

# Don't Quit Too Soon!

By Wendyl K. Leslie

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Some years back, Newsweek magazine ran a full-page ad that I thought was very good. The headline of the ad read, "Before You Quit, Read This," and the body of the ad went on to report:

"The first strategy of many who are faced with a problem is to quit. But a man who suffered such severe burns on his legs that he faced amputation--he didn't quit. Glenn Cunningham became the most successful distance runner of his time.

"And a man with less than one year of formal education didn't quit. Abraham Lincoln became the most revered president we ever had.

"And a fragile boy in Scotland, bedridden most of his childhood, didn't quit. Robert Louis Stevenson became such a masterful storyteller, your great grandchildren will cherish his books as you did.

"Now, if you had all three of those strikes against you, nobody would blame you for quitting. But unless your legs are severely burned, and you're so fragile, you have to stay in bed, and you never graduated from second grade, why don't you turn around and get back to work. Maybe we'll be writing about YOU someday!"

The story of successful people, wherever they may be found --running a home, achieving business success or success in any kind of endeavor--is the story of people who wouldn't quit.

It makes you wonder how many people have stopped just short of winning everything they could possibly want--maybe just inches, just one day short of victory.

For us to be successful at anything, there is a series of qualifications we must fulfill. It's as though we're being tested to see whether or not we deserve the success we seek. As we run up against one problem after another, we are given the choice of quitting or pushing on to the next. And if we keep going, if we never lose sight of what it is we're working toward, eventually we'll make it.

Huxley, in an essay, compared it to a kind of game. He wrote:

"To those who play well, the highest stakes are paid, with the kind of overflowing generosity with which the strong delight in strength. And those who play ill . . . are checkmated . . . without haste, but without remorse."

And that seems to be the way it works. If a person will stay with it--keep everlastingly at it--he will get a kind of second wind. From somewhere he'll find the strength and determination he needs to go on.

Every day of the week, there must be thousands who turn away in defeat, and who will never know the great joys of accomplishment and success, because they quit too soon. Who can say how close they may have come? Maybe one more day, or even an hour, could have meant the difference. They can be compared to a youngster in school who quits a week before graduation. They'll never know the abundance that could have been theirs if they'd stayed with it a little longer.

It's been wisely written that success in life is a matter not so much of talent or opportunity as of concentration and perseverance. And that is its essence.

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Wendyl Leslie, is editor of Serve to Lead Leadership Concepts, and author of "Serve To Lead: Mastering the Leadership Style of Jesus." Nominated for Marquis "Who's Who of America" for 2003, he invites you to visit the largest Christian Leadership site on the Internet at: <http://www.servetolead.net>

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