

# Philippians 3:12–4:1

## Time to Grow Up: Maturing in Christ

The Summit Church, *Philippians: The Secret to the Good Life*

**MPT:** Because Christ has taken hold of us and will one day transform us, we must press on toward Christlike maturity, reject earthly patterns of life, and stand firm as citizens of heaven.

**MPS:** While you haven't arrived, you belong to Christ, you've been claimed by Christ, your future is secure in Christ, so keep pursuing Christ until you are finally made like Christ.

**UFN:** The good life belongs to people who are satisfied in Christ but never satisfied with where they are spiritually.

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July 4

Happy Birthday, America! You don't look a day over 240.

### STAND + READ: Philippians 3:12–4:1

<sup>12</sup>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. <sup>13</sup>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, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup>Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. <sup>16</sup>Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

<sup>17</sup>Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. <sup>18</sup>For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. <sup>19</sup>Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. <sup>20</sup>But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup>who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

<sup>4:1</sup>Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

### INTRODUCTION

Family beach TRIP (not vacation). Golden years: boogie boarding. **One of my favorite things about my 6-year-old is his confidence.**

- *Did you see me?? I rode that wave a mile!*
- *Watch this: I can run faster than Sonic.*
- *Wind surfing? I could do that.*
- Honestly, I respect it. Completely detached from reality, but impressive nonetheless.

However, one area that confidence is testing my patience (and sometimes I think my Christianity) is when he wants to do something he's not yet learned to do—like he has all the confidence in the world but the motor skills of newborn giraffe: **pour milk, crack eggs, putting toothpaste on, carrying plates.** It usually always ends in a mess.

- And when he's 6, it's a little frustrating, but it's still more cute than anything. You smile, grab a towel, "Good try, Buddy."
- Cute for a 6-year-old ... but if he's 26 and still spilling milk like that, it's not cute anymore, is it?
- **Eventually, childish confidence stops being cute and starts being concerning.** At some point, you have to grow up.

**There's a term we tend to use in church for a new follower of Jesus: Baby Christian.** And there are things that are understandable when you're a **baby Christian**—there's struggles, blind spots, insecurities, habits, and ignorances and assumptions that make sense for someone that's just entered into this new life with Jesus. And if that's you, **THAT'S OKAY—babies are supposed to be babies.**

- But babies are also supposed to grow. And just as there are all sorts of physical, emotional, and mental signs of maturity, there's also **signs of spiritual maturity.**

That's what Paul is concerned with here in the back half of chapter 3.

## CONTEXT

Last week, Pastor J.D. showed us that Philippians 3 begins with Paul taking the old **résumé** he once trusted—his morality, religion, pedigree, zeal, and accomplishments—and ends up saying it's all **loss compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ.**

Now Paul is gonna show us what life looks like *after* we come to know Christ. Paul's a realist; he knows the tension of following Jesus: **Yes, we are fully accepted in Christ, but we are not yet fully mature in Christ.** In other words, Paul is gonna say, **the good life belongs to people who are satisfied in Christ but never satisfied with where they are spiritually.**

- So I've titled this message **Time to Grow Up: Maturing in Christ.**

Up to this point, Paul's been laying out the ideal Christian life, and I don't know about you, but Paul sounds like some kind of **Super Christian.** But then v 12 comes along: Paul says, **Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect ...**

When Paul says "**obtained this,**" he's talking about **knowing and becoming FULLY like Christ. THIS = Looking completely like Jesus.**

This is the Apostle Paul saying, "*Lest you think too highly of me, I have not arrived! Just like you, I'm still a work in progress.*"

- And, y'all, I love that Paul says this. Because for 21 years, I sat in the same seat you're sitting in now, and EVERY SINGLE WEEK I remember thinking some form of, "I hear you, Pastor ... but your life is **perfect** and you **have it all together**. You have no idea what my life is really like."
- Paul, in his wisdom, anticipates that and is like, "Nah, bro, if you only knew. I still struggle. I still do things I don't wanna do. I *don't* do things I *do* wanna do. If you think I'm some kind of Super Christian, you're gonna be *super disappointed*. I'm not perfect. I've not obtained this. I haven't arrived. We're way more similar than different."
- So lemme say this: In case you think Paul, or me, or Pastor J.D., or Bryan, or your campus pastor are some kind of **spiritual superheros** with perfect little families that sit around reading the Bible in peace and joy 24/7 with no conflict, all you gotta do is go ask our wives if that's reality. That'll knock that illusion off its pedestal real quick, I promise you!

