

A pair of weathered, brown hands are held up in a gesture of prayer or offering, palms facing forward. The hands are positioned in the center of the frame. The background consists of rough, reddish-brown stone walls. A warm, golden light source, possibly a candle or a small fire, is visible behind the hands, creating a soft glow and casting long, vertical shadows. The overall mood is one of solemnity and faith.

Proclaiming Christ with Joy &  
Peace in all Circumstances

# **PHILIPPIANS**

By the Power of the Resurrection

**The Games for  
Zeus's Honor –  
*Transformed* – to  
Honor Serving Jesus**

# The History of the Olympic Games

The Olympic Games began in 776 B.C. to show honor to Zeus

Olympiad means a period of 4 years (also the frequency of the games)

The games were held in a Panhellenic Sanctuary (religious structure)

In Greek Mythology, the 12 Gods are housed at Mount Olympus, from where the "Olympics" get their name, and they were held in Olympia

Philippi was named in honor of Philip II of Macedon (382-336 B.C.)

Philip II won the Olympic chariot horse races 3 consecutive times  
(356 B.C., 352 B.C., and 348 B.C.)

Scholars recognize that Paul uses symbolic language in Philippians 3 to relate to the striving for the goal/ prize in the Olympic Games

The context of the following passage is that the goal/ prize is knowing Christ, the power of His resurrection, and achieving the resurrection



**Philippians 3:12-14 (LSB)** <sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. <sup>13</sup> Brothers, I do

not consider myself as having laid hold of *it* yet, but one thing *I do*: forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching 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.

*Paul hasn't finished the race yet. He is still competing in the sight of those who encourage (Christ & His Church) & discourage (enemies of Jesus) his progress.*

*God's will is being done in heaven & our "upward call" is to seek His will & kingdom first & His righteousness with the joy & peace of knowing that God takes care of our needs.*

*Looking behind will yield less success in the race to the crown of life. We strive for the "now & not yet" of God's kingdom.*

**Are you pressing on toward God's upward call for the prize?**

**Philippians 3:15-17 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> Therefore let us, as many as are **mature**, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. <sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, to *the degree* that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. <sup>17</sup> Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.

*The Greek word, teleios (τέλειος), can mean mature, full-grown, perfect, or complete. Jesus taught in Matthew 5 to be "perfect" as your Heavenly Father*

*Though we are to walk in humility, Paul is noting that he and others have achieved a walk with Christ that is mature enough to call others to follow their example*

*To walk by the same rule and mind is to be unified toward the purpose of striving for God's Kingdom, knowing the goal is the crown of life*

Has your walk in Christ reached enough maturity to be imitated? If not, are you being led by the Spirit to that end?

**Philippians 3:18-19 (NIV)** <sup>18</sup> For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. <sup>19</sup> Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things.

*All who do **NOT** follow Christ are in the kingdom of darkness. With that said, some blatantly live in opposition to the salvation brought by Jesus' sacrifice. The idea that Jesus' salvation is the only way to the Father is highly offensive to our culture that permits every lifestyle.*

*When observing those who are lost, there are so many who take pride in their sin. The pursuit of selfish gain or pleasure is their goal. Since we know their destination is destruction, we should be sharing the good news of Jesus and the kingdom of God for their salvation.*

Instead of being disgusted by the sinful lives of others, will you take up the mission of King Jesus to seek and to save the lost?

**Philippians 3:20-21 (CSB)** <sup>20</sup> Our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly wait for a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>21</sup> He will

transform the body of our humble condition into the likeness of his glorious body, by the power that enables him to subject everything to himself.

*Paul also writes in Ephesians that though we once lived by the lust of our flesh, God saved us from our sins, and we are now seated in the heavenlies because of His grace. As we continue to serve the Lord Jesus, we are confident that our salvation will be realized upon Jesus' return.*

*The confident expectation we have is that we will be transformed by the power of Jesus' resurrection to bodies that are no longer subject to corruption. Our confidence comes from the fact that Jesus has already achieved victory over death, and all who follow Him will receive the crown of eternal life.*

**Romans 6:23 (ESV)** For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.