



THE GREAT OLYMPIC MISTAKE!



Objective:

- To illustrate what most understand about our “Life race”; and
- To clear possible misunderstandings.

Version 1, June 2020



1) THE STORY OF THE CENTURY:

Two companies were awarded the contract to advertise and print the Olympic program. “Life” was the first company and “Infinity” was the second. Since “Life” was the preferred supplier (service provider), they were given 90% of the contract and advertising coverage and poor “Infinity” was responsible for the rest. The Olympic Committee completed their complex program and sent it via email to both companies. The CEO of “Life” wanted payment to be received upfront, but the Olympic committee declined their request and agreed to pay 25% instead for covering the initial expenses.

The CEO of “Life” was concerned with expenses and pushed the staff to unrealistic deadlines in order to organise the media, newspapers, social media, pamphlets and television coverage. These deadlines placed staff under a lot of pressure, so much so that their project leader fell ill. The responsibility was passed down the line and guess what, somewhere the Olympic programme got “lost in translation”...

Both companies started their campaign to produce, distribute and communicate the Olympic programme to as wide an audience as possible. Both companies got the programme out in time, but the public received conflicting messages? Guess what, most people chose to believe the contractor that was “mainstream” (“Life”). They seemed to be the norm...

The kick-off event was a roaring success and the stadium was packed to full capacity (over 100 000 sat and watch the opening event, while 6 Billion watch the event on TV, social media and the internet). As the Olympic games progressed, most events were almost packed to full capacity, but everybody was awaiting the upcoming men’s 100 meter dash.

The line-up for the 100 meter dash included the world’s best 8, namely:

- Usain Bolt
- Tyson Gay
- Yohan Blake
- Asafa Powell
- Justin Gatlin
- Christian Coleman
- Nesta Carter
- Maurice Greene

Let us call them the “Magnificent 8”!

90% of the general public received the message that the 100 meter dash would be on Saturday evening at 20:00, so at 14:00, the stadium was quickly filling up and people all across the world were buying their favourite drinks and snacks and inviting family and friends to join them. Others were filling up sport bars dressed in their country’s colours to watch the greatest race of all time. Even the “magnificent eight” pitched up for the race! The remaining 10% of the general public also got their message about what is on the programme for Saturday night...



The Olympic Committee, other VIPs and the track and field staff were also at the Stadium as usual, but they could not understand why the “magnificent eight” decided to pitch up and seem to want to participate? The track and field staff started directing the participants to the starting line and as the “magnificent eight” walked onto the field, the entire stadium rose in one huge roar and the “cheers” from sports bars could be heard miles away! As other less known participants walked on, they could not believe how well they were being received by the public!/? Everybody was cheering, screaming and dancing in a festive mood!

The “Magnificent eight” walked towards the 100 meter mark which puzzled the track and field staff? The other participants walked toward the 50 meter mark and the crowd could not understand what was going on, because those on the 50 meter mark was either going to be in the way of the “magnificent eight” or were they part of an exhibition pre-race? Perhaps they were going to see if they can beat the “magnificent eight” by running a 50% shorter distance? No, the crowd was wrong, because the track and field staff called the “Magnificent eight” to also join at the 50 meter mark. The “Magnificent eight” was also puzzled, but though that it is perhaps a 50 meter race that would introduce a new dynamic to the race?

The “magnificent eight” went down for the start, while the other participants stood almost upright which further confused the crowd and then there was another problem! The “magnificent eight” seem to have taken ownership of each lane, while the other 8 participants had to huddle together in one lane? This was going to be a huge mess, because the participants were going to trip over each other? On your marks, get set, BANG went the gun and the “Magnificent eight” shot out of their lanes like bullets, while the others started at a leisured pace? Some of the crowd laughed at the confusion, while others were cheering like mad! Since 50 meters were not long enough for the “magnificent eight” to really accelerate, it was a photo finish, but the other eight took the corner and carried on running? This was very confusing, especially since the track and field staff did not seem to be fazed about the “Magnificent eight’s” photo finish?

