]	2532 [e]	2638 [e]	5259 [e]	5547 [e]	2424 [e]
hō	kai	katelēmphthēn	hypo	Christou	Iēsou
ὧ	καὶ	κατελήμφθην ,	ὑπὸ	Χριστοῦ	Ἰησοῦ .
that which	also	I was laid hold of	by	Christ	Jesus
RelPro-DNS	Conj	V-AIP-1S	Prep	N-GMS	N-GMS

- The analogy that Paul has been using and the terms he has used to express himself have been from the world of accounting.
- Paul now moves into the world of athletics, competition, self-discipline, running and winning.
- It appears Paul is making a clear point that he (nor anyone else) has obtained perfection. This would be some kind of holiness doctrine that taught that perfection could be attained. This could include full eschatological benefits that could lead into a dominion-like theology. See 1 Corinthians 4:8-13, which is written to a church just south of Philippi.
- Paul (and, others) can press on towards the goal, but they will not achieve the goal in this life.
- The best Paul could do was come closer to fulfilling the purpose Christ Jesus took hold of him.

**Philippians 3:13** – “Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,

80 [e]	1473 [e]	1683 [e]	3756 [e]	3049 [e]	2638 [e]	1520 [e]	1161 [e]	3588 [e]	3303 [e]	3694 [e]
adelphoi	egō	emauton	ou	logizomai	kateilēphenai	hen	de	ta	men	opisō
13 ἀδελφοί ,	ἐγὼ	ἐμαυτὸν	οὐ*	λογίζομαι	κατελιφέναι .	ἓν	δέ :	τὰ	μὲν	ὀπίσω
Brothers	I	myself	not	do consider	to have taken hold [of it]	one thing	however	the things	indeed	behind
N-VMP	PPro-N1S	PPro-AM1S	Adv	V-PIMP-1S	V-RNA	Adj-ANS	Conj	Art-ANP	Conj	Adv

1950 [e]	3588 [e]	1161 [e]	1715 [e]	1901 [e]
epilanthanomenos	tois	de	emprosten	epekteinomenos
ἐπιλανθανόμενος ,	τοῖς	δὲ	ἔμπροσθεν	ἐπεκτεινόμενος ,
forgetting	to the things	moreover	ahead	reaching forward
V-PPMP-NMS	Art-DNP	Conj	Adv	V-PPMP-NMS

- Paul again stresses not only the fact he has not obtained perfection, but he does not consider himself to have even fully accomplished what Jesus Christ called him to accomplish.
- At times Paul does realize he had completed a portion of his ministry, but this just meant there was the next phase. See Romans 15:19-24

**Philippians 3:14** – “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

2596 [e]	4649 [e]	1377 [e]	1519 [e]	3588 [e]	1017 [e]	3588 [e]	507 [e]	2821 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	1722 [e]	5547 [e]	2424 [e]
kata	skopon	diōkō	eis	to	brabeion	tēs	anō	klēseōs	tou	Theou	en	Christō	Iēsou
κατὰ	σκοπὸν	διώκω	εἰς	τὸ	βραβεῖον	, τῆς	ἄνω	κλήσεως	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	, ἐν	Χριστῷ	Ἰησοῦ .
toward	[the] goal	I press on	for	the	prize	of the	upward	calling	-	of God	in	Christ	Jesus
Prep	N-AMS	V-PIA-1S	Prep	Art-ANS	N-ANS	Art-GFS	Adv	N-GFS	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Prep	N-DMS	N-DMS

- Key word: **skopos** translated “goal”. It is only used here in the NT.
  - The word skopos comes from the word skopein which means “look”. The reason for the connection in the Greek language is that the runner “looked” (*skopein*) at the finish post which became identified as the *skopos*, or the place the running was looking.
- Reaching the *skopos* results in receiving the “prize” (**brabeion**)
  - This same word *brabeion* or “prize” is used in 1 Corinthians 9:24 – “all the runners run, but only one gets the prize.”
  - 1 Cor. 9:25-27 provides more details concerning rules and awards
  - More details describing the winners can be found in 2 Timothy 4:8
- At the Greek games the dignitary officiating or presiding over the games would award the prize. Sometimes the emperor would be that official. Jesus Christ is the one officiating over the “Christian Games” we are participating in today. At the end of the games Jesus will be the one awarding the prizes to the winners. So, again, the games are not over, the goal has not been reached and no one is perfect. That is yet future and Jesus will present the awards.
- The phrase “for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus is literally, “the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

