



Stretch Forth!

What does it mean to ‘reach forth’ unto those things which are before? This Artios springs from the June 2025 edition. According to Phil 3:13, we learned that we are to forget those things which are behind, but we are also to reach forth for something far greater.

(Phil 3:13 KJV) 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,

The Greeks used epekteinomai to mean, ‘to stretch oneself forward upon’. How does the Bible use this interesting Greek word?

It is only used one other time:

(Col 1:6 KJV) Which is come unto you, as *it is* in all the world; and bringeth **forth** fruit, as *it*



doth also in you, since the day ye heard of *it*, and knew the grace of God in truth:

The King James Version translators might not have agreed with the Greek usage; perhaps that is why they greatly shortened it. Sadly, we weren’t provided the full translation. Epekteinomai means ‘to stretch oneself forward upon’. When a Greek word ends in ‘mai,’ it signifies an action taken by the subject.

The subject that is bring forth fruit is identified in verse 5:

(Col 1:5 KJV) For the hope which is laid up

for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

The subject doing the action is ‘the word of the truth of the gospel’. It is this very entity that brings forth fruit. The gospel of Jesus Christ always brings forth fruit. Should we re-translate verse 6 with the meaning that the Greeks knew? Let’s.

(Col 1:6 KJV) Which is come unto you, as *it is* in all the world; and ‘stretches itself forward upon’ [the world and everything it contacts] to bear fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the day ye heard of *it*, and knew the grace of God in truth:

Breaking down the Greek:

Epekteinomai is derived from three Greek words: epi, meaning ‘upon’, ek meaning ‘from’, and teino meaning

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‘to stretch’. Together, they mean to stretch oneself forward upon. That wasn’t too hard, was it?

Now, revisiting Phil 3:13, we can see that we are to stretch ourselves forward upon those things which are *before*. Sounds kind of like we’re prostrating ourselves across something to reach something. No matter the position, we are to stretch forth in order to reach those forward things, just like:

Jesus did when he put forth his hand and touched the man with leprosy.

(Mat 8:3 KJV) And Jesus **put forth his hand**, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

The man with the withered hand did when he followed Jesus’ command to ‘stretch forth thine hand’.

(Mat 12:13 KJV) Then saith he to the man, **Stretch forth** thine hand. And he stretched *it* forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

Just like when Jesus indicated his real mother and brethren:

(Mat 12:49 KJV) And he **stretched forth** his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

Just like Jesus did when he caught sinking Peter:

(Mat 14:31 KJV) And immediately Jesus **stretched forth his hand**, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Just like the one who stretched out his hand and drew his sword and smote off the servant’s ear.

(Mat 26:51 KJV) And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus **stretched out his hand**, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest’s, and smote off his ear.

Just like when the Apostles voted for someone to take Judas’ place, they gave forth their lots [votes].

(Acts 1:26 KJV) And they gave **forth** their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Those things which are before:

Just like we are to stretch forth our hands to heal:

(Acts 4:29-30 KJV) And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, {30} By **stretching forth** thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

These are the great things that are before us to grasp and to do. If we can walk away from our pasts, we can walk into a brand new future, branded ‘the more than abundant life,’ and hand it to whomsoever we will. Can you imagine?

This is a new life, a new way of being, and a new message to the world’s weary. Stretching ourselves forward

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upon isn't necessarily aggressive, but it is definite and could defy cultural norms, the medical system, unbelief and doubt, misplaced aggression, voting norms, and entrenched sicknesses. Let's give it a try, together.

Much Love in Christ,

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