



GODSPEED

Endurance Wins the Race, Love Wins the War



PERSONAL NOTE



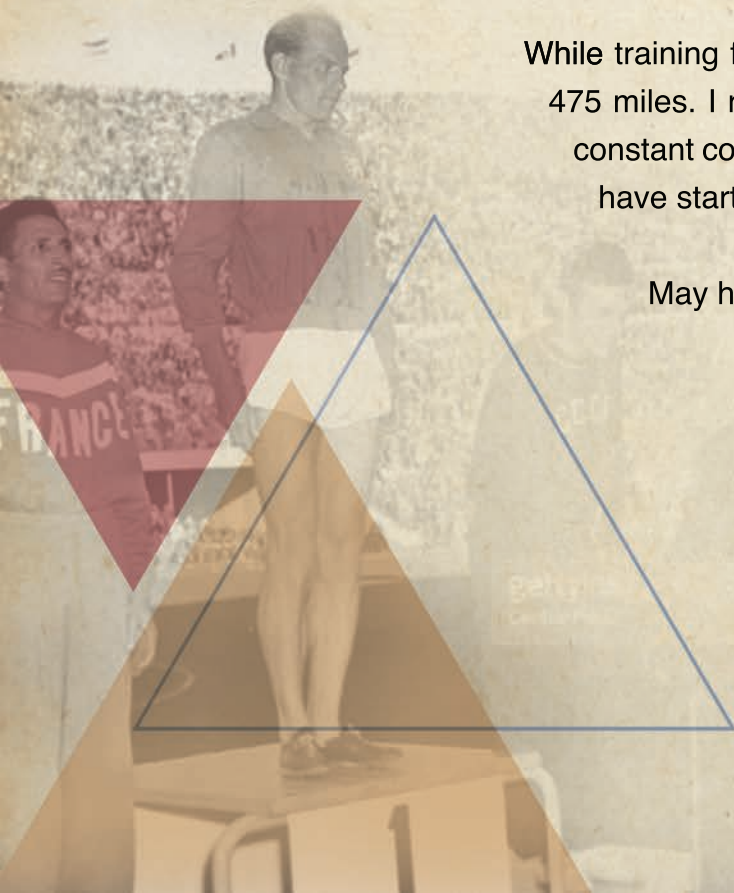
On the day I began training for my first marathon, I knew I'd need all the inspiration I could get. I picked up a biography of Emil Zátopek, and I couldn't put it down. I read for six straight hours. At the dinner table that night, I did two things. I asked my family if they had ever heard of the name, Emil Zatopek. The unanimous answer was "no." I've asked that same question dozens of times since then and gotten the same answer from nearly everyone. A rare person knows the name, Emil Zatopek. After asking the question, I announced to my family that I was going to make a movie about Emil Zatopek's life, if it was the last thing I do. I know, that sounds a little dramatic.

I've read more than four thousand books, including hundreds of biographies. And I have my fair share of heroes. But I have never encountered anyone quite like the inimitable Emil Zatopek. His accomplishments in the sport of distance running are unprecedented and unparalleled. But the man himself is far greater than the gold medals he won, or the one he gave away!

While training for my first marathon, I completed 72 training runs totaling 475 miles. I ran all of those miles by myself, but Emil Zatopek was my constant companion. If it weren't for his inspiration, I'm not sure I would have started or finished the 2017 Chicago Marathon.

May his story inspire you as much as it has inspired me!

Mark Batterson



EMIL ZÁTOPEK

"All the effort in the battle for life would have no purpose if I did not have Christ before my eyes."
- Zatopek

