

THE BIG IDEA: We COMPLETE what we REPEAT.

The Take-Off

Today marks the halfway point of the 10 Series, and today we'll be making a pretty significant turn.

To this point, we've dealt with some pretty hard stuff. We've talked about being intentional, living with contentment, and paying attention. Every one of those words are action words. We happen to things instead of things happening to us.

And last week we addressed tension, which is what most of us feel whenever we begin to learn new truth.

Everyone of us has learned more about ourselves and about Jesus during this series, and many of us have started feeling the tension between what we're learning and what we're doing.

But today, the series takes a shift towards the payoff for not throwing in the towel during the hard stuff.

Not that we won't still have to deal with some things that can increase our tension, but from today through the end of the series, each week we're going to see more and more of the benefits that come from living out the truths that we're learning.

I agree that it's hard to be intentional, to be content and to pay attention. But today's truth will help lesson the tension that many of us feel. Today we'll learn the power behind practicing consistency.

1. Consistency is revealed in a moment

As a nation, we are obsessed with overnight success stories.

We love reading about the latest viral video, or the businesses that seemed to explode into multi-billion dollar industry leaders.

Tonight, we'll watch the latest overnight success - 49er's QB, Colin Kaepernick - try to lead his team to a Super Bowl win in only his 10th career start.

In fact, as I prepared for this teaching, I found an article that highlighted the Top 10 Accidental Discoveries and told the bizarre stories behind how much of what we use now was discovered. Among them are:

- Penicillin was discovered when Alexander Fleming didn't clean his workstation before vacation.
- Pacemakers were discovered when the inventor - while working on something else - reached into a box and pulled out the wrong item.
- The color mauve was discovered by an 18 year-old trying to cure malaria but in the process made the first-ever synthetic dye.
- After a decade of trying to find a way to make rubber easier to work with and resistant to heat or cold, Charles Goodyear discovered the answer when he spilled rubber, sulfur and lead onto a hot stove.
- Coke was the result of mixing a bunch of ingredients together to find a cure for headaches
- Maybe my favorite accidental discovery story is Saccharin. In 1879 a chemist was working on new ways to use coal tar. After a normal day he went home. During dinner he noticed the rolls were particularly sweet, but they tasted normal to his wife. That's when we realized that he'd forgotten to wash his hands. He went back the next day and tasted all his work until he found it, and Saccharin was born.

This fascination with great moments isn't limited to inventions, discoveries or viral videos, either.

It happens in athletics.

In a few hours we'll all see a number of examples of consistency in the Super Bowl alone. Not just Ray Lewis, who is wrapping up a career spanning 17 years and over 200 games, but other, less-famous names, too. No telling how many cumulative hours of practice will be represented on the field tonight between all the players, but one thing is true: many will see the glory of the moment and miss the grit of the mundane that got them there.

It happens a lot within the church. We see "famous" Christians and want we we see in them without realizing what it took to get that in them.

We want the prize of greatness without paying the price of greatness.

That price is consistency, and the spotlight reveals who has paid it and who hasn't.

2. Consistency is practiced over time

There is no shortcut here, and the people who have succeeded know it.

Louis Pasteur knew it. He once said that "chance favors the prepared mind."

Napoleon Hill knew it. He is quoted as saying "patience, persistence and perspiration make an unbelievable combination for success."

Shoot, even Bruce Springsteen knew it. "Getting an audience is hard. Sustaining an audience is hard. It demands a consistency of thought, of purpose, and of action over a long period of time."

Translation? **Big moments happen if we don't quit in the boring moments.**

We watch others in their great moments and want it now because we see the reward but not the price.

I think Paul had this struggle in mind when he wrote Philippians 4:9.

He's just shared his story in chapter 3 - his GREAT moment - and he knows that some are only seeing glory, and so

he writes: "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me - put it into practice."

This isn't a truth that needs to be taught for an hour or two, because we all know it (and hate it) already.

Our greatest moments are simply the result of consistency in the not-so-great moments.

The one constant in the accidental discovery stories I shared earlier? The discoveries happened to scientists who were practicing science. They were prepared.

What is happening over these 10 weeks of the 10 Series is that we are learning to practice consistency, and if we're faithful to do these things over time, there will be a day when the effect of our consistency will be revealed.

This is a theme found often with Paul:

- Galatians 6:9 - don't give up, your consistency will be rewarded
- Colossians 2:6 - don't just receive Christ, continue to live (or walk) in him

Before we wrap this up, I want to play an audio testimony that I found some years ago. It's a bit lengthy - around 8 minutes - but it is a powerful illustration of what can happen when we live with consistency for Jesus.

[Mr. Genor on George Street]

The Landing

Mr. Genor understood our Big Idea: **We COMPLETE what we REPEAT.**

Lots of people start things. Fewer people finish.

It is the faithful consistency to repeat spiritual disciplines that leads to God's will and purpose in your life being complete.

Consistency reveals that we are Christians, not just people doing Christian things.

Christians read the Bible consistently. They pray consistently. They serve consistently. They give consistently.

People who try to do Christian things don't do any of this consistently.

"Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me - put it into practice."

We complete what we repeat.

Here are some questions for you to discuss with your family or your Community Group?

- Am I willing to be consistent for a lifetime in order to be recognized for a moment?
 - Jesus was prepared 30 years for 3 years of ministry that ended badly in the eyes of most men.
 - Mr. Genor was a consistent witness for 4 decades without seeing fruit.
- Is my love for Jesus all the motivation I need to walk with him consistently?
 - What gets us through the down/dry/mundane times?
 - This is a matter of will first, emotion second.
- Am I so thankful for Jesus saving me that I can live in peace with nothing more from him?