

Pressing Toward the Mark - 11/13/22

TEXT – Philippians 3:12-14 *Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 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, **I press toward the mark** for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

INTRO – What does it mean to press toward the mark? The finish line

How do we reach the mark God has set for us?

Every decision and every action should have the finish line in view.

- 1st We must be honest with ourselves and admit where we are: as Paul declared. “Not that I have already attained”.
- Then, we must keep our eyes of faith on Christ and forget the past — past sins and failures, and also past successes.
- We must press on in His power. The Christian life is not a game; it is a race that demands the very best that is in us: “This one thing I do”

I. Initiative

A. Make plans

Luke 14:28 *For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?*

B. Get started

2 Timothy 4:7 *I have **fought a good fight**, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:*

C. Set some goals

1. Please God
2. Witness to the lost
3. Faithful to church
4. Godly marriage and children
5. Serve God
6. Be a good steward
7. Maintain a good testimony
8. Obedience to the Bible
9. Grow in grace
10. Be kind

II. Determination

Someone once asked Paul Harvey, the journalist and radio commentator, to reveal the secret of his success. "I get up when I fall down," said Harvey.

James 2:18 *Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and **I will shew thee my faith by my works.***

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 *Know ye not that they which run in a race **run all**, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*

Genesis 3:19 *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

Hebrews 11 believers all required effort.

Press on.

Nothing in the world Can take the place of persistence.

Talent will not;

Nothing is more common Than unsuccessful men With talent.

Genius will not:

Unrewarded genius Is almost a proverb.

Education will not;

The world is full of Educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination Alone are important

III. Discipline

Hebrews 12:1 *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us **run with patience** the race that is set before us,*

1 Timothy 1:18 *This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest **war a good warfare**;*

John 15:1-2 *I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, **he purgeth it**, that it may bring forth more fruit.*

Make yourself accountable to God, your spouse, your employer, your pastor, and perhaps a friend.

IV. Faithfulness

2 Timothy 4:2 ***Preach the word**; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*

1 Corinthians 4:2 *Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*

Valentine Wightman started the first Baptist Church in Groton, Connecticut. He pastored it for over 40 years and his son and grandson pastored the church covering a span of 125 years. His great-great grandson also later pastored the church along with pastoring in other towns covering 54 years total.

V. Perseverance

Galatians 2:2 *And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or **had run, in vain.***

Galatians 5:7 ***Ye did run well;** who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?*

Philippians 2:16 *Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, **neither laboured in vain.***

2 Samuel 23:9-10 *And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away: 10 He arose, and smote the Philistines **until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword;** and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil.*

Judges 8:4 *And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over, he, and the three hundred men that were with him, **faint, yet pursuing them.***

CONCL – He was born in Columbus, Ohio, 1890, the third of eight children. At eleven he quit school to help with the family expenses, and got his first full-time job at \$3.50 per week. At fifteen he got interested in automobiles and went to work in a garage at \$4.50 a week. He subscribed to a correspondence home study course on automobiles. Following long days at the garage, he worked at the kitchen table by the light of the kerosene lamp. His next step was already planned in his mind--a job with Frayer-Miller Automobile Company of Columbus.

One day when he felt ready, he walked into the plant. Lee Frayer was bent over the hood of a car. The boy waited. Finally, Frayer noticed him. "Well," he said, "what do you want?" "I just thought I'd tell you I'm coming to work here tomorrow morning," the boy replied. "Oh! Who hired you?" "Nobody yet, but I'll be on the job in the morning. If I'm not worth anything, you can fire me." Early the next morning the young man returned to the garage.

Noticing that the floor was thick with metal shavings and accumulated dirt and grease, the boy got a broom and shovel and set to work cleaning the place. He went on to a national reputation as a racing car driver and automotive expert. In World War I he was America's leading flying ace. Later he founded Eastern Airlines. His name--Eddie Rickenbacker.