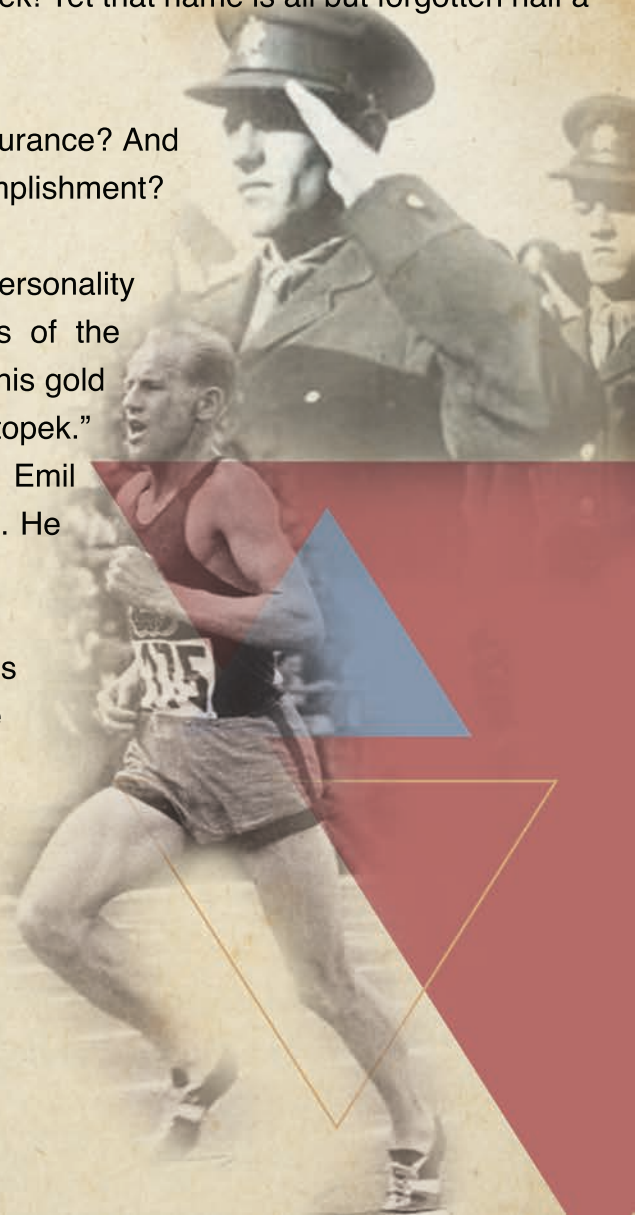
Emil Zatopek was ordinary in every way--5'7" on tiptoes, 145 pounds soaking wet. He possessed very little natural talent. He faced impossible odds in a sport dominated by the "Flying Finns." Yet the Czech Locomotive would emerge from behind the Iron Curtain, step onto the Olympic stage, and become almost universally recognized as the Greatest Runner of All Time, at any distance. Emil Zatopek did what no runner will ever do again, winning triple gold while setting Olympic Records in the Nickel (5,000 meters), the Dime (10,000 meters), and the Marathon (26.2 miles), a race he had never run before.

With an inhuman threshold for pain and an insatiable desire to always beat his personal best, Emil Zatopek set eighteen World Records while becoming the most famous sportsman of his generation. Adoring fans chanted the name of the man who had stolen their hearts, Za-to-pek! Za-to-pek! Yet that name is all but forgotten half a century later.

Who was Emil Zatopek? How did he defy the limits of human endurance? And what drove the Czech Locomotive to unprecedented Olympic accomplishment?

The man behind the myth does not disappoint. His larger-than-life personality was only eclipsed by his down-to-earth character. In the words of the Australian runner Ron Clarke, to whom Emil famously gave one of his gold medals: "There is not, and never was, a greater man than Emil Zatopek." His archrival, French runner Alan Mimoun, dubbed him "a saint." Emil Zatopek lived life the way he ran races--like his life depended on it. He knew no other way!

Nine days before the 1952 Olympics, Emil risked his career, and his life, by standing up and staring down the Soviet Union. When the communist powers-that-be forbade his friend, Stanislav Jungwirth, from competing in the Olympic games, Emil drew a line in the sand: "If Stanislav does not go, nor will I." Before winning gold in the Olympic games, Emil Zatopek won the hearts of the world with that one act of selfless courage. That defining moment epitomizes who Emil Zatopek was, what Emil Zatopek was about.



THE COACH

"What you do when the stadium is full is important, but what you do when the stadium is empty is a thousand times more important."

- Emil Zátopek

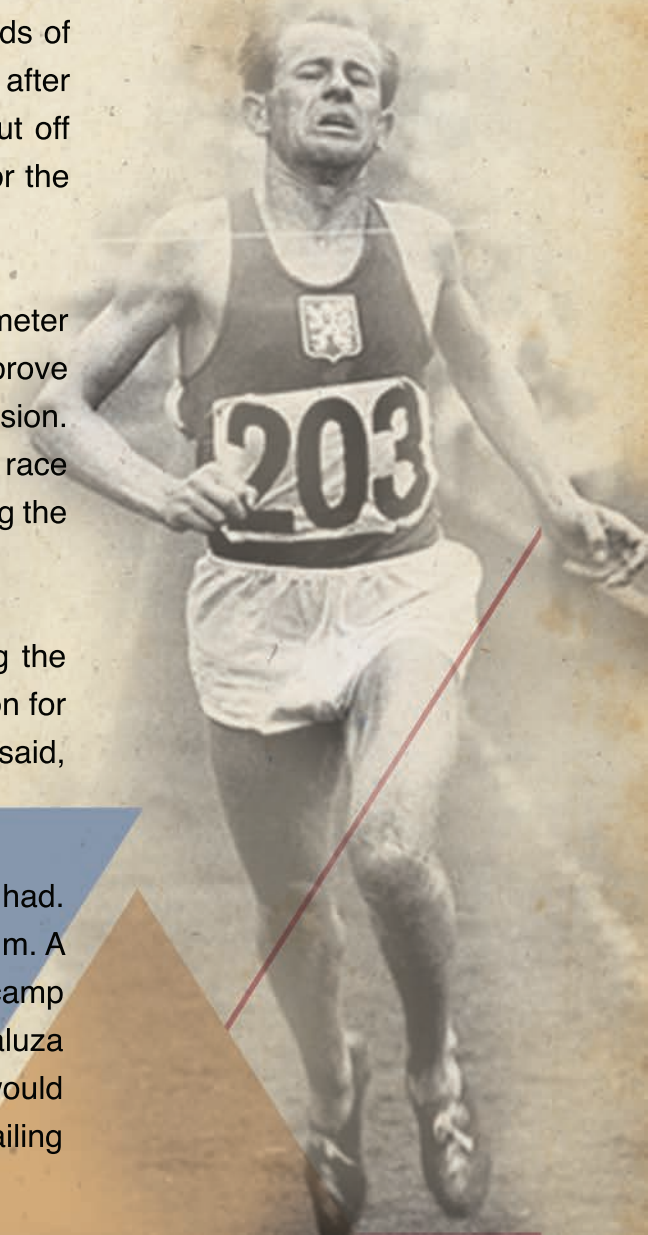
The sixth of eight children, Emil Zátopek was born into a poor Czechoslovakian family during the Great Depression, so poor that Emil didn't own a pair of shoes. His father was a harsh man who needed little provocation to beat Emil and his siblings. His mother was loving and strong, but she could not always curb her husband's temper.

At the age of 14, Emil was sent away from home to work in another city, Zlín. He became little more than a number, one of thousands of boys working and studying at the Bata Shoe Factory. Not long after arriving, Nazi Germany invaded his hometown and Emil was cut off from his family. Before long, Emil found himself making boots for the Third Reich, living under their tyranny of fear.

On May 15, 1940, Emil was forced to participate in a one-kilometer race. He tried to fake injury to avoid racing, but that race would prove to be the turning point of his life. Emil discovered his life's passion. Half a lifetime later, he reminisced: "I felt something during that race that I had wanted since childhood." Emil finished second, catching the eye of his future coach, Jan Haluza.

Jan Haluza was the only coach Emil Zátopek ever had. During the first few years of Emil's running career, Haluza laid the foundation for future success. When interviewed in his late seventies, Emil said, "Without Haluza, there would have been no Zátopek."

Jan Haluza was more than a coach, he was the father Emil never had. He was the first man to see greatness in Emil and call it out of him. A committed follower of Christ, Haluza was sentenced to a labor camp in 1948 when he refused to join the Communist party. Haluza warned Emil, but Emil refused to listen. Emil and Haluza would reconcile later in life, but Emil would never forgive himself for failing to stand up for his friend, his coach, his spiritual father.





THE STAGE

*"It is at the borders of pain and suffering,
that the men are separated from the boys."*

- Emil Zátopek

When World War II ended, Nazi Germany was pushed out of Czechoslovakia by the USSR. After a brief "Czech Spring," their Soviet saviors became as brutal overlords as the Nazis had been before them. But now, Emil was wearing their uniform. After winning an Olympic gold in the '48 London Games, Emil became the poster child for a communist regime and was tasked with delivering their propaganda in public speeches. The Soviet Union tightened its grip on his homeland, imprisoning anyone who dared oppose them, including his coach, Jan Haluza.

After coming face to face with the atrocities happening to his friends and family, Emil could stand it no longer. Nine days before the '52 Helsinki Games, Emil Zátopek made a decision that would pit him against the full force of the Communist Dictatorship. He stood in defiance of a direct order. The USSR would either back down or Emil would not run in Helsinki. Impossibly, the USSR blinked first.





THE LOVE STORY

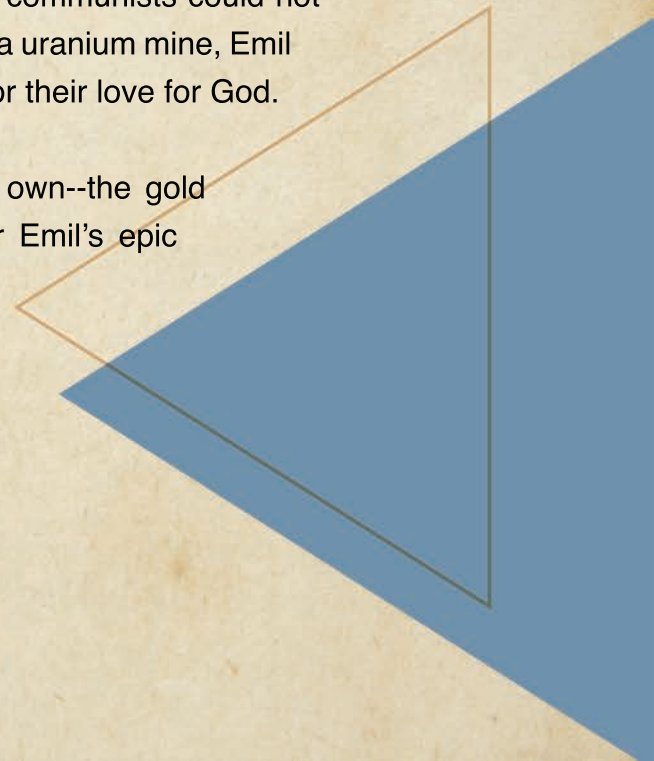
"Great is the victory, but the friendship of all is greater."

- Zatopek

The true-life love story of Dana and Emil Zatopek was a storybook romance in the truest sense. Though their love for one another never wavered, their life was anything but carefree. By the time Emil found the courage to ask for Dana's hand in marriage, the communist party refused to allow it. Emil had just won his first Olympic gold at the '48 London Games and Dana's family was not in good standing with the communists. In an act of treason, Emil ignored their commands and publically asked for Dana's hand in marriage. Once again, the communists caved to Emil's courage.

Emil and Dana were born on the same day, September 19, 1922, and they married on their shared birthday in 1948. Their love was a bond even the communists could not break. And despite the five "lost years" that Emil would spend in a uranium mine, Emil and Dana never lost their love for each other, their love for life or their love for God.

There is one gold medal that Emil celebrated more than his own--the gold medal that Dana won in the Javelin, less than an hour after Emil's epic victory in the Marathon.



THE TRAINING

"When a person forces himself to do a thing a hundred or a thousand times, then he certainly has developed in more ways than physical.

- Zatopek

Emil's running style was hopelessly unorthodox.

Sportswriters said he ran like a man who had been stabbed in the heart; a man who had scorpions in his shoes; a man wrestling an Octopus on a conveyor belt. Emil laughed off their criticism with his trademark sense of humor: "I'm not talented enough to run and smile at the same time." But one thing set Emil Zatopek apart—his 1951 military file highlighted one defining characteristic, "doggedness." Many were faster than Zatopek, but no one trained longer, trained harder.

