

REACHING FORTH!

*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.*

*I press
forward to the
mark for the
prize of the
high calling of
God in Christ.*

***Philippians
3:13,14***

Reading through Chapter three of the book of *Philippians* one cannot fail to be overawed by the manner in which Apostle Paul was caught up with the things of God. One sees him totally absorbed in apprehending that for which he was apprehended. Not only does one see a man who had a deep longing to attain the mark or goal that was set before him, but one also sees him constantly 'stretching forth' to know Him and the power of His resurrection. What a dynamic example for any Christian!

Beloved, this is the mentality the Lord would like us to have in these days. Be like Apostle Paul who

was not content with the revelations he had but rather desired to possess more and more of the reality of the Lord in his life.

Today the Christian hierarchy no longer urge the adherents of their faith to reach forth to those higher things which God has called them for. They preach that it is enough to be born again, that it is sufficient if they have trusted in Christ unto salvation. And therefore, the majority of Christians are unable to taste of that which is God's best.

There is a school of thought that declares that once we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ we possess everything that He Himself had and that all we need to do is to claim those promises. They say, "You claim—you get it". Another view is that when we accept Jesus into our lives we have all that we confess, for He has completed all that was needed to be done. They say, "You confess it—you have it". They encourage believers to ask for every worldly need, and to

believe that 'God shall supply every need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus'. How different these views are compared to those of Apostle Paul who having received so much yet declared that he had not yet attained everything that God had to offer. And for this reason he always strived to attain more, to move on, and to go yet a little deeper into the things of God.

The goal before Apostle Paul was to grow into the fulness of Christ Jesus. He was not satisfied with rudiments of Christian life which are repentance, faith toward God, new life in Christ, baptisms of water and Holy Spirit, doctrines of resurrection and eternal judgment (Hebrews 6:1-2). Beloved, spiritual maturity is not something that will fall into your lap during a revival meeting. True maturity involves manifesting the very life of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is not something that can be obtained by confessing, believing or claiming. Rather we need to daily

press on, in obedience and faith, to the high calling upon our lives—that our inner man may grow to the likeness and full stature of our Lord, Jesus Christ. **There is no scope to fully ‘stretch forth’ or to reach out to this tremendous goal in Christ Jesus whilst we sit in a rocking chair. Indeed all our natural faculties, our senses, our energy and our whole beings need to be directed God ward, trusting and abiding in the Lord, to fulfill His will in our lives.** But let us not fall into error and attempt to use human psychology and the wisdom of man, to attain what God has set before us, in the heavenly or spiritual realm. Let us beware of the emphasis, in some quarters, to rely upon abilities and virtues to attain that which is spiritual. Let us not also fall into the trap of believing that we have already acquired our inheritance in the Lord, and therefore no longer need to reach forth unto higher and deeper dimensions in Him.

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