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# Run For Your Life

Hebrews 12:1-3

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*“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, 2 looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”*

## INTRODUCTION:

- **The Bible uses figures of speech, metaphors, similes to teach truth**
- **In the NT the Christian life is repeatedly compared to everyday things, events, or practices**
  - **At times the Christian life is compared to “warfare”**

**2 Timothy 2:3-4**—*“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”*

**Ephesians 6:11**—*“Put on the **whole armour of God**, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil”*

- **Paul described his Christian life—as a “boxer”**

**1 Corinthians 9:26**—*“so fight I, not as one that beateth the air”*

- **The Christian is often described as a “slave” of Jesus Christ**
  - **Paul often referred to himself as a “slave” or “bond-servant” of Jesus Christ**
- **Jesus spoke of His followers being “salt and light” in this world**
- **Peter refers to Christians as babes and as living stones**
- **But one of the metaphors Paul was particularly fond of—was “racing”**

**1 Corinthians 9:24-25**—*“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”***

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

**Philippians 2:14-16**—*“Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 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.*”

- **And then, right here in our text, we see Paul using the theme of “racing” to describe the Christian faith**

**Vs. 1**—“... *let us run with patience the race that is set before us*”

- **The word “Race”**
  - **The word in the Greek is “*Agon*”**
  - **It is the word that we get “*Agony*” from**
  - **The idea of the word—is that running the “race of faith” is not passive luxury**
    - **It is agonizing**
    - **It is grueling**
    - **It requires the utmost in self-discipline**
    - **It requires determination**
    - **It requires perseverance**
  - **It’s not some little “jog” that we do every once in a while—when we are trying to burn off of few pounds**
  - **It’s not something we “pick up” and later “put down” when we get tired of it**
  - **It is a marathon that doesn’t finish until we get to the end**
    - **The end—meaning the end of our lives**

- **The moment we got saved we entered into this race**
- **And we are not to stop the race—until it’s all over**
- **Until we have breathed our last breath**

- **And we can guarantee that this “race” isn’t always going to be easy**

- **There’s going to come lots of opposition**
- **Lots of trials**
- **Lots of difficulties**
- **Lots of opportunities to quit**
- **Lots of opportunities to give up**

- **And you may feel like quitting from time-to-time**
- **But that’s why Paul says that we are to run the race with “*patience*”**

- **“Patience”**

- **The word means “*steady determination to just keep going*”**
- **It means to continue even when everything wants to slow you down**
- **There are going to be times in the Christian life—when the “fog” sets in**
- **And everything tells you to quit**

- Every spiritual bone and spiritual muscle aches—and it screaming out for you to quit
- That’s why Paul said—that we are to run the race with “Patience”
  - Stay at it
  - Don’t quit
  - Don’t pull off for a “breather”
  - Just keep going
- The Audience that Paul is writing to:
  - Paul is writing to a group of Jews who have been exposed to the claims of Christ
  - Some of them have believed the gospel
  - And some were still sitting on the fence in unbelief
  - And the ones who had genuinely believed—were contemplating going back to Judaism—because they had already begun to suffer for their faith

**Hebrews 10:32**—“*But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; 33 partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used.*”

- They were thinking about quitting the race
- And we remember Paul’s warning to them

**Vs. 35-39**—“*Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. 36 For ye have*

*need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. 37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”*

- Paul pointed out to them that—it is the “just” ones who continue to the end—and receive the reward
- But those who draw back (who fall away) lose everything
  - They are those who never were truly his
  - And they demonstrate it by their “falling away” from the truth
- But the “just” continue on—living by faith

- ✚ So Paul uses the illustration of a “race” to demonstrate what the Christian Life looks like
- ✚ And he is going to give us 5 points in “How Christians are to Run”

### **CIT: How Are We to Run the Race of Faith?**

#### **I. We Are to Run the Race of Faith With Encouragement** (vs. 1a)—“*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses ... let us run with patience the race that is set before us*”

