

From the Editor

Before 1954, most people assumed that it was just about impossible to run a mile in under four minutes. People would try hard and come close, but it was accepted as a general norm in those days that the 4-minute barrier was the human limit. However, one young man, a medical student from Oxford University felt that it wasn't impossible. As a matter of fact, he was so confident that it was not impossible that he determined in his mind and body that he would break the 4-minute barrier—and he did. The news report from that day tells the story:

Roger Bannister, a 25-year-old British medical student, has become the first man to run a mile in less than four minutes. His time was 3 minutes 59.4 seconds, achieved at the Iffley Road track in Oxford and watched by about 3,000 spectators. Just over 200 yards from the finish, Bannister took the lead with a final burst of energy. He sprinted to the line in record time and fell exhausted into the arms of a friend, the Rev. Nicholas Stacey. Pandemonium broke out when spectators heard news that Bannister had officially beaten the four-minute mile.

Today, most all Olympic-class runners break the 4-minute mile. The current fastest mile record is held by Moroccan Hicham El Guerrouj, who came in at a blistering 3 minutes 43.13 seconds in Rome, Italy, on 7 July 1999.

When people tell themselves that something is impossible, it usually is—at least for them. Such preconceived limits become our cages—cages that prevent us from dreaming, growing, and pursuing other possibilities. We could aptly name all such cages: “Tyranny of the Impossible.” When we make up our mind that something is

“impossible” we cripple ourselves and prevent our true capabilities.

When the impossible is something like running a mile faster than everyone else, perhaps you could argue that it really doesn't matter. But I am afraid that we as Christians are more apt to fall prey to this crippling mental condition in the Christian world than anywhere else, and it is here that the consequences are most devastating. The

“Tyranny of the Impossible” is killing the dreams, visions, creativity, and most catastrophically, the faith of the Church—the kind of faith that moves mountains.

In this issue of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant*, we have a large article featuring a radical group of believers called the Moravians. These believers of the 1700s were not afraid to dream—and accomplish—“the impossible.” Their legacy of genuine revival, committed prayer life, and astonishing mission exploits defied the “Tyranny of the Impossible” at every turn.

I will acknowledge from the start, there were things that they did and practiced as a church that I would struggle with. They certainly were not a perfect church in life or in doctrine. But that's not why I wrote the article. I wrote the article so that we as a church today could recognize that the “4-minute mile” of church life was broken once again over 200 years ago in a little city called Bethlehem, Pennsylvania! I wrote the article in hopes that our “Tyranny of the Impossible” can give way to a new generation of Christians who dare to dream the impossible and then to put it into action, with the Lord Jesus Christ being our helper! As we run, let's be encouraged that there have been saints such as these Moravians who have gone on before us, who are waiting at the finish line, cheering us on!



Roger Bannister breaking the 4-minute mile barrier.

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. He. 12:1-2

This issue of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* is short on short articles and long on long articles. Although the variety is short, we trust the nourishment is long. In the area of natural nourishment, Mike Atnip has urged us toward temperance in eating with an article on the “touchy” subject of gluttony. Dave Esh teaches about the correct spirit in the area of reconciliation and forgiveness, while the sisters get a short article and a good poem on the beauties of “hiddenness.” Finishing out this issue is an old Anabaptist tract on the doctrine of the two kingdoms, explaining why the church should not participate in the state’s business.

May the Lamb that was slain receive the reward of His sufferings!

—*Bro. Dean*