

“WALKING IS SIMPLY A SERIES OF INTERRUPTED FALLS.”

all else, for it determines the course of your life. Avoid all perverse talk; stay away from corrupt speech. Look straight ahead, and fix your eyes on what lies before you. Mark out a straight path for your feet; stay on the safe path. Don't get sidetracked; keep your feet from following evil" (Proverbs 4:20-27, NLT).

I have often said that much of what I have accomplished in life has been the result of me not being smart enough to quit. It has been my experience that persistence is regularly underrated as a quality of success. I saw a poster many years ago that said, "Success is getting up one more time than you fall down." I shared that one day, and a man told me, "Walking is simply a series of interrupted falls."

The reality is that great battles are won, great companies are made, great feats are achieved by series of simple steps often repeated. In January, the gyms are full of people who have promised to improve their health; in March and onward, the gyms have people who are improving their health.

Conclusion

Karen's husband had left her with two teenagers to care for and no money, no job, and not much education. As we talked, she shared that it was difficult for her to even get out of bed in the morning. I could certainly understand why.

"What would you like to do with your life?" I asked.

"I always wanted to be in real estate," she said.

"And what stops you?" I challenged.

I began to help her tap into the anger that was fueling her depression and use it to motivate her to work toward her goals. She got her GED, enrolled in a community college, earned her real estate license, and became a successful businesswoman. It took time, hard work, determination, and perseverance—but she did it.

The STEWPOT

A POTPOURRI OF PRACTICAL IDEAS to help you become a better steward

JANUARY 2019 • VOLUME 24, ISSUE 1

DAYDREAMS, NIGHTMARES, AND VISIONS

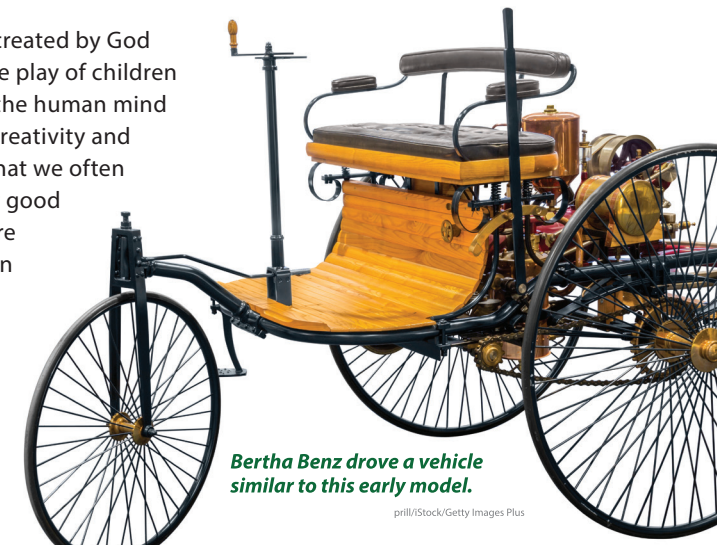
BY EDWARD W. FARGUSSON, M.DIV.

It was the summer of 1888, and Karl was slipping into depression. He had worked so hard on his dream but, alas, his good idea was recognized by hardly anyone except his own family. He had worked tirelessly on his invention and was sure it would revolutionize the world; yet it went largely unnoticed.

Karl's wife, Bertha, knew she had to do something because she believed in Karl's dream and had witnessed his hard work. She arose early one morning and took her two sons to visit her mother—a harrowing journey of 120 miles round trip in two days. This excursion proved to be the answer to Karl's problem. Until then, the longest trip by "horseless carriage" had been a mere 40 feet! Bertha's daring stunt brought Karl Benz's invention to the attention of the world and turned his dream into a reality that has changed the course of history forever.

Our human brains were created by God to be idea factories. Even the play of children reveals the great beauty of the human mind as ideas pile upon ideas of creativity and originality. The problem is that we often never fulfill our dreams. Our good ideas get stuck inside and are never expressed, or we begin to work toward achieving them only to set them aside as other things become a priority.

Peter Drucker, a great writer and thinker on business management,



Bertha Benz drove a vehicle similar to this early model.

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STEWARDSHIP is a total lifestyle. It involves our health, time, talents, environment, relationships, spirituality, and finances.

"What would you like to do with your life?"

Distributed by:
Rocky Mountain Conference
Stewardship Ministries
Director: Doug English

Produced by:
Pacific Union Conference
Stewardship Ministries
Gordon Botting, Director

2019

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once said: "Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work." This month we will look at four steps to turn your daydreams into reality and not a nightmare.

Assess

"But don't begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?" (Luke 14:28, *New Living Translation*).

Just south of the city where I live is an empty mall. Never completed, it stands as a testimony to someone who planned but neglected to consider the costs of delay. The builder went bankrupt before the project was ever finished.

Of course, we cannot see every possible challenge, but we should not ignore the ones we can clearly see. For example, if my aim is to grow three inches, that goal is completely unreasonable. However, losing 20 pounds is something I can realistically do. Taking time to assess whether your dream is simply wishful thinking or something you have a reasonable chance to achieve is important.

Plan

"God has now revealed to us His mysterious plan regarding Christ, a plan to fulfill His own good pleasure. And this is the plan: At the right time He will bring everything together under the authority of Christ— everything in heaven and on earth. Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for He chose us in advance, and He makes everything work out according to His plan" (Ephesians 1:9-11, *NLT*).

Sometimes our responsibility is not to

We need to pray and seek to discover God's plans for both the destination and the journey.

create a plan but to discover it. God may already have a plan. I just need to discern what that is by prayerfully examining what He has already revealed and seeking what He will reveal.

Not only should I try to learn His ultimate plan, I should also ask Him how He wants me to accomplish it. In the Bible, King Saul is an example of someone who listened to hear God's plan, but then set out using his own methods to accomplish it. When David fought Goliath, he was an example of someone who not only trusted God to tell him what He wanted, but he also let God determine the ways to achieve it.

We need to pray and seek to discover God's plans for both the destination and the journey. The Psalmist says, "Why are the nations so angry? Why do they waste their time with futile plans?" (Psalm 2:1, *NLT*). Let's not be frustrated by futile plans.

Execute

"You see, his faith and his actions worked together. His actions made his faith complete" (James 2:22, *NLT*).

This step is where Peter Drucker's words come into play. At some point we must begin the hard work of doing what we set out to do.

I once worked with someone who had a great idea. She shared in detail her idea for a product that she knew would be popular, and I thought she might be onto something. But when I suggested she should start working on the idea and even gave her suggestions for where to begin, she said, "Oh, I don't want to have to work at it. I just want to sell my idea for a lot of money and let someone else do the hard work."

Well, guess what? If other people are going to do the hard work, they want the money.

Keep it up

"My child, pay attention to what I say. Listen carefully to my words. Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. Guard your heart above