We haven't arrived, but we keep putting one spiritual foot in front of the other. To get that idea across, Paul actually uses the same Greek word 3x in verse 12, which our English translations render a bit differently: **12Not 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.**

- All three of those words come from the same root word meaning: *obtain, make one's own, lay hold of, seize, or catch*.
- ***Not that I've already obtained perfect maturity, but I press on to obtain it, because Christ Jesus has obtained me!***

Notice Paul's pursuit of Jesus is not for self-salvation.

He does NOT say, "I press on so Christ will make me his own."

He says, "I press on *because* Christ Jesus has made me his own."

He's chasing after the God who has already chased after him ... he's trying to obtain that which has already obtained him.

This is the Christian life in one sentence: **We chase after God because he chased after us.**

- Our lives are a **response** to Jesus' love toward us. We don't pursue Christ to **earn** God's love ... we pursue Christ because **we already have it**—he demonstrated that love for us on the cross.

We talk about this all the time, but strip away all the religiosity of this whole thing, and **what it means to be a Christian is to be obtained by and taken hold of by Christ!**

- If you're a follower of Jesus, it's because Christ Jesus made you his own.

But while salvation is free, our spiritual growth is not ... therefore, we **PRESS ON**. PRESS ON carries the idea of **vigorous and determined effort**.

- The Philippians, when they read this letter, would've immediately thought of the **Isthmian Games** ... basically, their version of the Olympics.
- Similar to an athlete striving for victory in the Olympics, the Christian life requires **perseverance** and **dedication**.

- That's what Paul is getting at: When it comes to his spiritual maturity, he is filled with a **holy dissatisfaction**. He is fully satisfied in Christ but not satisfied with where he is spiritually.

But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

The "goal" is the finish line. When a runner is straining for the finish line, they don't look to the right or left; instead, every muscle is focused dead-center ahead.

- This is how we are to live: **focused**, with **purpose** and **intentionality**.
- It's Paul's ONE mission, he says: **full maturity in Christ**.

<sup>15</sup>Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.

This is funny to me cuz Paul obviously thinks he's right ... so he's like, *"If you disagree with me, fine. God will show you I'm right."*

- His approach is actually really wise—instead of getting mad at immature people, Paul trusts God will show them the truth.
- And what he's alluding to here is people who have taken an **apathetic attitude toward their growth in Christ**. He's saying God will show them, if the Holy Spirit really is living inside of them, that they need to push themselves harder in their quest for maturity.

As for the rest of us, Paul says, <sup>16</sup>Only let us hold true to what we have attained. In other words, what you need isn't some **new revelation from God**; you just need to be **faithful and obedient to the things he's already shown you** ... hold true to what you *have* already understood and attained.

<sup>17</sup>Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

Basically, *"You wanna know how to do this? Just look at me. Watch my life. Look at my maturity and copy that."*

And Paul isn't being arrogant when he says that. He's not saying, "I'm the standard." He's just saying, "You need living examples." Not just sermons, books, and podcasts ... but people whose lives you can actually see up close. People you can sit across the table from and say, *"That's the kind of faith I wanna follow!"*

It's important to have good, mature examples you can look to because, v 18, <sup>18</sup>For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

In other words, choose your examples carefully, because the people you admire will shape the person you become.

And Paul says this with tears, cuz he knows how high the stakes are. Bad examples (“enemies of the cross”) don’t usually look dangerous at first—they often look like normal, impressive, successful, confident people. To the point we admire them and follow their example.