**Philippians 3:15** – “Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.”

3745 [e]	3767 [e]	5046 [e]	3778 [e]	5426 [e]	2532 [e]	1487 [e]	5100 [e]	2088 [e]	5426 [e]	2532 [e]	3778 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]
Hosoi	oun	teleioi	touto	phronōmen	kai	ei	ti	heterōs	phroneite	kai	touto	ho	Theos
15 Ὅσοι	οὖν	τέλειοι	τοῦτο	φρονῶμεν ;	καὶ	εἴ	τι	ἑτέρως	φρονεῖτε ,	καὶ	τοῦτο	ὁ	Θεὸς
As many as	therefore	[are] mature	this	should be of mind	and	if [in]	anything	differently	you are minded	even	this	-	God
RelPro-NMP	Conj	Adj-NMP	DPro-ANS	V-PSA-1P	Conj	Conj	IPro-ANS	Adv	V-PIA-2P	Conj	DPro-ANS	Art-NMS	N-NMS

4771 [e]	601 [e]
hymīn	apokalypsei
ὑμῖν	ἀποκαλύψει .
to you	will reveal
PPro-D2P	V-FIA-3S

- “mature” is from *teleioi* which could also be translated “perfect”, but the context is speaking of maturity
  - Paul is reclaiming the word “perfect” (or, *teleioi*) and giving it the proper definition.
  - Paul says those who claim to be “perfect” should be thinking the way Paul has just described.
  - Here Paul identifies with the “mature” (*teleioi*) just like he did with the “strong” in Romans 15.
  - Christ-centered life as Paul described it was maturity
- But, such a mature view is not easily attained. Some will not be able to understand or to appreciate the Christ-centered life.
  - These are the non-perfect or the non-mature.
  - They are not rebuked by Paul, but encouraged to continue their pursuit of Truth and God will reveal it to them in time.
  - There is the danger of those who do not understand to:
    - One, find a short cut to what could pass as maturity or perfection.
      - Legalism
      - Christian-like lingo or behavior or hangouts, etc.

- Two, become critical in their ignorance of Paul and mature believers who are the strong living in freedom and pursuing Christ and not religion or church activities.
- “That too” is *kai touto* which could mean that beside the supposed divine revelation and voices of the Holy Spirit they have heard (Paul being sarcastic; referring to things like 2 Corinthians 12:1), God will also reveal to them the basic Christian principles he has already revealed to the apostles, church leaders and through his Word.
  - Or, Paul is saying with sincerity that God will continue to be faithful to those who pursue Truth to reveal the same plan of action and course of life.

**Philippians 3:16** – “Only let us hold true to what we have attained.”

4133 [e]	1519 [e]	3739 [e]	5348 [e]	3588 [e]	846 [e]	4748 [e]	2583 [e]	3588 [e]	846 [e]	5426 [e]
plēn	eis	ho	ephthasamen	tō	autō	stoichein	kanoni	to	auto	phronein
16 πλήν	εἰς	ὁ	ἐφθάσαμεν ,	τῷ	αὐτῷ	στοιχεῖν .	ἄκανόνι	τὸ	αὐτὸ	φρονεῖν
Nevertheless	to	that which	we have attained	by the	same	to walk	rule	the	same	mind
Conj	Prep	RelPro-ANS	V-AIA-1P	Art-DNS	PPro-DM3S	V-PNA	N-DMS	Art-ANS	Adj-ANS	V-PNA

- Note: there is no word for “rule” which appears in some translations. (It is NOT placed into the RSV, ESV or NIV). The addition in some translations is to clarify by gaining support from Galatians 6:16 where “rule” is translated from “kanon
- Stoichein or “to walk” or “hold true to” was originally a military term which meant “to be in a rank, or series”.
  - This would be yet another call for unity.
  - The military family histories of Philippi would have recognized this word and its meaning.
  - This is direction to obtain the correct mind-set/position and translate that mind-set/position into action/performance.

**Philippians 3:17** – “Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.”

4831 [e]	1473 [e]	1096 [e]	80 [e]	2532 [e]	4648 [e]	3588 [e]	3779 [e]	4043 [e]	2531 [e]	2192 [e]	5179 [e]
Symmimētai	mou	ginesthe	adelphoi	kai	skopeite	tous	houtō	peripatountas	kathōs	echete	typon
17 Συμμιμηταί*	μου	γίνεσθε ,	ἀδελφοί ,	καὶ	σκοπεῖτε	τοὺς	οὕτω*	περιπατοῦντας ,	καθὼς	ἔχετε	τύπον
Imitators together	of me	be	brothers	and	consider	those	thus	walking	as	you have [for]	a pattern
N-NMP	PPro-G1S	V-PMM/P-2P	N-VMP	Conj	V-PMA-2P	Art-AMP	Adv	V-PPA-AMP	Adv	V-PIA-2P	N-AMS

1473 [e]  
hēmas  
ἡμᾶς .  
us  
PPro-A1P

**Philippians 3:18** – “For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

4183 [e]	1063 [e]	4043 [e]	3739 [e]	4178 [e]	3004 [e]	4771 [e]	3568 [e]	1161 [e]	2532 [e]	2799 [e]	3004 [e]	3588 [e]
polloi	gar	peripatousin	hous	pollakis	elegon	hymin	nyn	de	kai	klaiōn	legō	tous
18 πολλοὶ	γὰρ	περιπατοῦσιν ,	οὓς	πολλάκις	ἔλεγον	ὑμῖν ,	νῦν	δὲ	καὶ	κλαίων ,	λέγω	τοὺς
many	indeed	are walking	[of] whom	often	I told	you	now	moreover	even	weeping	I tell [you]	-
Adj-NMP	Conj	V-PIA-3P	RelPro-AMP	Adv	V-IIA-1S	PPro-D2P	Adv	Conj	Conj	V-PPA-NMS	V-PIA-1S	Art-AMP

2190 [e] 3588 [e] 4716 [e] 3588 [e] 5547 [e]  
echthrous tou staurou tou Christou  
ἐχθροὺς τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ;  
[as] enemies of the cross - of Christ  
Adj-AMP Art-GMS N-GMS Art-GMS N-GMS

**Philippians 3:19** – “Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

3739 [e]	3588 [e]	5056 [e]	684 [e]	3739 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	3588 [e]	2836 [e]	2532 [e]	3588 [e]	1391 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	152 [e]
hōn	to	telos	apōleia	hōn	ho	theos	hē	koilia	kai	hē	doxa	en	tē	aischynē
19 ὧν	τὸ	τέλος	ἀπώλεια	, ὧν	ὁ	θεός	ἡ	κοιλία	, καὶ	ἡ	δόξα	ἐν	τῇ	αἰσχύνῃ
whose	-	end [is]	destruction	whose	-	God [is]	[their]	belly	and	[their]	glory	[is] in	the	shame
RelPro-GMP	Art-NNS	N-NNS	N-NFS	RelPro-GMP	Art-NMS	N-NMS	Art-NFS	N-NFS	Conj	Art-NFS	N-NFS	Prep	Art-DFS	N-DFS

846 [e]	3588 [e]	3588 [e]	1919 [e]	5426 [e]
autōn	hoi	ta	epigeia	phronountes
αὐτῶν	-- οἱ	τὰ	ἐπίγεια	φρονοῦντες .
of them	those	things	earthly	minding
PPro-GM3P	Art-NMP	Art-ANP	Adj-ANP	V-PPA-NMP

**Philippians 3:20** – “But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,”

1473 [e]	1063 [e]	3588 [e]	4175 [e]	1722 [e]	3772 [e]	5225 [e]	1537 [e]	3739 [e]	2532 [e]	4990 [e]	553 [e]	2962 [e]
hēmōn	gar	to	politeuma	en	ouranois	hyparchei	ex	hou	kai	Sōtēra	apekdechometha	Kyrion
20 ἡμῶν	γὰρ	τὸ	πολίτευμα	ἐν	οὐρανοῖς	ὑπάρχει	, ἐξ	οὗ	καὶ	, Σωτῆρα	, ἀπεκδεχόμεθα	Κύριον
of us	indeed	the	citizenship	in	[the] heavens	exists	from	whence	also	a Savior	we are awaiting	[the] Lord
PPro-G1P	Conj	Art-NNS	N-NNS	Prep	N-DMP	V-PIA-3S	Prep	RelPro-GMS	Conj	N-AMS	V-PIM/P-1P	N-AMS

2424 [e]	5547 [e]
Iēsoun	Christon
Ἰησοῦν	Χριστόν ,
Jesus	Christ
N-AMS	N-AMS