## A. The Cloud of Witnesses

1. This cloud of witnesses that Paul is referring to—are those OT saints of the past that he mentioned in chapter 11

a. They are “witnesses” to running the race of faith with patience

i. They knew how to run the race

- Always trusting
- Never giving up
- No matter what the obstacles
- No matter what the hardships

ii. They stood out in the midst of a wicked world

- Noah trusted God—and built the ark in the midst of a wicked world—completely given over to Satan
- Abraham forsook his family and his home to follow a God that he did not know, to go to a land he had never been to before, and never in his lifetime receive a

promise that he was given by God

- Moses stood against the most powerful man in the world—Pharaoh—and demanded for him to let the children of Israel go
- He saw the Red Sea split right before him—and the children of Israel walk through on dry ground
- Joshua led the children of Israel against Jericho—and walked around the city for 7 days—to see the walls fall down flat at God’s command
- And many others saw God do miraculous things on their behalf—because they trusted God

iii. But some of those great men and women of the faith suffered through awful things

**11:35-38**—“and others were *tortured*, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36 and others had *trial of cruel mockings and scourgings*, yea, moreover of *bonds and imprisonment*: 37 they were *stoned*, they were *sawn asunder*, were *tempted*, were *slain with the sword*: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being *destitute, afflicted, tormented*; 38 (of whom

*the world was not worthy:.) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.”*

2. These who are the “Great Cloud of Witnesses” serve as an encouragement for us

a. They stand as a testimony—that if they could do it—live a life of faith—run this race with patience—we can to

b. The reluctant Jews

i. Those who had been saved—were nervous about moving forward

- It’s going to cost them everything if they go public with their faith

- It would cost them their friends
- Their family
- Their synagogue privileges
- Their jobs
- Their social status
- And even their community respect

- Could they really run this race all the way to the end?
- Paul says—“***Look to these faithful witnesses—that***

***proved out that it can be lived out!”***

ii. And those who had never truly been saved...

- Those who had not yet entered the race
- Paul’s telling them same thing...
  - “***Get into the race!***”
  - “***Your forefathers did***”
  - “***And they were faithful all the way to the end***”

## **B. The Same Motivation For Us**

1. These people of the past are to be our motivation—and encouragement to “***run with patience the race that is set before us***”

a. If you haven’t yet got into the race—**or if you haven’t yet been saved**—get saved and start running in the race

i. And let those “*Great Cloud of Witnesses*” be the motivation and encouragement to be faithful all the way unto the end

- ii. Yes, you will go through trials as a Christian
- iii. Yes, it will cost you to belong to Christ
- iv. But if they could do it—then you could

b. And if you have already been saved—and your race looks more like a “walk” than a grueling run

- i. Then you need to get reengaged in the race
- ii. As Paul will later say in this chapter...

vs. 12—“Wherefore *lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees*”

iii. Let those saints of the past be a fresh encouragement for you to be faithful once again

c. And if you are saved—and running hard—don’t get discouraged because it’s difficult

- i. It was difficult for them
- ii. And they made it to the end

## I. We Are to Run the Race of Faith With Encouragement

**II. We Are to Run the Race of Faith Unhindered** (vs. 1b)—“*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*”

### A. If You Are Going to Run the Race Successfully, You Have to Run Unhindered

1. Paul alludes to the running metaphor when it comes to not being hindered

a. A runner will not be able to run at his best level—if he has excess weight upon him

i. Sometimes—when runners train—**they run with extra weights upon them**—to help build up their leg muscles—and also burn off excess fat—that would slow them down in a race

ii. But when they got to the actual race—all those weights would be removed—so they could run at their maximum speed

- They even would wear **very light clothing**—just so that they would not be weighed down
- Every ounce counts when it comes to running a race

b. The illustration makes complete sense since to the Christian life

- i. When we get saved, we are to run the race with patience
- ii. It's not going to be easy
- iii. And it definitely won't be easy—if we allow certain things to hinder us—that keep us from being successful

**2 Timothy 2:3-4**—*“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”*

- **A soldier won't get himself all entangled with the things of this life—if he's going to be a good soldier**
- **He won't get enmeshed in those things—he won't get tied up**
- **As much as he can—he will cut off those things that entangle him from being the best he can be**
  
