



The Greatest Spectacle in Racing

The Secret of Winning and Finishing the Race

Introduction

- This month will mark the 107th running of the **Indianapolis 500**.
- Originally built in 1909, the Speedway was a dirt track, but in 1911 it was paved with **bricks**—giving it the nickname the **Brickyard**.
- Even then, it attracted **widespread attention** from both American and European racing teams.



Introduction

- The first winner of the Indy 500 was an American by the name of **Ray Harroun**.
- His average speed was just under **75 mph**, and it took him 6:40 to complete the race.
- His **winnings** were **\$10,000** or, in today's dollars, over \$317,722.
- Drivers **today** can earn up to 3 million dollars in cash prizes.
- In **2021**, the average speed for the winner was around **192 mph** and took 2:27.



New Innovation



Rear View Mirror

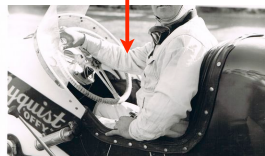


New Innovation



Seat Belts

First used in 1922 but not widely accepted until 1956.



Greatest Spectacle in Racing

- Billed as **The Greatest Spectacle in Racing**, the **Indy 500** is considered one of the world's three most significant motorsports events.
- The **official attendance** is not disclosed by Speedway management, but
 - ▶ the permanent seating capacity is more than **257,000** people, and
 - ▶ infield seating raises the capacity to approximately **400,000**.



The Valvoline Special

- My dad took me to my first **Indy 500** in 1966 when I was 11 years old.
- The company he worked for sponsored a car called the **Valvoline Special**, driven by Eddie Johnson, who finished 7th.
- That year is remembered for having an **11-car pile-up** at the start of the race.
- Some drivers' names during that year's race were young Mario Andretti, Jim Clark, Parnelli Jones, Jackie Stewart, A.J. Foyt, Dan Gurney, Bobby, and Al Unser.
- The **winner** of the race that year was **Graham Hill**, who was a rookie.



Greatest Spectacle in Racing

- Today, during **qualifications**, many cars average speeds over **220 mph**.
- The 3.5-liter turbocharged engines produce more than **650 horsepower**.
- However, their **fuel economy** is only .769 mpg.
- The **aerodynamics** of the cars produces a downforce of 5,000 pounds.
- At speed, the **tire treads** reach a temperature of **212°**.



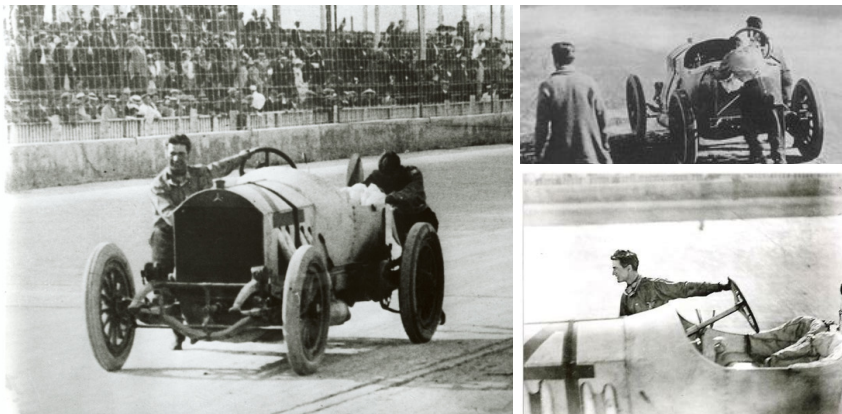
1912 Indy 500

- But perhaps the most memorable, or at least inspiring, **Indy event** occurred during the second running at the Brickyard in **1912**.
- Something in that race caught the **public's imagination** and helped make the Indianapolis 500 the great race it is today.
- What happened didn't even involve the **winner**.
- It involved **Ralph DePalma** (Italian-American) and his riding mechanic **Rupert Jeffkins**.



