Missing the Point

(Selected)

Orville and Wilbur Wright were excited. On December 17, 1903, they had finally succeeded in keeping their homemade airplane in the air for 59 seconds. Immediately they rushed a telegram to their sister in Dayton, Ohio, telling of this great accomplishment. The telegram read, *“First sustained flight today fifty-nine seconds. Hope to be home by Christmas.”*

Upon receiving the news the sister was so excited about the success that she rushed to the newspaper office and gave the telegram to the editor. The next morning the newspaper headline read, *“Popular Local Bicycle Merchants To Be Home For Holidays.”* One of the greatest stories of the twentieth century was missed because an editor missed the point.

But who has not made the same mistake in reading the Scriptures? If one is too casual about it, he might learn some truth but miss that which is most important. For years Charles Hodge has been saying, *“Familiar Scripture should be read more closely.”* That advice is well worth heeding, but all Scripture should be read more closely to let the deep meaning sink into your heart. Read the Bible. Read it carefully. And don’t miss the point.

“***Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so***” (**Acts 17:11**).

**You Can Run On A Foul But You Sho’ Can’t Sco’**

(Selected)

The Bible compares our efforts toward heaven to a race or a game of contest in which all competitors are striving for victory. In **1 Corinthians 9:24**: ***“So run, that ye may obtain.”*** In **Philippians 3:14**: ***“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”*** In **Galatians 5:7**: ***“Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?”*** In **2 Timothy 2:5**: ***“And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.”*** In each instance, attention is called to the fact that to win the prize one must contend according to the rules. One’s measure of skill and proficiency does not give license to ignoring the rules. It may be a race, tennis match, football or baseball game- or going to heaven – but they all have that common point.

A preacher was once illustrating life to a baseball game. He was striving to show the folly of ignoring what the Bible says and of following human creeds and denominationalism. He first said, *“You can’t run on a foul.”* But you can run on a foul, just as you can practice any religion you want to, and the old preacher knew this. So he paused and said, very deliberately, to set the record straight and make his point clear: *“You can run on a foul, but you sho’ can’t sco’.”*

Yes, you can hit a *“home run”* in foul territory, but it doesn’t give you the privilege of trotting around the bases, and if your religion isn’t in the Bible, *“you sho’ can’t sco’.”*

**Tied to Old Habits**

(Selected)

A drunken man entered his row boat one night to cross the river. He picked up the oars and pulled away – so he thought. He rowed all night but did not reach the destination. When daylight came, he was surprised to find that he was just where he started the night before. He had forgotten to untie his boat.

So it is with many of the Lord’s followers. They are tied to their habits, desires, wills, or some cherished idol or idols of the heart. Consequently, their lives are fruitless. Shore-bound Christians never flourish and are of little or no help to others.