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Viewpoints

Observing events in our modern world from the viewpoint of our ascended Savior.

Olympic Inspiration ~ August 12, 2016

Jesus inspires us to change how we race through life.

[Online Version & Archive](#)

What kind of commitment does it take to be able to compete at the Olympics, yet alone, to win gold?

A little research shows that to reach the Olympic games, you are probably putting in five hours of intense training or workouts every day, six days a week. And everything from what you eat to when you sleep is calculated. This goes on for more than four years, of course, with the goal being to condition yourself physically and mentally, so you become unflinchingly focused on finishing first or best. Which is probably why this photo has gone viral on the internet.



At the IPC World Championships held in New Zealand in January 2011, Blake Leeper (R) of Team USA is photographed during the Men's 200 meter finals as he helps up his fallen teammate.*

And if you didn't notice, look closely at both men's legs. IPC stands for the International Paralympic Committee, which governs the competitions where athletes with physical disabilities qualify for the Paralympic Games (held are in parallel with the Olympic Games).

This photo of Blake Leeper helping his teammate reminds me of Jesus. On the night before Jesus gave himself to the cross, he was teaching his disciples in the Upper Room. "Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power... so he got up from the meal... and wrapped a towel around his waist.... and began to wash his disciples' feet..." (John 13:3-5).

At the very time when you and I would have been consumed with self-pity due to the impending suffering at the cross, Jesus instead thought about his divine glory and almighty power that he shared with his heavenly Father from eternity. Can you imagine an Olympic gold-medalist who purposely sacrificed his legs? Yet the Son of God did so much more when he left heaven and set aside his glory to become the substitute of all mankind—for by nature we humans are crippled and dying in sin. Like the perfect Olympian, Jesus overlooked the pain and suffering involved, and focused on the gold medal that he wanted to give to us.

At the same time, Jesus did not let his identity as God and Lord over all things inflate his ego. Instead of self-pride and self-promotion, he turned his attention to his disciples by funneling his eternal power into washing his disciples' feet. This act of humble service was a prelude to when Jesus, a few hours later, would wash away the sins of the world with his holy blood shed at the cross.

Blake Leeper is a bilateral amputee. But instead of wallowing in self-pity, he dedicated himself to racing in the Paralympics, which is why he's inspiring. And then to see Leeper's heart bleeding for his fallen teammate?

But catch your breath, because Jesus is even more inspiring. Because his heart bleeds for us, Jesus left heaven to race to the cross. Jesus had to win this race, not for himself, but in order to gift us with the gold of forgiveness and salvation. His victory is what inspires us to quit life's rat race of self-pity. His serving us is why we now race to serve our neighbor in compassion and love. ✚

Source Material (Links may become inactive over time.)

*[Photo Source](#) @ zimbio.com

Correction: Toward the end of the original posting, Blake's last name was incorrectly stated. This later posting corrects that mistake so that Blake Leeper's name is correctly used throughout the whole devotion.

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Blessings to you and your loved ones, Pastor Mike Nitz