1912 Indy 500

- At the start of the race, **Ralph DePalma** **immediately** took the lead and set a blistering pace.
- In fact, he led the race for **198** of the 200 laps.
- But with only a **mile to go**, something went **horribly wrong** with his Mercedes.
- The **engine stopped**, and the car rested on the back straightaway.
- Undaunted, **DePalma** and his riding mechanic exited their car and started pushing.



The Real Winner

- Even though **Joe Dawson** passed them to win the race, it didn't matter.
- The **crowd** gave him a standing ovation, and the story of **DePalma** pushing his car across the finish line swept across the nation and captured the fancy of everyone.
- From then on, the **Indianapolis 500** became an American tradition.
- **DePalma** went on to win the **1915 Indy 500** and, in his career, won over 2,500 races.



King David's Final Words

1 Kings 2:2-4

- **"I am about to go the way of all the earth,"** he said.
- **"So be strong, show yourself a man** (have **courage**), and **observe** what the **LORD your God** requires:
 - ▶ **Walk in his ways**, and **keep** his **decrees** and **commands**, his **laws** and **requirements**, as written in the **Law of Moses**, so that
 - you may **prosper** in **all you do and wherever you go**, and
 - that the **LORD** may keep his **promise** to me.
 - ▶ **"If your descendants watch how they live and walk faithfully before me** with all their heart and soul, you will **never fail** to have a man on the **throne of Israel.**"



Be Strong

- **Ralph DePalma** probably would have been **shocked** to learn before the race that he would have to **push his car across the finish line**.
- This is often how we approach life.
 - ▶ We expect **life** to **carry us along and give us wonderful things**.
 - ▶ We think that life is a **stream upon which we flow and go**.
 - ▶ In other words, we think that **life** ...
 - carries us along and;
 - we don't need to **prepare** our hearts for **unexpected trouble**.
 - ▶ However, this misguided **assumption** produces **unrealistic exceptions**, which can cause a **"crisis of faith."**



Be Strong

- How **surprised** we are ...
 - ▶ when sometimes things **break down**, and
 - ▶ we have to **climb** out of our **expectations**,
 - ▶ **clamber** over our **dreams**, and
 - ▶ **step out** onto the rough brick road of experience and start **pushing**.
- No doubt this is why David tells his son Solomon to **"Be strong."**
- Why? Because **life** is **always full of unexpected setbacks** that can **tempt** us to **quit** or **stop trying**.



Be Strong is a Commandment

- MOSES COMMANDS AND ENCOURAGES JOSHUA!
 - ▶ **Be strong and courageous.** Do not be **afraid** or **terrified** because of them,
 - for the **LORD your God** goes with you;
 - he will never leave you nor forsake you." (Deut 31:6 NIV)
 - ▶ Have I not commanded you? **Be strong and courageous.**
 - Do not be **terrified**;
 - do not be **discouraged**,
 - for the **LORD your God** will be with you wherever you go." (Josh 1:9 NIV)

Be Strong is a Commandment

- DAVID ENCOURAGES SOLOMON!
 - ▶ Consider now, for the **LORD** has chosen you to build a **temple** as a sanctuary. **Be strong and do the work.**" (1 Chr 28:10 NIV)
- THE APOSTLE PAUL TO THE CHURCH!
 - ▶ Be on your guard; stand firm in the **faith**; be men of courage; **be strong.** (1 Cor 16:13 NIV)
 - ▶ Finally, **be strong** in the **Lord** and in his mighty power. (Eph 6:10 NIV)

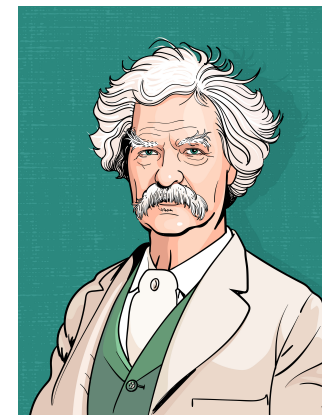
Be Courageous

- Can you imagine how **DePalma** felt as his car came to a grinding halt on the speedway?
- He wasn't just a lame duck but a **dead duck** —no two ways about it.
- However,
 - ▶ despite all odds,
 - ▶ he chose to be **courageous** and
 - ▶ not quit.



