

The Bulwark

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REEPICHEEP: PADDLING TO THE GOAL

The Chronicles of Narnia, a series of books written by C.S. Lewis is so much more than classic children's literature. There is a healthy dose of elements in the books that would appeal to children but by the same token there are some deep spiritual take aways to be found. One of which can be seen in the intrepid, little talking mouse Reepicheep. His primal desire in life is to reach "the utter East" and join with the great lion, Aslan (as one reads the series, it becomes clear that Aslan, is symbolic of Christ). Reepicheep's resolve is seen expressed in the following quote. "While I may, I sail East in Dawn Treader. When she fails me, I row East in my coracle. When that sinks, I shall paddle East with my four paws. Then, when I can swim no longer, if I have not yet reached Aslan's Country, there shall I sink with my nose pointed to the sunrise." (Voyage of the Dawn Treader. C.S. Lewis) Talk about determination.

Lewis, in that soliloquy of Reepicheep, encapsulates the drive necessary for the child of God to have as their own. An unparalleled mind set of total devotion. A longing, not unlike the longing of which Paul refers to in the third chapter of Philippians. "Not that I have already obtained it, or have become perfect, but I press



on..." (v 12). Then again take reflect on what is seen in verse thirteen, "Brethren I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do..." All of which builds to the following as seen in verse fourteen. "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

There was the realization on Paul's part that he needed to become more like Christ. Reading over those verses it becomes clear that nothing else mattered; he needed to be the man that Christ would have him to be. Equally he came across as quite candid, and stressed that he had a considerable way to go; but he would never "throw in the towel", no matter the degree of difficulty.

To say there was "no quit" in the apostle Paul would be a gross understatement. He had surrendered everything that the world puts so much value in; position, power, money and prestige. Check out the third chapter of Philippians, verses three through eight where he expresses such in writing to the brethren in Philippi.

It is probably a fairly safe assumption to say that not one of us is "what we should be" with respect

to our relationship with Christ. We are in the process of pressing forward toward the goal "of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." We haven't arrived, and despite our failures, weaknesses and overall weariness, we find the reserve within and press ever forward.

"I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course. I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only me, but to all who have loved His appearing." (2Timothy 4:7-8) With full determination we must keep pressing forward. "Be imitators of me, just as I am of Christ." (1Corinthians 11:1) (wbe)

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