

Enjoy

Ready:

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."

-James 1:17 (NIV)

Set

My morning run had been a battle of both mind and body. It had been incredibly cold outside--below freezing--and being pre-dawn, it wasn't the best time of day for speed work. I'd been frustrated for most of the way, asking my muscles to wake up and run faster when all they wanted to do was go back to bed.

When I arrived back at my apartment complex, I had thoroughly convinced myself that I'd never do a morning run in the cold again. (I'm sometimes a bit of a drama queen.) As I climbed the steps up to the building, a woman came out the door. She looked to be a classy mid-40s woman, dressed in business attire for a day at the office. She smiled at me, and I smiled back, still lost in my negative thoughts. But then I noticed the hitch in her mobility. She hobbled slowly down the steps, one hand on the rail, the other clutching a cane. I didn't see a cast on her leg, so it appeared that this was more than a temporary injury. As I passed her, I greeted her, and she looked up and smiled again.

"Good morning," she said pleasantly. "Did you enjoy your run?"

"Yeah," I lied. "It was a little chilly, but it was okay."

"Good for you," she answered sincerely, looking me straight in the eye. "Good for you."

I didn't have to ask her to elaborate on her message. I could tell exactly what she was thinking: "Don't take this for granted."

I walked into my building feeling like a scolded puppy, completely convicted. Once I was in my apartment, I dropped to my knees and thanked God for the amazing time He'd allowed me on the road, and I humbly took back my recently established no-cold-morning-run rule.

How often do we take our sports and our bodies for granted? As a runner, I'm quick to grumble when my legs are heavy or the wind is strong. But that should never, ever, ever be the case. Each day of competition or training is a gift. It is a gift from our Lord who has given us the ability to race, to compete. He knows how much joy it brings us, and all He asks is that we use those gifts for His glory to love and serve others and to bring them closer to Him.

Today, enjoy your training. Enjoy your competition. God didn't have to give you the ability, and He can take it away at any time. But for now, while you can, maximize it and show the world how to win for Him.

Go

1. Do you enjoy your practice or training? If not, when was the last time you did?
2. If you were to ask others, would they say that they can see Christ in you when you're competing?
3. What needs to change in your training mentality? How can you change it?

Workout

Colossians 3:23-24

Philippians 4:4-5

Bible Reference:

James 1



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