

Pastor's Perspective: Important lessons from the Olympics



Special to Pelahatchie News

By Guest Columnist John Vaughn, Pastor, Cross Roads Baptist Church

The 2022 Winter Olympics will be held this month in Beijing, China. From February 4 –20, around 3,000 athletes from almost 100 countries will compete for the gold, silver and bronze medals. It is interesting that Beijing will become the first city in the history of the Olympics to host both the Summer and Winter Olympics. They hosted the Summer Games in 2008.

The athletes will compete in 109 different events. There will be skiing, sledding and skating events. Most people choose their favorite events to watch. One of the older events that is gaining in popularity is curling. That is the event where they slide a 40 pound granite rock on the ice and try to get it to stop on a target on the other end of the rink. One of the techniques is for two members of the team to "sweep" the ice in front of the rock to affect its direction and speed. On a side note, our two oldest grandchildren got to meet and learn some curling techniques from the Kazakhstan National Curling Team. I think I know who they will be cheering for in that competition!

We can learn some important lessons from the Olympics that can help us in our daily lives.

1. You Can't Do This Alone

Proverbs 27:17 tells us, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." As Americans, we tend to put a

high value on independence. We believe everyone should solve their own problems, and asking for help is usually seen as a sign of weakness. At first glance, the Olympics appears to reinforce this idea. Athletes in individual events seem to perform amazing feats all on their own. But take a moment to listen to their stories, however, and you'll realize this is far from true. All of these athletes had coaches to train them, teammates to encourage them, and families to support them throughout their journey. Regardless of the sport, nearly all of them would say that they could never have gotten this far on their own. The same rules apply to Christians. We need each other for leadership, fellowship, encouragement and inspiration. Alone, we can do very little, but together, we have the ability to become so much more!

2: We All Start Somewhere

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen." II Peter 3:18

Olympic athletes can be intimidating. They're strong, fast, agile, and seem almost superhuman at times. Still, none of these champions started out as the people they are now. It took years of dedication and training for them to reach this point.

And it takes a lifetime of work for

someone to follow Christ. But all Christians begin somewhere, whether it's in a Sunday school class, sitting in a worship service, or picking up a Bible after years of apathy. Living as a believer takes time and study, but even the oldest and wisest of us are discovering how little we still know about God. Don't be afraid of humble beginnings, this is where Jesus meets everyone.

3: Failure is Inevitable

"For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again, but the wicked stumble in time of calamity." Proverbs 24:16

If the Olympics teach us anything, it's that even the best athletes don't always win. A skier can get off course, or a skater can fall. No matter how good you are, nobody wins every time. It's a hard lesson many Christians still struggle to accept.

There is going to come a day when you fail as a Christian. When that day comes, what's important is that you accept your mistake and learn from it. True Olympic winners remember their faults and use them to get better. Christians should do likewise.

4: Give it Your All

"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize." I Corinthians 9:24

When someone qualifies for the Olympics, you know they're not just going for

the scenery. This is the highest point of competition, a literal once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for most contestants. So when their moment comes, do you think they're going to give a halfhearted performance? Of course not! Even if they don't expect to win, these athletes give everything they have to achieve their goal. For Christians, every day is our Olympic event. The world is watching, and we have to decide how we are going to live. We can choose to be token believers, to say the words but withhold the actions, or we can give everything we have to God. We don't compete for gold medals, but by living for Jesus, the world will see His victory in our lives.

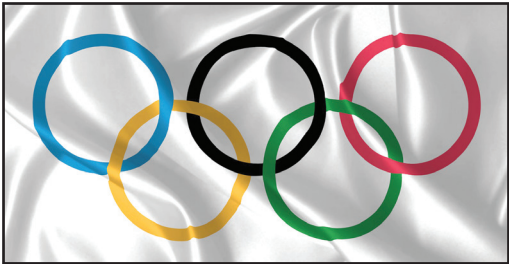
5: Winning Isn't Everything

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Matthew 6:33

While dozens of athletes compete in each of the events, only three medals are awarded. To make it to the medal stand, the winners must do their best to the end of the competition. Those who don't, won't make it to the winners stand.

How we finish the race of life is vastly more important than winning it. As Christians, we need to live every day as if it's our last, and be mindful of the legacy we'll leave behind. Remember, God does not judge a man by his strength or glory, the Lord looks at the heart.

So tune in and watch some of the Olympic events. And remember that as a Believer, you are competing every day for the medal the Lord has for you! Be sure to take your family to Church on Sunday.



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Obituaries

NAME	AGE	CITY	DOD	ARRANGEMENTS
Mark Quick	62	Pelahatchie	12/31/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Earnest Lee	90	Polkville	12/31/2021	Wolf Funeral Services
Barbara Spatz	88	Morton	1/4/2022	Wolf Funeral Services
Manuel Harris	80	Lake	1/4/2022	Wolf Funeral Services
Willie Shoemaker	75	Pelahatchie	1/9/2022	Wolf Funeral Services
Edgar Jones	81	Lake	1/9/2022	Wolf Funeral Services
Peter Rowse	78	Lake	1/11/2022	Wolf Funeral Services
Henry Holmes	71	Morton	1/14/2022	Wolf Funeral Services
Edna Ficklin	88	Morton	1/17/2022	Wolf Funeral Services
Harold Wolfe	82	Lake	1/17/2022	Wolf Funeral Services

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