But Paul says, “Don’t be fooled. Learn to recognize where their life is headed: <sup>19</sup>Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

- **Their end is destruction:** Paul’s like, “*This is where this road leads.*” It may look freeing and fun now, but sin always overpromises and underdelivers. The end of a life rejecting the cross is not freedom but eternal and irreversible separation from God in the lake of fire—eternal destruction.
- **Their god is their belly:** Their desires are in charge. They are ruled by their appetites and physical desires—be it food, sex, comfort, attention, success, approval, laziness, control—those desires are in charge. What they want, they give in to.
- **They glory in their shame:** They celebrate the very behaviors they should grieve. Instead of repenting of sinful things, they rejoice in shameful ones.
- **Their minds are set on earthly things:** They live like this world is all there is. They focus on temporary material things over eternal and spiritual ones.

<sup>20</sup>But, by contrast, our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Philippi had become a Roman colony. And with Rome being the great superpower of the day, the citizens of Philippi were proud to be citizens of Rome. Rome shaped their laws, their values, and their identity.

So when Paul writes and says, “our citizenship is in heaven,” he’s making a bold statement. He’s saying, “*That’s where your deepest identity comes from now—not Rome, not your résumé, not your appetites, not this world ... but HEAVEN.*”

- Which, of course, doesn't mean we ignore life here. No, we live here faithfully, but we belong there ultimately.

And as heavenly citizens, we await a Savior <sup>21</sup>who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself, <sup>4:1</sup>Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

We don’t drift. We don’t cave. We don’t follow the wrong examples. We don’t set our minds on earthly things. We stand firm in the Lord—because our Savior is coming from *there*, we can stand firm *here*.

So what does it look like to stand firm and **grow up in Christ**? Church, I don't want us to just get older *around* Christian things ... I want us to actually **grow up** and **mature**. Paul gives us four marks of maturity in Christ, four ways we grow up.

## Maturing in Christ: Four Ways We Grow Up

### 1. HONESTY: Admit you haven't arrived (12–13)

The first sign of spiritual maturity is admitting you're not as mature as you think you are. Again, Paul, <sup>12</sup>Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect ...

- This is the APOSTLE PAUL we're talking about: Church planter. Missionary. Wrote half the New Testament. Shipwrecked, beaten, imprisoned, *but kept going anyway* Paul.
- So if *he* looks at his own life and says, "Yeah, I haven't arrived yet," then we're fooling ourselves if we think we have.

Spiritual maturity begins with honesty, not arrogance. Back to our opening example: **It's like when a kid first learns to do something basic and immediately thinks they're elite.**

- **It's cute when a kid thinks he's arrived. It's dangerous when a Christian does.**
- The moment you think, "*I'm good. I got this. I've arrived ... I don't need others speaking into my life,*" that's usually the moment you've stopped growing.

You refuse to, as **2 Corinthians 13:5** says, "Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. Test yourselves."

This is why Paul's honesty is so important. Realize he's not comparing himself to other people and then assessing his maturity—if Paul wanted to compare himself with others, he had plenty of reasons to feel **spiritually impressive and mature**. He already told us earlier in chapter 3 that by religious résumé standards, he was **valedictorian**.

See, when you compare yourself with other people, you will almost always lie to yourself in one of two directions:

1. You'll either find someone **more mature and further along** than you and feel crushed: *Ugh, I'll never be like them.*
2. Or you'll find someone **less mature** than you and feel smug: *Pfft, at least I'm not like them.*

But when we honestly assess ourselves against the person and work of Christ, that's a gamechanger.

- You won't **despair** cuz he's already made you his own.

- Neither will you get **proud**, cuz you realize how far you have to go.
- The gospel enables both things to be true at the same time: Christ Jesus has made me his own *and* I've got a long way to go.

That's not shame, that's not pride, that's gospel-centered honesty. Listen, some of you are stuck in your growth, and it's not because you've **failed**. You're stuck because you won't be **honest**!

- You keep calling **immaturity** "personality"
- You keep calling **lust** a "struggle"
- You keep calling **selfishness** "boundaries"
- You keep calling **greed** "being responsible"

You will never mature beyond the truth you refuse to tell or the secret you refuse to confess.

The first mark of growing up is telling the truth about where you actually are. Ask someone close to you this week—someone you trust: *Where do you see immaturity in me? Where do I need to grow up?*

Growing up starts when you stop pretending you've arrived and start being honest. Then we begin to FOCUS.