- **That's the idea that Paul is saying—if we are going to run at our best—we need to get rid of the excess weights that keep us from running at the max**

c. The specifics of the illustration

- i. All of us may have our personal *“weights and besetting sins”* that Paul speaks about here

- They might range anywhere—from friendships that pull us away—or seeking after pleasures—none of which may be sinful—but they do hinder us in our running
- And some things in our lives—are sinful—and they definitely hinder us
- But I don't think that is what Paul is speaking about
- Remember—Paul is speaking specifically to a Jewish audience—who is having trouble even entering the race—let alone running it
- And what's hanging them up—is not bad friendships—or being too busy
- **It's Judaism**
- **And it's fear**

ii. The unnecessary weights that they are carrying—is Judaism

- With all its rules and regulations

- The rule-keeping wasn't necessarily sinful
- God—after all—did prescribe many of them
- And He prescribed for the time in which they were under the law—and were being taught how incapable they were of obeying God
- The purpose of these laws and rules—was to teach them that they need a savior

**Galatians 3:24-25**—“*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.*”

- The law was given to point people to Christ
- But once that person comes to Christ—he no longer needs the teacher of the law
- He is not bound under it any more
- And anyone who keeps fervently hanging on to all the rules and regulations—**weighs himself down**
  - And when it comes to the race—he keeps being pulled away

- He keeps being slowed down

- So Paul's advice—is to lay aside the weights
- ***“You don't need them anymore”***
- ***“They can't save you—they can't make you more pleasing to God”***
- ***“They just hinder you!”***

**iii. The sin** that does easily beset them

- There was a specific sin that was easily besetting them
- Keeping them from entering the race
- It was UNBELIEF
- That's why Paul has been majoring on their responsibility to move forward by faith
- To enter the race by faith
- Just like their forefathers did
- Their biggest problem—is that they don't believe what God says
- Even though the Scriptures—through and

through—point to salvation  
by faith in Christ

## B. Application to Us

1. If we are going to run the race of faith successfully—we need to remove the hindrances—**the weights**

a. So many—have not even entered—because they have too many things they want to keep carrying

i. Jesus said that the cares and pleasures of this world often keep men from coming to faith in him

ii. They are willing to trade their own soul for the world

b. Some never enter the race—because of fear of men

i. They are afraid of what might happen to them if they believe—if they truly enter into the race

ii. And really—it's not fear of men—it's lack of Faith in God—that keeps them from entering in

2. And sadly—some of us who have entered the race—live so encumbered with stuff—that they can't really serve Jesus faithfully

3. Paul's command—

- a. Lay aside the weights
- b. Lay aside the sin
- c. And start running the race

## I. We Are to Run the Race of Faith With Encouragement

## II. We Are to Run the Race of Faith Unhindered

III. We Are to Run the Race of Faith With a Right Focus (vs. 2a)—“*looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith*”

### A. The Importance of Your Eyes Being in the Right Place

1. Many sports stress the importance of keeping your eyes focused in the right place

- a. “*Keep your eye on the \_\_\_\_\_.*”
- b. In about every sport that is emphasized in some manner
- c. The reason why this is so important—is because your eyes will affect your performance

i. Your body naturally will follow your eyes

### ILLUSTRATION:

*Recently, researchers in England set out to determine whether weekend golfers could improve their game through one of two approaches. Some were coached on individual swing technique, while others were instructed to gaze fixedly at the ball before putting. The researchers hoped to learn not only whether looking at the ball affects performance, but also whether where we look changes how we think and feel while in action.*

*Back in elementary school gym class, virtually all of us were taught to keep our eyes on the ball during sports. But a growing body of research suggests that, as adults, most of us have forgotten how to do this. When scientists in recent years have attached sophisticated, miniature gaze-tracking devices to the heads of golfers, soccer players, basketball free throw shooters, tennis players and even competitive sharpshooters, they have found that a majority are not actually looking where they believe they are looking or for as long as they think.*

*It has been less clear, though, whether a slightly wandering gaze really matters that much to those of us who are decidedly recreational athletes.*

*Which is in part why the British researchers had half of their group of 40 duffers practice putting technique, while the other half received instruction in a gaze-focusing technique known as “Quiet Eye” training.*

*Quiet Eye training, as the name suggests, is an attempt to get people to stop flicking their focus around so much. But “Quiet Eye training is not just about looking at the ball,” .... “It is about looking at the ball for long enough to process aiming information.” It involves reminding players*

*to first briefly sight toward the exact spot where they wish to send the ball, and then settle their eyes onto the ball and hold them there.*

*This tight focus on the ball, Dr. Wilson says, blunts distracting mental chatter and allows the brain “to process the aiming information you just gathered” and direct the body in the proper motions to get the ball where you wish it to go.*

*A quiet, focused eye, in other words, seems to encourage a quiet, focused mind, which then makes for more accurate putting.*

2. Another sport that is important in the way you use your eyes—is running
  - a. You are NOT to run—with your eyes on your feet
  - b. You are NOT to run—with your eyes focused on the stadium (the crowd)
  - c. You are NOT to run—with your eyes focused on those running with you
  - d. You are to KEEP your eye—straight ahead of you
    - i. Focused on the track before you

3. Paul alludes to that concept

*“looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith”*

a. In order for us to run successfully in the Christian life—we need to keep our focus in the right place

i. We don't keep the focus on ourselves

- We'll definitely trip up—if all we do is focus on ourselves
- That doesn't mean that we don't need to look at ourselves every once in a while
- But that doesn't need to be the focus of our race

ii. We don't keep it on those around us

- If we spend all our time looking at others—and comparing ourselves to them—we'll stumble and trip
- Maybe even causing others to stumble
- And again, that doesn't mean we should never look at others—or get advice from others
- But others are not to be the focus of our race

iii. Our focus is to be on Christ

- And more specifically—on the faith of Christ
- Yes, Christ is the One Who begins and ends our faith
  - He is the author of our salvation
  - And He will finish it—when we make it to heaven
  - But that's not what Paul is talking about
- He's talking about—us getting our focus on the faith that Christ demonstrated for us

**Vs. 2**—“*looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him **endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.***”

**NOTE:** The OT saints are great to look at—as examples of men and women who lived the life of faith. **But their faith can't compare to the faith that Christ demonstrated in His earthly life.**

**Listen to what the Scripture says about Christ's faith:**

**Hebrews 4:15**—“*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*”

**When Jesus was tempted of Satan in the wilderness He continually demonstrated His faith in the Father...**

**Matthew 4:1-10**—“*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. 3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.*

*4 But he answered and said, **It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.***

*5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 and saith unto him, **If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.***

*7 Jesus said unto him, **It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.***

*8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 and saith unto him, **All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.***

*10 Then saith Jesus unto him, **Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.***”

**John 5:30**—“*I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*”

**Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane**

**Matthew 26:39**—“*And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, **O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.***”

**John 19:30**—“***It is finished!***”

**When Jesus was being mocked by his enemies—noticed what they said about Him**

**Matthew 27:43**—“*Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, 42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. 43 **He trusted in God;** let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God”*

## **B. Jesus is our High Example to Look to While Running the Race of Faith**

1. He is not only the One Who begins our faith at salvation—and completes it—He is our Supreme Example of what LIVING BY FAITH looks like
2. Set your eyes upon His life
3. Set your eyes upon His faith
4. And when you get your focused on Him—you’ll run the race the way you should

- a. Even if the race God sets before you takes to some very dark valleys

**Galatians 2:20**—*“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”*

### **I. We Are to Run the Race of Faith With Encouragement**

### **II. We Are to Run the Race of Faith Unhindered**

### **III. We Are to Run the Race of Faith With a Right Focus**

**IV. We Are to Run the Race of Faith With the Mind to Win (vs. 2b)**—*“who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God”*