"You cannot jump to the second floor from the pavement," said Emil. "Step by step, though, a man will come to the fifth floor." Emil made it to the top floor, winning sixty-nine consecutive races from 1949 to 1951. But even Emil admitted this simple truth: "Whoever surpasses my training will also break my records."

While on sentry duty, Emil would run in place in army boots for hours on end. During training runs, he was known to wear a gas mask for the sake of oxygen deprivation. And Emil ran so hard for so long that he passed out on the track more than once. Emil Zatopek didn't just master pain, it became his most intimate friend. It took three years for Emil Zatopek to win his first race, but once he tasted that first victory, he rarely lost again.

After eighteen years of competitive running and eighteen world records, Emil hung a pair of his running shoes from a nail in the wall of his living room. The Czech Locomotive had run more than 50,000 miles--the equivalent of two laps around the world. Most of those miles were run by himself, but he was never alone! Emil Zatopek ran with Christ in his heart. When asked how he had accomplished what he did, Emil said, "Faith in Jesus multiplies the human powers."



THE LEGACY

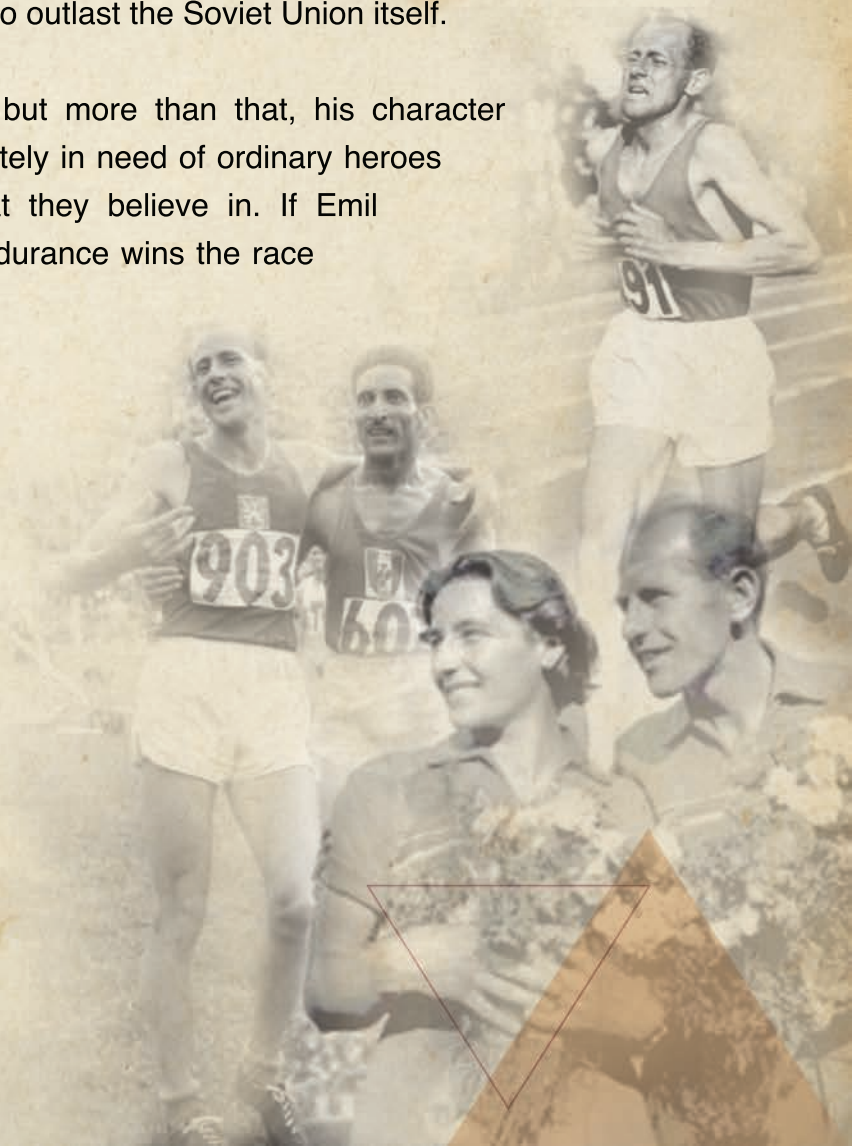
"Men, today we die a little."

- Zatopek

In November of 1969, Emil Zatopek was sent to the Uranium mines for resisting Soviet occupation. He would spend the next five years of his life moving barrow loads of earth. "I have already gotten to know the world from on high," said Emil. "Now I am getting to know it from down below."

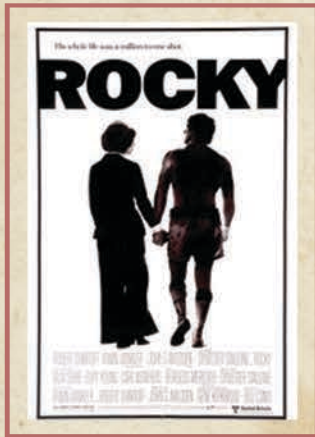
The communist regime did all they could to erase Emil Zatopek's name from history. His name was removed from the stadium in his hometown of Koprivnice. His athletic accomplishments were deleted from school textbooks. They tried to bury him 150 meters below ground in a Uranium mine, but Emil Zatopek's legacy was destined to outlast the Soviet Union itself.

His gold medals deserve the silver screen, but more than that, his character deserves to be celebrated by a world desperately in need of ordinary heroes with the courage to risk everything for what they believe in. If Emil Zatopek's life teaches us anything it's this: endurance wins the race and love wins the war.



COMPARABLE FILMS

ROCKY



BUDGET: \$1.1 million
***DTG:** \$117,235,147

CHARIOTS OF FIRE



BUDGET: \$5.5 million
DTG: \$58,972,904

THE NATURAL



BUDGET: \$28 million
DTG: \$47,951,979

RUDY



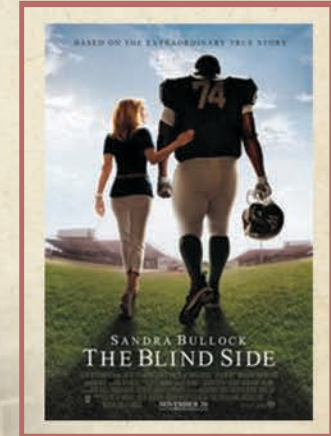
BUDGET: \$12 million
DTG: \$22,750,363

MIRACLE



BUDGET: \$28 million
DTG: \$64,378,093

THE BLIND SIDE



BUDGET: \$29 million
DTG: \$255,959,475



SCREENWRITERS

MARK BATTERSON



Mark Batterson serves as lead pastor of National Community Church (www.theaterchurch.com) in Washington, DC. One church with seven campuses, NCC owns and operates Ebenezers Coffeehouse, the Miracle Theater, and the DC Dream Center. Mark holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from Regent University and is the New York Times bestselling author of 15 books, including *The Circle Maker*, *Chase the Lion*, *All In*, and *Whisper*. Mark is married to Lora. They have three children: Parker, Summer, and Josiah. And they live on Capitol Hill.

JOEL N. CLARK



Joel is the co-founder of Atlas District Pictures and Switchvert; production houses located in Washington, DC and Johannesburg, South Africa. Joel has written and directed multiple award winning films, short films, sitcoms, commercials, adventure series and feature documentaries. Joel has also written fiction and nonfiction books which have been published widely. The quality of Joel's work can be seen in the stories he's chosen to tell. He lives with his wife of eleven years, Megan, their daughter Juno, and their son Elah, in Washington DC. <http://www.joelnc Clark.com>.

JASON CLARK



Jason is a writer, producer, speaker, and director of A Family Story (www.afamilystory.org). Jason has written 7 books including, *Prone to Love*, and *God Is (Not) In Control*. He has written and produced films in several genres including documentaries, faith based discipleship and entertainment. A natural storyteller, Jason writes and speaks with authenticity. His stories inspire awe and wonder in the goodness of God. Jason's mission is to reveal to the world just how good God's love is for us. He and his wife, Karen, live in Charlotte North Carolina with their three children.

