

# Olympic Lessons

by Carl McMurray

Proverbs says that wisdom shouts aloud in the streets. We must just be willing to listen. During the 2014 Winter Olympics it was shouting in the streets of Sochi, Russia. I didn't get to see much of the Olympics, but what I saw always seemed to shout a lesson.

For example, did you see the defending Gold Medalist snow boarder, Shawn White cruise toward Gold? "Practicing" in his words, for his final run. That confident final run in which he took a tremendous fall and blow to his hip on the top of the "pipe." He was in pain and out of the competition. Lesson here might be that when we are most confident, perhaps we should be most cautious. Or, as the apostle would say, "Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall."

Did you watch the men's downhill racing? If so, then you saw the skiers race side by side downhill, over jumps, and around corners at breakneck speed four at a time. I loved the heat where one of the four skiers seemed hopelessly locked into the fourth place position all the way down the course until the very last gi-normous jump before the finish line whereupon all three leaders in the race crashed on their touchdown and slid across the finish line sprawled out in the snow, and number four, by narrowly avoiding one downed skier, went across the finish line in first place. Unbelievable! Don't tell me that Ecclesiastes 9:11 isn't truth. Time and chance do overtake all of us. Never, ever give up the race till the finish line is crossed, whether the goal is gold, or streets paved with the stuff.

Then there was the youngest member of the ladies figure skating team, Polina Edmunds. Just a high school senior. Ms. Edmunds did an amazing presentation (I'm told, since I'm no expert in figure skating), but fell in her long program on the exact same jump she fell on in her short program. What a disheartening turn of events for this young lady to make the same mistake twice. But the amazing part was to see her bounce back up off the ice and charge into an even more difficult jump, making that one with grace and a smile. Reminded me of Philippians 3:13-14, where the apostle spoke of forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, he pressed on toward the goal for the prize... I note that the apostle didn't say a word about sitting on the ice and taking a breather when we fall. He said forget it, get moving, press on, keep your eye on the goal. We're all going to mess up and pay up, sometimes stupid with double zeros. Romans 3:23. But we can't just sit there and cry. Ms Edmunds got up and got her presentation done and saved her crying for the finish circle.

When it's confidence time, we need to beware lest Satan cause us to stumble. When seeming failure looms in front of us, we need to press on for who know what will happen or even if God might intervene in His providence to help us. And when we do fail, as we all will from time to time, save your crying about it for the proper time. Get up, dust yourself off, say a prayer, and launch into the next move in your program. The next success you have may indeed put to shame the failure you experienced.

Wisdom DOES shout aloud in the streets, even in the streets of Russia, if we will but listen.