

## HEARTBEATS Staying Connected 6/12/2023

Dear Friends in CHRIST,

***ONE AT ONE*** – *Every day this week beginning on Tuesday, June 13 you are encouraged to pray for one minute at one o'clock. This week, pray for the children in our world. Pray for their future and ask that they receive opportunities to grow and excel in their GOD-given abilities. Ask GOD to bless them and keep the safe as they continue their lives toward futures that will make a difference for them, for their families, and for our world.*

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On December 2, 2012, Kenyan runner, Abel Mutai, and Spanish runner, Ivan Fernandez Anaya, were competing in a cross-country race in Burlada, Navarre. Abel was in the lead but became confused by the signs near the end of the race. Thinking he had won, he stopped running about 10 meters from the finish. Fernandez was a close second behind him. Seeing that Abel had stopped without completing the course, Ivan began shouting for him to keep running. Abel did not know Spanish and did not understand what Ivan was saying to him. So, Ivan came up to him and began using gestures to guide Abel forward until Abel crossed the finish line in first place.

When Ivan was asked by a reporter why he had done this instead of taking advantage of Abel's mistake and winning the race, Ivan answered, "He was the rightful winner. He created a gap I couldn't have closed."

The reporter pressed, "But you could have won."

Ivan answered, "I didn't deserve to win it. I did what I had to do. As soon as I saw he was stopping, I knew I wasn't going to pass him. What is the merit of my victory? What is the honor of this medal? What will my mother think?"

This story reveals something that is easily missed today. Values matter. In truth, they matter more than accolades and trophies. Many today take advantage of people's weakness rather than helping to strengthen them. Many look out for themselves and not for others. Yet, the greatest victories are not in the awards we win, but the values we treasure and uphold. And our values are best revealed in our actions, how we respond in situations where we have to choose what it is that is most important to us. You can claim to hold certain values, but the truth of those values in your life are the choices you make when those values are one the line. Winning would have been a wonderful thing for Ivan. But his values in what was doing right, what working for what was just, took precedent over personal glory. He knew he could not be proud of himself if he did not adhere to his values. Thus, the saying is true: actions speak louder than words.

In CHRIST'S love,  
Pastor Jeffrey