



NEW HEART BEAT DEVOTIONS

“To have your accomplishments continue, you must be training someone to take your place.”

Pass the Baton

My granddaughter was involved in relay swimming races. Four swimmers made up each team. Each had to complete a lap of the pool before the next could start. There were eight teams racing at the same time. The win depended not only on her but also on how well her precursor and successor performed.

“Relay race, consisting of usually four sets (leg), each leg run is by a different member of a team. The runner finishing one leg is usually required to pass the next runner a stick-like object known as a “baton” while both are running in a marked exchange zone. In most relays, team members cover equal distances: Olympic events for both men and women are the 400-metre and 1,600-metre relays. Some non-Olympic relays are held at distances of 800 m, 3,200 m, and 6,000 m.”¹

My home state hosts the Penn Relays “the oldest and largest track and field competition in the US hosted annually since April 21, 1895 by the University of Pennsylvania at Franklin Field in Philadelphia. In 2012, there were 116 events at the meet and more athletes run in the Penn Relays than do any other track and field meets in the world. It regularly attracts more than 15,000 participants from high schools, colleges, and track clubs throughout North America and abroad. Historically, the event has been credited with popularizing the running of relay races.”²

In a way our involvement at work, in our communities, in sports, in politics, in church ministries and even in our own families is like a relay race. We may be greatly involved accomplishing much or may be just someone behind the scenes. In either case, our time being involved will end. It may be within a short time or after a very long period of time. It may be by choice or forced on us. We must remember that we are placed in and removed from a position or responsibility by God and for God. “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” I Cor 10:31 While we are there, we are to do our best. “Know ye not that they which run in race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.” I Cor 9:24

But we must be prepared to pass the baton at any moment. When the time comes, we must pass with willingness, cooperation and understanding that God will reward us for what we did. “Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” I Cor 15:58 We may not understand or want to leave but we must trust that He has something better for us. “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.” Prov 3:5,6 I have taken and passed the baton.

An example of passing the baton or transfer of power is the presidential transition. Sadly, the recent one did not go well. However, the one in 1877 was worse. The Hayes-Tilden “election had disputes over 20 electoral votes along with multiple allegations of electoral fraud. This constitutional crisis was resolved only two days before the scheduled inauguration through the Compromise of 1877.”³ “After the Compromise, a few Democrats complained loudly that Tilden had been cheated. There was talk of forming armed units that would march on Washington, but President Grant was ready for that. He tightened military security, and nobody marched on Washington.”⁴

God only knows when the time will come that we will be called home and our mantle is passed to another. The question is how would our work, our ministry, and our family suffer? Only a self-centered person will leave behind a family, a ministry, a church, a business or a race that is devastated by their leaving.

	<p><i>Charles L Stambaugh Mount Wolf PA</i></p> <p>“He must increase, but I must decrease.” John 3:30</p> <p>Are you preparing and allowing someone to take your baton or will they be devastated by taking your mantle?</p>	
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¹en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Relay_race#:~:text=A%20relay%20race%20is%20a,professional%20races%20and%20ama%20game%20games. ²en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penn_Relays

³en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_transition ⁴en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compromise_of_1877

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