

Kid's Devotional
8/30/20

Following Jesus

Theme: Discipleship

Scripture: Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. Matthew 16:24-25 (NIV)

Did you enjoy watching the Olympics on TV? Weren't they wonderful? I enjoyed watching all of the events on TV and reading all the newspaper stories about the Olympics and the athletes. Why do the athletes go to the Olympics? That's right! They go to the Olympics to win a medal -- hopefully the gold. I am sure that you might have heard of Michael Phelps. Michael is a swimmer who has won several gold medals in Olympic competitions. How would you like to win an Olympic gold medal? Before you say, "Yes," you might want to hear more of Michael's story and the sacrifices he had to make to win those medals.

When Michael was eleven years old, he was swimming in a pool in Baltimore, Maryland. A swim coach by the name of Bob Bowman noticed him. He immediately realized that Michael had extraordinary talent. He talked to Michael's parents and told them that the boy was very gifted and could become an Olympic champion if he trained right. He told them that it would require a total commitment to training and told Michael that he could never reach his full potential by living the life of a normal kid. So, from the time he was eleven, Michael gave up almost everything else in his life to devote himself to becoming the greatest swimmer in Olympic history.

Just as Bob Bowman saw great potential in Michael Phelps, Jesus sees great potential in each of you. That is why he has called you to become his disciples. Will it be easy? No way! Jesus once told his followers that to be his disciple would be very difficult. "If any of you want to be my follower, you must forget about yourself, take up your cross, and follow me." Jesus took up his cross, didn't he? He took his cross and carried it up a hill where he was crucified. He knew he was going to have to suffer, but he also knew he would win the victory in the end and so will we. Jesus promised, "If you give up your life for me, you will find it."

Let's pray. Jesus, we want to be all that you want us to be. We know that we can never realize our full potential until we make a commitment to follow you. Amen.

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