

Lessons From the 2020 2021 Olympics Sunday AM 08/15/21

Introduction:

There were negative things about the last Olympics; political statements, taking a knee, some called this the “woke Olympics.” But I got to thinking about some of the positive things from the Olympics.

I) Life Has Lots of Twist & Turns, Victory To Those Who Handle Them

A) The Olympics were postponed from 2020 to 2021.

1. To world-class athletes this made a big difference.
2. Training schedules, sacrifices, age of the athlete, all changed.
3. Some did not make the Olympics who would have a year earlier and vice versa.
 - a. Tamyra Mensha Stock from Ghana, an immigrant, who actually won a position on the U.S. wrestling team in 2016 for the Rio Games but could not go because the team did not qualify.
 - b. She stuck with it and this time the team qualified and she won.

B) The life of a Christian has many twists and turns, victory to those who handle them.

¹³ *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. **Philippians 4:13***

1. There is enduring to the end despite all the trial and turns of life.

¹⁰ *Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. **Revelation 2:10***

2. Going back to Philippians, Paul faced a lot of twists and turns.

a. From his circumstances to demean him and boast themselves.

¹² *But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel,* ¹³ *so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ;* ¹⁴ *and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.*

¹⁵ *Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill:* ¹⁶ *The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains;* ¹⁷ *but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.* ¹⁸ *What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice. **Philippians 1:12-18***

b. Some were preaching out of envy and strife, selfish ambition, lacking sincerity, adding to Paul's afflictions.

i.. How many would have been tempted to say "Forget it, I quit."

ii. How many would have started fighting and attacking back?

c. Paul's response – His imprisonment had actually turned out for the furtherance of the Gospel, in the palace, to the rest, and among the brethren, some were preaching out of sincerity and love.

d. Paul rejoiced and it did not matter who was preaching as long as the Gospel was being preached. He let the rest up to God.

3. We, you and I, will face our twist and turns, handle them so as to be faithful and complete our race.

II) Setting Personal Records (PR)

A) **Some athletes did their best, did not win, but still set their PR.**

1. They ran faster, jumped higher, swam faster, played harder, and excelled.
2. Example: 440 women's hurdles. At the Olympic trials no woman had ever ran faster than 42 seconds. Sidney McLaughlin ran just under. At the Olympics two women ran under 42 seconds.
 - a. Dalilah Muhammad, the 31-year-old former world record holder, won gold in this event at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games. She took silver in Tokyo with her fastest time ever, 51.58.
 - b. Sidney McLaughlin ran setting a new world record of 51.46.
 - c. Called one of the great races ever in Olympic history.
3. The ultimate goal of athletes is to go their best, get the most out of your body.

B) **Our goal as Christians should be to be our very best.**

*Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; ² for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus. **1 Thessalonians 4:1-2***

*But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; ¹⁰ and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; **1 Thessalonians 4:9-10***

1. What is your personal goal?
2. Don't minimize your abilities, set a low bar; dream and aspire to be better, to increase more and more.

3. A lot of people stagnate, some get discouraged when they look at others. Does not matter what they are doing, but what are you doing.

III) Good Sportsmanship Never Goes Out of Style

A) Images of people showing good sportsmanship.

1. Isaiah Jewett and Nijel Amos Help Each Other Up After Falling in 800m Semifinals.
2. Italy's Gianmarco Tamberi and Qatar's Mutaz Essa Barshim stole the show in the Olympic field events. The longtime friends were going head to head for a gold medal, the only jumpers left when the bar went up to 2.37 meters. Both athletes failed to clear it, putting them on track for a high-stakes jump-off for the gold — until they agreed to share the medal, the first joint Olympic medal in athletics since 1912. Tamberi roared with joy as the two embraced.

B) Loving your brother, being kind, never goes out of style

³⁹ And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
Matthew 22:39

*¹ Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, ² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. ³ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. **Philippians 2:1-4***

1. What happens when I see a brother struggling in life, in sin?

*¹ Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. ² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. **Galatians 6:1-2***

2. Do we pray for one another, seek to help each other get off the mat?

3. What happens when someone else is excelling and I am not?

¹⁵ See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. 1 Thessalonians 5:15

IV) Team Work Does Wonders

A) Women's Indoor Volleyball and Men's basketball.

1. On the women's team, their star player goes down with injury.
 - a. Jordan Thompson injured in match against ROC. Team loses the match and she is gone for the rest of the games.
 - b. They went on to win the Gold medal against Brazil. How? Redefined their roles, played harder, made sacrifices, put the team first.
2. U. S men's basketball team lost two exhibition games, first game of the Olympics.
 - a. These are professional players used to making millions of dollars. For the Olympics they are not paid although there is a monetary payment depending on the medal they win.
 - b. The most valuable player did not score over 6 points a game, Draymond Green, rebounded, played defense, did all the little things to win.

B) As Christians we have to work together.

1. A congregation is the aggregate of its parts, you and I are parts of this group.

For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. ⁴ For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶ Having then gifts

*differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;⁷ or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;⁸ he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. **Romans 12:3-8***

2. Corinth is an example of what not to do with jealousy, envy, bickering, strife, etc.
3. There are no vessel organs in the body of Christ, we all have a function in this body.

Conclusion:

One athlete did not get to compete although she was the fastest in the world at 100 meters, Sha'Carri Richardson, won the U.S. trials, but she broke the rules. Must compete according to the rules. ⁵ ***And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. 2 Timothy 2:5*** Jesus sets the rules for being a Christian, are you one? Are you competing as a Christian? If not, why won't you let us help you now?