## 2. FOCUS: Pursue one thing (12–16)

<sup>13</sup>Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. And here's the key phrase: **But one thing I do ...**

- Paul says, *"I haven't arrived. I'm not pretending I'm already mature. I'm **being honest** about where I'm at. But I'm not gonna wander aimlessly either; I know what I'm after: ONE thing."*

Here's why this is important: **Honesty without focus just becomes self-awareness without growth.** Honesty is important, of course, but without aiming that honesty somewhere it's just **navel-gazing**. You've gotta understand this, because this is rampant today:

- We know our **issues**.
- We can name all our **dysfunctions**.
- We have language for trauma, triggers, generational diagnoses, personality types . . . we've got Enneagram numbers, love languages, Myers-Briggs, Hogwarts houses... *WE ARE NOT SHORT ON SELF-AWARENESS.*
- But self-awareness by itself does not make you mature. At some point you have to take that self-awareness and aim it somewhere.

Paul is honest about his state of maturity, and he says: There's ONE thing I'ma focus on. There's ONE thing I'ma pursue.

- Not 20 things. Not following his heart. ONE THING.
- Maturity requires holy focus. **Focus is, at its core, a settled direction of life.**

Paul learned this pattern from Jesus. This was so often Jesus' response to people:

- **Rich young ruler**, who thought he kept all the commandments: *ONE thing you lack.*
- **Martha**, distracted and anxious by many things: *Only ONE thing is worth being concerned about.*
- **David** says in Psalm 27:4: *ONE thing I ask of the Lord—ONE thing I seek—to dwell in the house of the Lord ...*
  - Over and over again, Scripture pushes us away from **scattered spirituality** and toward **focused pursuit**.
  - So often, the secret to maturing in Christ is not *adding* more things to your life but FOCUSING on the right thing.

Then Paul tells us what that one thing practically involves: **But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.**

- Focus means I leave what is behind, I lean toward what is ahead, and I live for what is eternal. Let's take those piece by piece:

**Focus by leaving what is behind.**

**Forgetting what lies behind** is not about **erasing the past** or **pretending it didn't happen** ... it means refusing to let the past control your **present obedience**.

Paul had to forget all his successes—all his résumé items and religious achievements.

He also had to forget all his failures—his shame and regrets, sins that could have kept him stuck.

**Listen, your past may help explain you, but it does not get to define you.** There's a reason your **car's windshield and rearview mirror** are not the same size.

- You need the rearview mirror—you need to learn from your past. You need to remember God's faithfulness. You need to see where you've been. **But you cannot drive forward while staring backward.**
- Some of you are trying to follow Jesus with your eyes fixed on the rearview mirror: replaying old **shames**, old **failures**, old **wounds**, old **relationships**, old **"what ifs."**
- Others of you are staring backwards at old **trophies**, old **achievements**, old **spiritual highs**.
- But maturity means the past **informs and teaches** you, but it does not **define or control** you.
- Sure, glance at that rearview mirror—learn, give thanks, repent—but then fix your focus on the windshield, because Jesus is calling you forward.
- **For followers of Jesus, the glory days are always in the future, not the past. We live looking through the windshield, not the rearview mirror.**

- The mature Christian isn't controlled by yesterday's shame *or* yesterday's success.

### Focus by leaning toward what is ahead.

Paul says, “Strain forward to what lies ahead.”

Again, it's this picture of a **runner stretching toward the finish line**—body tilted forward, eyes locked ahead, making one of those crazy faces. They're giving it everything they've got.

- But notice Paul isn't just talking about **effort**, he's talking about **direction**.
- How heartbreaking to run hard, give everything you've got, and still lose the race because you were sprinting toward the wrong finish line.
- See, this isn't just about *pace*, it's also about *direction*.
- Some of us don't have a discipline problem as much as we have a direction problem—we're busy, we're moving, we're putting in effort. But our lives are leaning toward comfort, approval, success, control, or distraction, instead of Christ.
- That life won't lead toward maturity, but exhaustion.
- Direction matters more than pace—strain *forward*.

And what does **forward** look like? Paul says, <sup>14</sup>**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.** In other words, Paul isn't just running from something; he's running toward someone.

### Focus by living for what is eternal.

The “**upward call of God in Christ Jesus,**” again, would've conjured up the image of their Olympic games, where the winner would ascend the steps in the stadium to the **bema seat**, where the judge or emperor would say his **name**, his **father's name**, and his **country**, and then **place a wreath on his head**.

