

**Thank you, again! Bruce Evans
Speaker for today**

President Quote...Persistence

Calvin Coolidge, the 30th president of the United States, is known for saying...

"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 omnipotent".

August Birthdays

1 Paige Cree 12 Debbie Hoffman
16 Nick Hoffman. 27 Isaiah Diaz

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

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Stay Focused...Don't Quit

By Bruce Evans

Florence Chadwick knew early on in her swimming career, she wouldn't be content taping laps in a pool. She longed for the open water of the ocean, and at ten she became the youngest person to swim across the mouth of the San Diego Bay. But her heart's desire was to swim across the English Channel, which she did when she was thirty-two years old in 1950. Twenty-one miles, she covered in thirteen hours and thirty-two minutes.

In 1952, Chadwick set out to swim the twenty-six miles from the coast of California to Catalina. She swam for fifteen hours, but a heavy fog set in, causing her to become somewhat disoriented; she gave up. Only to find out how close she was to completing the crossing, one mile short. Undaunted, two months later she waded into the ocean to try it again. The fog set in once again, she was shrouded in the fog, visibility of the shore gone, but she persisted. She envisioned in her mind the shoreline with each stroke she took. This time she reached her destination.

There is a tremendous lesson that can be taken away from the perseverance she exhibited. Failure was not an option; she had demonstrated a tenaciousness that is laudable. When problems arise in life, they can easily cloud our vision. It is at times like these that we have the occasion presented to be able to learn and to see the goal with eyes of faith.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews serves as a backdrop for the first two verses of chapter twelve. *"Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily tangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before*

Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

When life presses hard against us, which at times it does, one cannot give in to the temptation to “quit”. The resolve to dig deeper and find the strength to endure and break through is within the grasp of each one. Make note of what is found in Hebrews 10:35-36. *“Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.”*

In the latter part of the ninth chapter of First Corinthians, Paul discusses the necessity for full commitment on the part of the child of God. For each to embrace a mindset like that of a trained athlete. *“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.”* (v.24) A directed effort, with eyes fixed on the goal. Think back to the example seen in Florence Chadwick, she envisioned the shoreline, and with each stroke was determined to arrive at her goal.

“Brethren I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do; forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:13- 14) Consider Romans as well 8:37, *“But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer...”*

Eyes of Faith Looking Inward

By Dan Jenkins

Paul’s words that we should *“...walk circumspectly”* (Ephesians 5:15) would be easily understood by those who first read this in the King James Version. It simply means that as we walk, we should be looking about and carefully considering all that is happening. It begins with us looking upward, to establish the right relationship with God. Then we should also look around us, to see opportunities to let our lights shine before others. The first and

second greatest commandments are summed up in these two actions. However, we must never forget the third direction to look—look inward.

We should look inward because it is the source of outward actions. The greatest commandment about loving God is tied to the core of our souls. We are to love Him with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind and all our strength (Mark 12:30). Service to God without involving the entirety of the inward man misses the mark. Walking circumspectly (looking around us) demands we look inward to measure the depth of our devotion to the Master.

We should look inward because it is the entry step to becoming a perfect (mature) man in the eyes of God. James speaks of the extreme difficulty of controlling the tongue and then adds, *“If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body”* (James 3:2). Jesus said, *“For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks”* (Matthew 12:34). The road to spiritual maturity is obvious. Look inward, bridle the tongue, and spiritual maturity lies before us.

So, this week as we commune with the Lord at His table, look inward to examine ourselves as we eat and drink with Him (1 Corinthians 11:27). Obviously, when we eat together, we look backward to the cross remembering Him. We look forward to His return as we show His death, but perhaps most important is that self-examination we do. In His wisdom He has given us a regularly appointed time to look inward.

Paul also urged the Corinthians to look inward for another reason. *“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves”* (2 Corinthians 13:5). Our walk with Him involves far more than knowing the faith, it demands we walk in it. Look inward! Are we walking in the truths of His word.

Our songs often describe our lives as we walk looking about. We may struggle and sing of our determination to walk one step at a time. Yet, we make each of those steps. One day the final step will be taken, and that step is into our eternal home. God help us to *“...walk circumspectly.”*