#### **A. Why Runners Race**

1. No one runs a race without some kind of expectation of reward
  - a. The reward may be nothing more than a ribbon
  - b. Or a trophy
  - c. Or in Paul’s day—a wreath of leaves
  - d. It may be a prize that is worth lots of money

- e. Or sometimes the reward is fame and recognition
- f. And some run for the healthy body it may produce
- g. And occasionally—the race is run for the sheer exhilaration of the race

2. But the kind of race that Paul is describing—is not some 100 yard dash—that only lasts for minutes

a. This is the Agon race

- i. A marathon-like race
- ii. That seems to last forever
- iii. Going over all sorts of terrain—and through all sorts of difficulties
- iv. It’s a race that someone doesn’t just lightly enter

- They train for months—and sometimes years to be mentally and physically prepared
- And if they haven’t—they won’t make it through to the end

b. The aim and objective of this race—is to win the prize at the end

**I Corinthians 9:25**—“*And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown*”

c. At the end of the Isthmian game of Greece—a pedestal stood at the finish line—and on it hung a wreath

i. Every runner—in the Agon—entered for the purpose of winning that wreath

ii. If that was not your motivation—you wouldn’t make it

### 3. Paul makes that point for the Christian Race

a. When we run—we are to run to win

b. We are to run with the end goal in mind

**1 Corinthians 9:24-26**—“*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*”

## B. What Are We Running to Win?

### 1. Paul points to Christ’s Faith

*“who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God”*

### 2. The thing that motivated Christ’s race...

#### a. The thing that gave him joy

i. To endure the cross

ii. To endure through the shame he would go through

- All through His earthly life
- Dealing with the wickedness of men
- Dealing with sin
- Having to bear it
- And having to be punished for it

b. It wasn’t the joy of seeing people healed

c. It wasn’t the joy of seeing lives changed

**NOTE:** Though those things no doubt, brought Him joy.

These things were not what gave him the joy to endure.

d. The reward at the end—was to be exulted—“*set down at the right hand of the throne of God*”

**John 17:4-5**—“*I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. 5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*”

**Philippians 2:5-11**—“*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

*9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*”

### 3. What Reward Are We to Run For?

- a. It's not Heaven
- b. It's for a Crown

*“Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible”*

- i. Several times—Paul spoke of us receiving a crown—for our faithfulness
- ii. A crown of glory

### 4. Jesus' own promise

**Revelation 2:8-10**—“*And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; 9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. 10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: **be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.**”*

### To the church at Thyatira

**Revelation 2:26-27**—“*And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 27 and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.*”

### To the church of Laodicea

**Revelation 3:21**—“*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*”

4. Our purpose in running—is to share in His glory

**I. We Are to Run the Race of Faith With Encouragement**

**II. We Are to Run the Race of Faith Unhindered**

### **III. We Are to Run the Race of Faith With a Right Focus**

### **IV. We Are to Run the Race of Faith With the Mind to Win**

**V. We Are to Run the Race of Faith Consistent to the End** (vs. 3)—“For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds”

**A. If We Don’t Want to Faint—Keep Our Eyes On Him**

**B. If We Get Our Eyes Off of Him—we will Weary and Faint**

1. We’ll give up before the end
2. Or we will never start

**CONCLUSION:**

**ILLUSTRATION:**

*“From the booklet Bits and Pieces comes an interesting story about Florence Chadwick, the first woman to swim the English Channel in both directions. On the Fourth of July in 1951, she attempted to swim from Catalina Island to the California coast. The challenge was not so much the distance, but the bone-chilling waters of the Pacific. To complicate matters, a dense fog lay over the entire area, making it impossible for her to see land. After about 15 hours in the water, and within a half mile of her goal,*

*Chadwick gave up. Later she told a reporter, "Look, I'm not excusing myself. But if I could have seen land, I might have made it." Not long afterward she attempted the feat again.*

*Once more a misty veil obscured the coastline and she couldn't see the shore. But this time she made it because she kept reminding herself that land was there. With that confidence she bravely swam on and achieved her goal. In fact, she broke the men's record by 2 hours!”*