- That's the image Paul is reaching for: He wants to live with such focus that one day he stands before the true Judge—the eternal King—and receives the prize.
- The prize isn't just heaven. The prize is CHRIST—seeing him, knowing him, being with him, *becoming like him*.

Spiritual maturity usually doesn't begin with some massive, dramatic life overhaul ... maturity happens as you take one step of obedience at a time: leaving behind what holds you back, leaning in the direction of Jesus, and living for what lasts.

So tomorrow morning, ask yourself three questions:

1. What do I need to leave behind?
2. What do I need to lean toward?
3. What one thing will I do today that will still matter in eternity? Not 12 things—one. Prayer? Bible? Confession? Sexual purity? Evangelism?

### 3. FORMATION: Choose what and who is shaping you (vv 15–18)

Verse 15, Paul says: <sup>15</sup>Let those of us who are mature think this way ...

- He's saying that **mature Christians think differently**.
- Right thinking is always the foundation for right living.

Then he gets super practical: <sup>17</sup>Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

Paul is moving from **what shapes our thinking** to **who shapes our life**. Again, he's telling us to be careful when we choose **the people you admire, because they help shape the person you become**.

- One of the biggest lies of our age is that we can observe without being affected. We can fool ourselves into thinking:
  - *I'm just scrolling.*
  - *I'm just listening.*
  - *I'm just hanging out.*
  - *I'm not actually participating.*
- But the reality is **YOU ARE BEING FORMED**.

*The issue isn't whether you are being disciplined. The issue is by what and by whom. Who are you becoming without even realizing it?*

You don't have to call someone your mentor for them to form you.

- Your **algorithm** can form you.
- Your **friends** can form you.
- Your **favorite podcast** can form you.
- Your **appetites** can form you.
- Your **spending** can form you.
  - **Formation is happening ALL the time—the question is, who has the chisel?** Man, formation matters.

I heard this interview recently with **Arthur Brooks**, and he was talking about why happiness levels continue to decrease even though comfort, options, accessibility, and entertainment keep increasing.

And he summarized it by saying that the reason people aren't happy is because they're living according to a (*HIS WORDS*) dark and worldly formula.

The broken **dark formula** is this: **love things, use people, worship self.**

- Tell me that's not Philippians 3:19—god is their belly; glory is their shame; minds set on earthly things.
- Love things. Use people. Worship self.

And, Brooks goes on to explain, we will only find joy when we reverse those into what he calls the **light formula: use things, love people, worship the Divine.**

- Tell me that's not the way of Christ!: use things, love people, worship God.

That is why Paul says to choose your examples carefully. Because every person you follow is teaching you a version of the good life.

- Some are teaching you the good life is **appetite** without **restraint**.
- Some are teaching it's **image** without **integrity**.
- Some are teaching it's **comfort** without a **cross**.
- Some are teaching it's **success** without ever **surrendering to Christ**.

But mature Christians don't just ask, "*Do I like this person?*" Mature Christians ask, "*Do I want to become like this person?*"

So this week, audit three things:

1. **Who/what has my ear?** (thinking)
2. **Who/what has my eyes?** (desiring)
3. **Who/what has my calendar?** (priorities)

Whoever has your ear, your eyes, and your calendar probably has your future.

Growing up means choosing examples of things and people that are forming you into the type of person you want to become.

**4. RESOLVE: Stand firm as citizens of heaven (3:20–4:1)**

This weekend our country celebrates its 250th birthday ... and man, there's a lot to be grateful for.

- Many of us have freedoms, opportunities, protections, and blessings that much of the world has never known—we should be thankful for that. With those freedoms and opportunities we should be **good citizens**, and we should **honor what is honorable**.
- We should **pray** for our nation, **serve** our neighbors, **seek the good** of our communities, and never take God's common grace for granted.
- *So let's all stand for the national anthem ... J/K. Man, Twitter would have a field day with that.*

Even with all we have to be grateful for in this amazing country, Philippians 3 gives us a necessary reminder: Yes, earthly citizenship is a gift ... but **heavenly citizenship is ultimate**. So Paul says, <sup>20</sup>**But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ ...**

Which actually means Christians should be among the **best earthly citizens** precisely because **we know this world is not our final home**.

