

imagined we have reached but in God's sight we certainly have not.

A man said something to me a few years ago that shocked me terribly. I could not quite believe that this was a general psychological thing/ He said, When you hear someone criticizing people, or criticizing ~~xxxx~~ things, you usually find that they are the very things he is guilty of himself. I could not quite believe that. I said, ~~xxx~~ That just doesn't sound right! The things I don't like in others, I would not be guilty of those things! But having had the suggestion made I began to notice that I'd been amazed how often the things that irritate me most in others are those very things I'm guilty of myself. It has opened my eyes to the fact, how difficult it is for us to see ourselves as we really are. But God sees us as we really are. He wants us to learn to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. = He wants us even to ~~be~~ want to be made conformable unto His death. That's what we must desire if we truly belong to Christ -- that we be made conformable unto His death and we may then experience the power of His resurrection and have it every day of our lives. He wants us to serve Him effectively as we should.

And then the third matter we were going to look at in this passage. The third though Paul stresses here might shock some at first sight. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead, not as though I had already attained either were already perfect but I follow after. I count not myself to have apprehended. I press toward the mark"

Yes, but don't you believe a person is saved once for all? Don't you believe it is God's power that saves you, and you now are saved? Then why does Paul say, he has not yet apprehended? Wasn't Paul a Calvinist? Did not Paul know that having been saved once he was saved for all eternity? Why did he say this? Well if you want the great doctrines of the sovereignty of God and of the tremendous change that God makes when we are saved, you'll find no better source for them than Paul. But you'll also find that Paul stresses this fact, that though the Christian before God has the standing that is made perfect -- just as if I had never sinned because the righteousness of Christ is place to his account --- yet that our state is something entirely different. Our state moves forward gradually. Our condition has to gradually move forward with great effort and strain and God wants us to work.

God says, You have not yet striven against blood striving against sin. He wants us to work, to push forward for the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ. God does wonderful things for us, but He wants us to push and to press and work in order to strive for this sanctification, for this improvement which we will get if we believe in Christ. It is promised to us. He who has begun a good things in us will continue to do it, but we have our part. If we are truly saved we will do that part, but some of us are pretty slow about doing it. So Paul gives us his example that even he the great Apostle needed to press forward and to realize that he still in some way was dead in sin and needed to be resurrection from his deadness in so many aspect of his character even though in God's sight the