

**"PRESSING TOWARD THE MARK"****Introduction**

1. A seasonable word for a New Year
2. We must aim hard and straight
3. "If you aim at nothing you are sure to hit it."

**1. THE CHRISTIAN IS A PERSON WITH ONE AIM**

- 1) "**This ONE thing**": Surprising because Paul did so many things:
  - (i) travels – "in the steps of Paul"
  - (ii) sermons: examples
  - (iii) epistles: what inspired writing!
  - (iv) apologetics: especially in the later chapters of Acts
- 2) How then can he say: "this ONE thing"?
 

Because:

  - (i) behind every activity lay one main desire
  - (ii) one MOTIVE drove him forward: "the love of Christ" and the desire to get to heaven.

**ILLUSTRATION**: A DYNAMO

**2. TO ACHIEVE THIS AIM HE DOES TWO THINGS**

- 1) There are things to forget:
  - (i) the measure of our grasp of the gospel
  - (ii) our progress in personal holiness
  - (iii) any service we have done for God

**APPLICATION**: The way to progress is to look AHEAD.
- 2) There are things to reach out for:
  - (i) more perfect understanding of truth
  - (ii) a greater degree of sanctification
  - (iii) to serve God still more steadfastly

**APPLICATION**: Are you making progress? Or NOT?

**3. THE OBJECTIVES OF ALL OUR STRIVING IS TO RECEIVE THE PRIZE OF OUR CALLING**

- 1) Paul here shows us that we, as believers, should aim at the mark:  
**ILLUSTRATION**: a race – the finishing post.
- 2) There is the danger of
  - (i) imagining we are "good enough"
  - (ii) slackening our pace

**ILLUSTRATION**: Achilles and the tortoise
- 3) The way Christ puts this:  
"you have left your first love"; also the Galatians: "Ye did begin well".  
**APPLICATION**: People may grow "weary in well-doing"
- 4) So Paul puts past attainments behind him and presses on.
- 5) What is the Christian's goal?
  - (i) v.8: to WIN Christ
  - (ii) v.9: to BE FOUND in Him
  - (iii) v.10: experiences in this life related to our UNION with Christ
  - (iv) v.11: the RESURRECTION glory
  - (v) v.12: to FOLLOW AFTER
  - (vi) v.13: to REACH FORTH
  - (vii) v.14: the PRIZE of glory

**CONCLUSION**

What a vision!!

**PSALM**

**84: 7 – 12**

**119: 129 – 133**

**27: 11 - 14**