- We don't have to **worship** our nation to love it.
- Nor do we have to **despise** our nation to put it in its proper place.

As **citizens of heaven** we can be grateful for America **without asking America to be our savior**. Because Paul says, **from this heavenly citizenship, we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ**.

Here's the deal: This world can only offer us saviors *who end up needing saving*—**Political** saviors. **Financial** saviors. **Career** saviors. **Family** saviors. **Body image** saviors. **Comfort** saviors. **Approval** saviors.

- But every earthly savior eventually collapses under the weight of what only Jesus can carry.
- If your hope rises and falls with elections, markets, body weight, your kids' success, or your reputation, then functionally you are waiting for the wrong savior.
- As Christians, we await a Savior who isn't fragile, temporary, corruptible, limited, or up for reelection.
- No **army** can come against him. No **election** can dethrone him. No **government** can overrule him. No **market** can bankrupt him. No **disease** can outlast him. No **demon** can overpower him.
- And here's the best news: No **weakness** can exhaust him. No **sin** can surprise him. No **sorrow** can intimidate him. No **enemy** can stop him.
  - He is not pacing heaven, worried about the **future** or the **approval ratings** or how **the vote** will turn out.
  - He is not crossing his fingers, hoping your life turns out well.
  - No, he is the risen, reigning, ruling, and one-day-returning King.

And this Savior, Paul says, <sup>21</sup>**who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.**

- What that means is the same power that will bring every enemy under his feet one day is the same power he will use to make you whole. We can stand firm now because no **earthly weakness** gets the final word. *How bout we just keep this thing rolling?!*
  - Your **aging body** does not get the final word. Your **cancer** does not get the final word.
  - Your **grief** does not get the final word.
    - JESUS WILL!
  - Your **body** won't always be this weak ... your **temptations** won't always be this strong ... your **anxiety** won't always be this visceral ... your **heartbreak** will not last forever.
- Your Savior is coming, and he's not coming to manage the decay of what is ... he's coming to transform *it* and **make all things new**.

We're citizens of the ruler of *that* kingdom. Therefore, we resolve to stand firm ... cuz if he can subject all things to himself, then he can hold you together until that day comes.

## CONCLUSION (VAMP)

Years ago, in the 1992 Olympics, a British runner named **Derek Redmond** was favored to win the 400m.

- Halfway through the race, though, **tears his hammy**. Collapses on the track. Rolls around in agony. He's done ... Olympic dreams over.
- However, as the medical team came out, he waved them off, got up, and started hobbling to finish the race. You can tell he's in complete anguish—body and heart both broken.
- All of a sudden, out of nowhere, a man comes running up behind him—this dude had come down out of the stands, jumped the fence, and pushed past security, so he could get to Derek Redmond, grab him, and help him finish the race.
- That man was his father. [PIC](#)
- In one of the most touching moments in Olympic history, with the entire stadium cheering, Derek (who's a blubbery mess at this point) and his dad Jim would cross the finish line to a standing ovation.

Listen: Derek finishing in first place wouldn't make his dad love him more, and him collapsing on the track didn't make him love him any less.

- Jim Redmond came down because Derek was his son.

Friends, that's the gospel: We don't press on to earn the Father's approval ... we press on because, in Christ, we already have it.

- Before you did anything, while you were spiritually dead on the track, Christ came down for you. Jesus ran the race you were supposed to run—carrying your sin and shame and burying them on the cross—crossing the finish line and making you his own.
- So now, in light of that, press on to maturity.
- Not perfection, but direction.

Be **honest**: Admit you haven't arrived.

**Focus** on the ONE thing that matters most.

Choose what and who will **form** you and shape you.

And **resolve** to say, "I'll stand firm because my Savior is coming."

That's the good life. The good life does not belong to people who pretend they are perfect ... it belongs to people who are satisfied in Christ but never satisfied with where they are spiritually.

- Summit family, time to grow up—keep pursuing Christ until you are finally made like him.

You haven't arrived. Neither have I. But Christ has made us his own. So, by grace, we press on.