

A prize that will never fade

Citius. Altius. Fortius. These Latin words meaning “faster, higher, stronger” are the motto of the modern Olympic Games. This year the Summer Olympics returned to the land of their origin as Athens welcomed teams from over 200 countries to the greatest sporting spectacle in the world.

Thousands of athletes pushed themselves to the limit of human endurance as they strove to go faster, higher and stronger than their competitors.

Let’s admit it...we’ve all cheered wildly as our country’s athletes have given their best and even shed a tear or two with pride when they mounted the podium to receive their medals.

Winning an Olympic medal has come to be regarded as the ultimate achievement in sport. Otherwise why would professional athletes (many of them multi-millionaires) covet such a prize despite winning championships in their respective sports?

Yet as marvelous as the Olympics can be, the sad truth is that once the flame has been extinguished and the celebration comes to an end, the prestige and glory begin to fade away.

For example. Many of us can remember the 1976 Summer Olympics, where Romania’s gymnast Nadia

“Comaneci became the darling of the Games. But can you recall any other gold medalist?

And remember how the highlight of the 1980 Winter Olympics was the “Miracle on Ice” when the underdog USA upset the Soviet Union to win the gold medal in hockey. But do you remember anything else about the Lake Placid Olympic games?

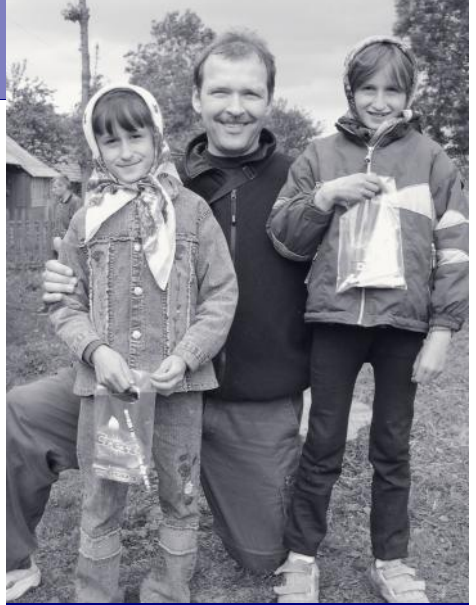
You see, prestige and glory – even Olympic prestige and glory – doesn’t last. Perhaps that is why God encourages us to aim



...prestige and glory – even Olympic prestige and glory – doesn’t last.

for a loftier goal in life than earthly accolades.

The Apostle Paul ministered in Greece during the time of the original Olympics. He wrote to the Church in Corinth: “Everyone who competes in the games, does so to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever” (1 Cor 9:25). In



Lloyd Cenaiko with two “treasures”; recent additions to HART’s Child Sponsor Project

other words, our energies should be focused on winning a prize that will never fade.

Jesus said: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth... But store up for yourselves treasures in Heaven... (Matt 6:19-20)

Despite the great things we can achieve or accumulate here on earth, they will not last. Only the things of God have eternal value.

People of faith set their sights on a prize greater than an Olympic medal. They are aiming for eternal life, joy and peace, all of which may begin here on earth, but will only be fully experienced on Heaven’s podium.

My hope is that the 2004 Olympics were able to inspire “athletes of faith” to determinedly press on “to win the prize for which God has called us (Philippians 3:14), the prize that will never fade.

Sincerely,

Lloyd

Cenaiko