The Olympic Committee decided to take action and the chainman made an announcement over the PA system that shocked the world!!!! The announcement went like this
“Dear ALL, there seems to be some confusion! This race is NOT the 100 or 50 meter dash, but the Olympic marathon! We are not sure what caused this confusion, as MOST of you seem to have received the wrong message? The first eight over the line are NOT finished, as the real race has only now started, but the first eight may continue with the race, if they have enough energy and stamina to make it.”

Most of the crowd and even the “magnificent eight” could not believe their ears. Some were shocked, some were disappointed, but most people felt stupid, because they “missed the plot”!



2) THE MORAL OF THE STORY:

There are actually many! Let us look at a few:

2.1) Most trust the wrong “life programme”:

There are two “Life programmes”.

The **first** is what the Media projects what life should be like and people see/hear/taste/smell and feel this programme and it feels so real, while the **second** is what the Bible tries to communicate. Most people trust the first (wrong) program, probably because their 5 senses dictate their life and they are stuck in the “Rat race” to create wealth, become successful, live in the moment and wanting all now, because material possessions seems so nice and right, especially when the Media boosts this perception!

“In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” - 2 Corinthians 4:4

Yes, many people get “blinded” by material wealth, fun and success. They follow the wrong “life programme”!

2.2) Those trusting the correct programme, need Endurance:

Just like the marathon needs endurance, those trusting the correct programme (Bible) also need endurance. Life on earth is already a challenge, but even more difficult for those choosing the second path, because they will be going against the flow (Blue Arrow below). Most follow the river downstream (Red Arrow below), because it seems to be the in-thing to do and is also the easiest way to go, although they heading towards a deadly waterfall...



“More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope” - Romans 5:3-4

“And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved” - Matthew 10:22

“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few” - Matthew 7:13-14



2.3) Life on earth is short, like the 100 meter dash:

The 100 meter dash in the Olympics is over in less than 10 seconds, just like our life on earth. You do not have much time to follow the correct programme and some doing the 100 meter dash even fall before that race is over!

"O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am! Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths, and my lifetime is as nothing before you. Surely all mankind stands as a mere breath! Selah" - Psalm 39:4-5

"Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away" - James 4:14

"Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"— yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin" - James 4:13-17

2.4) Stick to the rules:

The other eight runners kept on running, while the magnificent eight thought the race was over. The official rules were that the race is 42 Km, so the magnificent eight did not carry on running (they did not stick to the marathon rules) and quit at 100 meters! Just like the story above, in life, there are rules and God made many available in the Bible. Not only is the 10 Commandments they key "foundation rule", but accepting Jesus, spreading the Word and many other "rules" and guidelines are provided in the Bible.

"An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules" - 2 Timothy 2:5

"And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it" - 2 John 1:6



2.5) There is a straight path, but also a crooked one

Just like 8 of the runners turned away, while the magnificent eight carried on straight ahead, there are many that go astray, while others will stick to the straight and narrow:

“Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. But he answered them, “You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.” As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?” And Jesus answered them, “See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray” - [Matthew 24:1-51](#)

2.6) A race is tiring, but not with God by your side

For a marathon, a person needs stamina and a coach.

“Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint” - [Isaiah 40:28-31](#)

2.7) A race usually ends with a prize

There is a finish line, often a ribbon that is broken as someone crosses that finish line and then there is a medal to acknowledge the winner. The correct race was the Marathon and only those that completed it, would be awarded. The magnificent eight did not finish that race, even if they looked stronger, better, faster, they did not continue to complete the final and appropriate race. Those following the second programme will be awarded at the end...

“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing” - [2 Timothy 4:6-8](#)



"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable" - 1 Corinthians 9:24-25

Look at the great prize awaiting those who follow the second programme:

Romans 8:18 has to say *"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time [are] not worthy [to be compared] with the glory which shall be revealed in us"*

Follow the second programme in life, it will be hard and need endurance, because you will be going against that natural flow, as most go for the short fast route, but in the end there will be a great reward.