Be Courageous

- David says to his son, "**Be courageous.**"
 - ▶ He didn't say, "**Don't be afraid**," because, as Mark Twain has famously observed, "**Courage** is not the absence of fear."
 - ▶ It is acting despite it."
- In other **words**,
 - ▶ **courage** is knowing what's around the corner and
 - ▶ **acting** because you are confident that the **Lord** is with you.



Be Faithful

- David's last advice to his **son** was to
 - ▶ “**keep the charge** of the **LORD your God**,
 - walking in his ways and
 - keeping his statutes,
 - his commandments,
 - his ordinances, and
 - his testimonies.” (1 Kings 2:3)



Be Faithful

- God said something similar to **Joshua** when he began his leadership of the House of Israel:
 - ▶ “This **book of the law** shall not depart out of your mouth; you shall **meditate** (or study) on it day and night so that you may **be careful to act in accordance with all that is written in it**. (Joshua 1:8a)
 - ▶ For **then** you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall be successful” (Joshua 1:8b).
- Being **strong** and **courageous** without being **faithful** to the word of God only means that our strength and courage are likely to be misplaced and misdirected or to come as something too little or too late.

Be Faithful

- According to the **Apostle Paul**,
 - ▶ However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may **finish the race** and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me — the **task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace**. (Acts 20:24)
 - ▶ I have fought the **good fight**, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. (2 Tim 4:7)
 - ▶ Do you not know that in a race, all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? **Run in such a way as to get the prize**. (1 Cor 9:24)



Take Care of Business

- When someone is on their **deathbed**, and they give you their final words of wisdom, you can be sure they are **important**.
- And what did **David** tell Solomon?
 - ▶ Be strong
 - ▶ Be courageous
 - ▶ Be faithful to God
- **David's** advice to Solomon and our mandate as **followers** of **Jesus Christ** are not experienced in a poofy land of make-believe but in a nitty-gritty, 24/7, fast-paced world of unbelief, hostility, and anger.
- If we are to cross the **finish line**, we must be strong, courageous, and faithful to God because life is **full of trials**, and we may be **tempted** to quit when the **unexpected happens**.

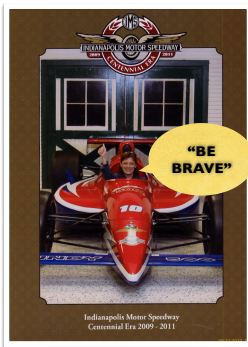
Unexpected Trouble

- Examples of **Unexpected Trouble**
 - ▶ A **bad report** from the doctor where you learn you have a serious health issue.
 - ▶ A **policeman** knocks at the door with news about one of your children.
 - ▶ You are laid off from work, and times are **hard** everywhere.
 - ▶ You just learned that your **spouse** has been unfaithful.
 - ▶ A close **friend** or **work associate** you trusted has just stabbed you in the back.
 - ▶ The **stock market** has crashed, and now your retirement fund is worth almost nothing.
 - ▶ You are called an **enemy of the state** because you won't bow your knee to the **woke mob**.

Fight the Good Fight of Faith

- During **times of disappointment**, we need to fight the **good fight** of faith.
- Instead of giving into ...
 - ▶ fear,
 - ▶ pointing fingers, and
 - ▶ complaining, we need to instead:
- Resist the **temptation** to repay evil with evil.
- Instead, let us be **strong**, **courageous**, and **faithful** pursuing righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. (1 Tim 6:11 NIV)

To the Finish Line



Be Faithful

- Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a **great cloud of witnesses** (*winners who finished the race*),
 - ▶ let us throw off
 - everything that **hinders** and
 - the **sin** that so easily entangles, and
 - ▶ let us run with **perseverance**; **the race** marked out for us. (Heb 12:1)

