



Endurance for the Race!

Ministry Spouse Networking Newsletter
January, 2010

Dear Friends:

So, how has 2010 been going for you? By the time this note hits your inbox, half of January will be behind us! Canadian winters are dark and long. They require us to persevere. Beyond simply coping with the challenges of dark mornings and unpredictable weather, it seems to me that daily life in the Chotka home has required an extra measure of endurance this month. Next month Canada is hosting the world's best athletes at the Vancouver Olympics. These men and women have spent years of their lives fine tuning

their skills so that they might win in their particular sport. Most have learned that not only do they need to be skilled athletically, but they must train their minds in order to be competitive.

Hebrews 12: 1 and 2 refers to our journey with Christ as a race. It says: “And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on who our faith depends from start to finish.” (NLT) There are seasons in life when we feel that God asks us to press on and push through obstacles. For many years, I thought that running with endurance meant God would help me as I struggled through the tough times. While it is true that He does grant us strength to endure, regularly “the grind” of enduring would wear me out. I would become discouraged and burdened. Often this led me to feel hopeless and defeated.

Realizing it is my loving Father God who “sets” the course of my race has been important for me to understand. The nature of my race is unique to me, and God **knows** the course of that race. He set it up! Beyond this, Jesus Himself is the finish line. This changes *how* I pray. Now I pray for God to equip me with everything I need, through His Holy Spirit. I am being trained daily to face the obstacles that come up. Changing my orientation means I have to deliberately focus on Jesus. That change takes lots of practice. Just like the athlete who finds he has improved in his sport through fine tuning his focus, when I allow the Holy Spirit to fill me and equip me, my endurance to “run the race that God has set before” me, increases. I can have a thankful heart when I race because the Lord is filling me up and equipping me along the way. There is much more joy in this attitude than simply enduring.

My prayer for you this year is that the Lord will increase your endurance. The race is often tough, but we don't need to merely endure- with Jesus at the finish line, there is great joy, great purpose and great victory in the race...from start to finish. May Jesus fill you each day with all you need!

In December, Ron Brown, our District Missions Coach, published an absolutely inspiring blog on www.globalvault.ca entitled "He gave me a bird with a broken wing." (Also found on Ron's homepage at www.canandahouse.wordpress.com) I highly recommend that all of us take the time to read it. You will be blessed, I know I was!



Blessings until next month,

Elizabeth Chotka

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