

Lost in the Fog

On a foggy morning in July 1952, Florence Chadwick waded into the chilly waters off of Catalina Island. Her goal? Swim the channel to the California coast.

The water was numbing cold that day. The fog was so thick she could barely see the boats that were accompanying her. Several times, a rifle fired to scare away sharks that approached her.

She swam more than 15 hours before she asked to be taken out of the water. Her trainer tried to encourage her to swim on since they were so close to land.

Chadwick was not a stranger to long-distance swimming. She was the first woman to swim the English Channel in both directions. But that day, she was discouraged.

When she looked ahead, all she saw was fog. Chadwick gave up only one mile from her goal.

Later, she said, "I'm not excusing myself, but if I could have seen the land, I might have made it."

It wasn't the cold water, exhaustion or fear that caused Chadwick to fail that day. It was the fog. Two months later, Florence Chadwick swam the Catalina channel and set a new speed record. Despite having to deal with the same fog, she made it this time, she said, because she kept a mental image of the shoreline in her mind while she swam.

The lesson for us? Keep our goals in sight and press on.

You may be much closer to fulfilling them than you realize.

I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus
(Philippians 3:14).

– Beecher Hunter