

Daily Bible Readings
Our Reading Prep For: 29 January 2023

Stand Firm

Monday: Be Watchful (**Matthew 24:36-44**)

Tuesday: Be Prepared (**Matthew 25:1-13**)

Wednesday: Be Trustworthy (**Matthew 25:14-21**)

Thursday: Be Compassionate (**Matthew 25:31-40**)

Friday: Be Holy (**1st Peter 1:13-21**)

Saturday: Stand Firm (**Philippians 3:17-4:1**)

Sunday: Hold Fast (**Philippians 3:12-16**)

Stand Firm

Bible Background • **Philippians 3:12–4:1**

Printed Text • **Philippians 3:12–16**

Devotional Reading • **Matthew 25:14–29**

Keep in Mind: *Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.” (Philippians 3:16)*

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: **BECOME** familiar with what Paul says about living as it relates to eternity with Jesus Christ; **APPRECIATE** that the journey of Christian living and a quest for something eternal are demanding experiences; and **PLEDGE** to stand firm in Jesus Christ.

In Focus

“Developing a strong relationship with Christ prepares us for the relationship we will have with Him in eternity. Paul wanted to encourage the Philippians to please our Lord in their daily lives and stay in the race.

Focal Verses

“KJV Philippians 3:12-16

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also, I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

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,

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

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

The People, Places, and Times

Races. To the Greeks of Paul’s day, races were very important. After all, this was the culture that had invented the Olympics! Beforehand, the runner spent much time in physical fitness training. A race in those days was in a straight line. The runner followed the line and raced toward the finish line. At the conclusion of the race, the herald proclaimed the winner, and the winner stepped forward to receive the prize—a palm branch and perhaps money. The race was not just a game to the Greeks; only one man could win. In Christ, however, many will win and we hope to be in that crowd.”

Background

Before Paul was reaching out to grasp the prize, Jesus reached out to him and grasped him on the road to Damascus. All of us have different salvation stories. We can tell how God was reaching out to us and if we could see things from God's "perspective, we would probably realize that He was calling out to us at many times and in many ways before we received Him as our Savior. But God's call to Paul (Saul, as he was called in those days) was quite different. First, God called out to him with a bright light and spoke directly to him. After this, Paul was blinded and was led to the city of Damascus.

For three days, Paul was in this city fasting and unable to see. When the Lord sent Ananias to pray with him, the Lord told Ananias that Paul would bring the name of Jesus before Gentiles, kings, and Jews. This was the task that Jesus had taken hold of Paul to do. Paul did not want to fail in the task that the Lord Jesus had for him. The Lord has grasped each of us for different tasks. We have different things to do at different times of our lives, but we don't want to fail to do those things that the Lord has called us to do. It's a race.

Will we reach the goal that He has set for us?"

In Depth

- 1. Pressing toward the Goal (Philippians 3:12–14)**
- 2. Putting Commitment to the Goal into Practice (vv. 15–16)**