

PRESSING ON!

PHIL 3:7-21

I. A GREAT LIFE-LESSON: PERSEVERANCE PAYS OFF

- A. Aesop's tortoise beats hare; "in praise of plodders"
- B. Biblical faith: "Faith is the art of holding on to things in spite of your changing moods and circumstances" (C.S. Lewis); N.B.: heroes of faith in Hebrews 11
 - 1. Noah "found grace in the eyes of the LORD" for persisting in building ark
 - 2. Abraham "walked by faith" and ultimately possessed promised land & sired a son
 - 3. Moses kept approaching Pharaoh with requests for deliverance, led grumbling Israelites for 40 years in the wilderness
 - 4. Rahab helped spies, became important in Jewish tradition
- C. Telling examples
 - 1. Animals—horses, mules & oxen; Oregon Trail preferences (settlers vs gold miners)
 - 2. Athletes
 - a. Glen Cunningham—favorite Bible verse: Is 40:31; Family Motto & title of his book: "Never Quit".
 - b. George Foreman—at 46 oldest heavyweight champion
 - 3. Generals
 - a. Quintus Fabius Maximus—whence famous "fabian" tactics vs. Hannibal
 - b. U.S. Grant's ultimate success, both on battlefield and end of life
 - 4. Political
 - a. Abraham Lincoln's many elections
 - b. Richard Nixon's career
 - 5. Science & technology
 - a. *Five Equations that Changed the World* documents persistence of mathematicians such as Isaac Newton, Michael Faraday & Albert Einstein
 - b. Thomas A. Edison's many inventions (e.g. light bulb) result of endless efforts, experiments
 - 6. Literature
 - a. J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* rejections
 - b. Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Marnie* rejections
 - 7. Church history
 - a. Athanasius constantly in exile
 - b. William Wilberforce worked patiently in Parliament to abolish slavery

II. A PRESCRIPTION: PRESS ON

- A. Forgetting the "if only" memories
 - 1. Woman in C.S. Lewis's *The Great Divorce* bemoaning son's death
 - 2. Temptation to see self as victim—"Not Everyone's a Victim" in San Francisco
- B. Ignoring "what if" fears—financial; physical; political
- C. Claiming our birthright—"joint heir with Jesus," cf. II Peter 1:4
 - 1. Jacob & Esau illustrate importance of picking up and carrying on family claims
 - 2. Estates & heirs
 - 3. Frontier examples of making "claims"
 - a. Homesteaders
 - b. Miners
 - 4. Biblical promises re ultimate possessions & assurance of Ultimate Good to come for those who love the LORD—hymn declares "blessed assurance, Jesus is mine; / Oh what a foretaste of glory divine"