



Connecting People to **Jesus**

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Monday, November 7, 2022

Pastor Eric Jay

Prayer: Lord Jesus, forgive us for our pride and striving for our own glory rather than for Yours. You deserve all praise and honor as our Lord who gave up everything to give us the forgiveness, life, and hope we could never deserve. Amen.

Scripture: Matthew 20:16

So the last will be first, and the first last.

Devotional – “Unlikely Victory”

According to the newspaper El Pais, On December 2, 2012, Spanish athlete Iván Fernández Anaya was competing in a cross-country race in Burlada, Navarre. He was running hard in second place, a good distance behind race leader Abel Mutai. Mutai was the bronze medalist in the 3,000-meter steeplechase at the London Olympics. As they entered the finishing straight, it was obvious to Anaya that Mutai was going to easily win the race, however, to everyone’s surprise, Mutai quickly stopped running about 10 meters before the finish. He clearly thought he had already crossed the finish line.

Fernández Anaya who was still running as hard as he could, realized he was quickly catching up to Mutai and could easily take him by surprise and win the race, but instead of exploiting Mutai’s mistake to claim an unlikely victory, Anaya slowed down and stayed behind Mutai, and using hand gestures due to their different languages, guided the Kenyan to the line and let him cross first.

In an interview immediately after the race, Anaya said, “I didn’t deserve to win it,” says 24-year-old Fernández Anaya. “I did what I had to do. He was the rightful winner. He created a gap that I couldn’t have closed if he hadn’t made a mistake.”

Fernández Anaya was coached in Vitoria by former Spanish distance runner Martín Fiz who helped Anaya become a European marathon champion in 1994 and world marathon champion in 1995.

When Anaya’s uncommon sportsmanship went viral in the news, Martin Fiz was asked about what he thought of his former student’s actions. Fiz said, “It was a very good gesture of honesty; a gesture of the kind that isn’t made anymore. Or rather, of the kind that has never been made. A gesture that I myself wouldn’t have made. I certainly would have taken advantage of it to win.”

There are many in this world that have the same perspective as Martin Fiz. They believe the only way to win in life is to be out in front, ahead of those around you. Yet, our Lord, when He was on this earth, taught the exact opposite and did the opposite. He told us things like - the way up is down, the way to the first chair is to take the last chair, the way to live is to die, the way to win is to be willing to lose for others.

Philippians 2: 3-5: "*Let nothing be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

As you do your best to find success in this life and find true victory, never forget that our Savior found eternal victory and won eternal life for you not by taking what He deserved or giving us what we deserve, but by going lowest of all to lift us up to heaven.

Thanks for joining me for another daily devotional, and remember that God has forgiven yesterday, is with you today, and has already taken care of tomorrow. Amen.