

THE OLYMPICS AND TRUE GLORY

The 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea, is straight ahead, starting on Feb. 9 and concluding on Feb. 25. The world will be focusing attention on these Olympic Games. Stories of heroism, achievement and loss – personally and competitively – will be shared.

Two very compelling stories occurred in the 2010 Winter Olympics. One made you swell with emotion and caused you to will the athlete to victory. The other story made you confused and caused you to wonder as the event unfolded.

The two stories involved two athletes – Joannie Rochette, an ice skater for Canada, and Sven Kramer, a speed skater for the Netherlands.

Rochette tragically lost her mother two days before the short program. Therese Rochette, 55, died of a heart attack at Vancouver General Hospital after arriving to watch her daughter compete. Joanne Rochette chose to remain in the competition. She skated for not only her nation's honor, but in her mother's memory.

When she took to the ice, there was not a dry eye in the stadium – and likely not in millions of living rooms. She ended up getting the bronze medal. At her mother's funeral, she placed the medal on the casket.

Her Olympic performance will not be forgotten.



Another performance will not soon be forgotten as well. Sven Kramer regrettably lost his 10,000-meter speed skate – a race that would have earned him the gold medal, a race he had in his back pocket. There was just one problem; you had to skate in the right lane. His coach mistakenly told him to switch lanes, thus disqualifying Kramer from the race.

After the race, Kramer was justifiably upset, but not for the reason that you may think. His words were: “That was a very expensive mistake.” Later, it was discovered that Kramer, with all of his endorsements back home, would have earned \$500,000 had he gotten the gold in that race.

Imagine the misery of losing such an amount of money. But aren't the Olympics supposed to be more than personal gain? Aren't the athletes supposed to be competing for something greater than themselves? Isn't that what the national anthem played at the awards ceremony is supposed to symbolize?

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In that same Olympics competition, we find two very different motivations. One seemed to be skating for the perks, while the other skated for others.

Joannie Rochette gave us a priceless visual of what our lives ought to express in this world. We should not live for ourselves, but for others – namely for Jesus who died, was buried but rose again, victorious over sin and the grave.

That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord (1 Corinthians 1:31 KJV).

– Beecher Hunter