

Crossing Niagara Falls

Nik Wallenda of the famous Wallenda family funambulists (tightrope walkers) is fulfilling a lifelong dream to honor his great-grandfather, who died after falling from a tightrope in Puerto Rico in 1978, by performing harrowing, world-record stunts truly in keeping with the Wallenda family tradition.

For example, on June 15, 2012, I watched on television with great anxiety – as did millions of others – as Wallenda became the first person to walk across Niagara Falls on a tightrope.

Tens of thousands of people gathered at the falls and millions more were watching on television as Wallenda crossed some 200 feet in the air on a two-inch-wide tightrope over the raging waters of Horseshoe Falls, the largest of the three falls that make up Niagara Falls.



Wallenda trotted in his final steps across the tightrope and stepped into Canada, barely 25 minutes after he started.

After he greeted his wife and family, Wallenda was approached by customs agents, who asked him for his passport, which he presented.

“No, I’m not carrying anything over, I promise,” he said.

“What is the purpose of your trip, sir?” the agent asked.

“To inspire people around the world,” Wallenda replied.

Wallenda’s feat was indeed inspiring, but not solely – not even predominantly – in the way one might think. What was most inspiring to me was the way Wallenda continually spoke to his Savior as he purposely, intently, confidently put one foot in front of the other.

Wired for sound, Wallenda was in constant communication with his father, his technical crew, and with news reporters who were broadcasting his every utterance. But most importantly, he was in constant communication with God.

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Cameras zoomed in as he stared intently toward the prize – the landing on the other side of the 1,500-foot chasm. Every few feet, you could hear him praising God, thanking God, beseeching God. “Thank you, Jesus, my King of Righteousness,” he said as he reached the most difficult spot on his journey.

When he got to the other side, he told reporters that the landing perch ahead of him was not always visible. Continually obscured by mist and rain, he couldn’t see it, but he knew it was there. He knew where he was going. His job was just to keep moving forward.

What’s the lesson for us?

Christian life is often a balancing act across dangerous chasms. Don’t look down, look ahead. Even when you can’t see the landing perch on the other side, know that it is there.

Focus on putting one foot in front of the other, purposely, intently, confidently knowing that Jesus, your King of Righteousness, is walking with you. What better way to inspire people around the world?

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me (Psalm 23:4 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter

