



February 14, 2010

A Life Remembered

On Friday tragedy struck the Olympic games when a young Georgian athlete was killed during a run on the luge, one of the most dangerous sports to be involved with. It was noted that there were also a number of other injuries at the site which raised a lot of questions about the safety of the facilities. Those who aspire to be Olympic athletes have many times started training as young children. More than one of them had parents who were also athletes and may also have participated in the Olympics. Others have come from other countries that have no history of participation in the Winter games. Countries such as Nigeria and others have representatives who have taken it on themselves to train and qualify for the games. The overall commitment to the sport is total. One has to be devoted to the training night and day and never give up on the dream of reaching the Olympics. It was sad that the athlete who was killed on Friday did not even live long enough to enjoy the opening ceremonies. After a life of training and preparation his time was cut short on the very threshold of what he had been preparing for. In life, looking at the goals one has spiritually, the training to reach a Heavenly home is no different. There are many who begin early in life and may have parents who are Christians. There are others who come to know the truth later on and make it their goal to serve the Lord, sometimes fighting many battles and struggles to reach the desired point. The fact is that while we are going through life there are many things that will attempt to dissuade us from maintaining the commitment that needs to be there. We must resolve to keep on going no matter what opposition we find. Paul states, ***“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”*** (Gal 6.9). There are numerous trials that will seek to stop us. At the present time economic problems, healthcare and other things occupy the minds of many and may crowd out the time and effort one may devote to serving God. Christ spoke of this in this explanation of the parable of the sower. ***“They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.”*** (Lk 8.13-14). Olympic athletes have had to face the same trials and uncertainties that everyone else faces. The difference is that they sought help if and when needed. They refused to give up the dream of one day being in the Olympic games and learned to overcome and manage the obstacles that stood in their way. Some might say that there is talent and ability that is needed or no matter what one does they will not be able to create within themselves what is not there. To a large degree that is true of being an athlete although there are some who have shown that this is not always a true statement. One of the athletes participating in the opening ceremonies was a Paralympics champion showing that where there is a will to accomplish something there is a way. In the case of being a Christian, there is help if we determine to live that way that God wants us to. As we are obedient we are given a “newness of life” as Paul states (Rom 6.4). We know that as life goes on we have the Lord to help as we struggle through the various tribulations that come our way. As the writer of Hebrews states, ***“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”*** (Heb 4.16). But we need to do things according to commands and examples we have in the scriptures. Just as Olympic hopefuls must meet stringent requirements, so we, in order to be pleasing to God must do the same. In athletic events only one can win as Paul also states of such things (1 Cor 9.24). In serving God, we can all win as God has promised but we must have the determination, drive and desire to see it through.

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