

Pk's Perspectives ... Finishing Strong

Okay, so this happened to me last Saturday. Having decided to go for a 3-mile run, I went through my (absolutely necessary) stretching routine before starting to pound the asphalt. I was feeling pretty good as I ran one of my routes that takes me over to Second Street @ Wendy's, down Second Street to Dykes Street where I make the block around the church and turn on Third Street heading back toward the college campus. I'm turning into the college campus at about the 1.7 mile mark of my run and hearing some voices, I look between buildings and see three of our church students working on their skateboard skills. I love these guys and couldn't pass up the opportunity to hangout for a quick minute so I stopped my runner's watch and sat on a bench to have a short convo with the skateboard guys.

Chase, Caden, and Dawson – these are the skateboard guys. I genuinely enjoy watching them as they try to perfect some new trick/flip/stunt with their boards. These guys are persistent! I've never been a skateboarder and it amazes me that these guys don't have casts on both arms and both legs. Seriously – my 3-mile run was a workout but I wasn't sweating anymore profusely than my skateboard friends as they made one attempt after another after another to land a new trick or perfect an old one. Maybe most challenging for me was understanding/comprehending the names of the different tricks/stunts the guys were throwing down.

But let me tell you something else about these three amigos: watching their skateboard antics was fun but eventually they all sat down and started telling me stories of their various adventures which was way more entertaining than their skateboarding skills. It was great...the highlight of my Saturday. So here's the thing – that quick minute of hanging out turned in to a 35-minute conversation! All my sweat dried up... my leg muscles tightened up...my body was deceived into believing the exercise session had ended.

One of the keys to establishing good exercise habits is finishing strong - accomplishing whatever workout goals are established for that day. I started out to run 3 miles; I was going to accomplish my goal. I got up from the bench, bid adieu to my skateboard friends, and started on the final 1.5 miles of my run. Can I tell you that this had to be the longest, most painful, most mentally challenging 1.5 miles I've ever run? At least it felt that way at the time. My body had already shut down and my motivation had dissipated over the course of my time sitting on the bench chatting with the three skateboard amigos. It was sooooooooooooo tempting to settle for a leisurely walk back to my house. But I didn't give in. I finished. Eventually, I felt good about finishing. And I will never again take a 35-minute break in the middle of a run. Ever.

In my quiet time Sunday morning, I found myself thinking about my experience the day before and God spoke some truth into my heart about the peril of taking a break from the pursuit of intimacy with Jesus. In Philippians 3, God challenges us to press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. God also warns us in Proverbs 6 when He says, "A little extra sleep, a little more slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, then poverty will pounce on you like a bandit; scarcity will attack you like a robber." Are you actively, intentionally, and passionately pursuing intimacy with Jesus? Or are you sitting on the proverbial bench, satisfied with how far you've come but with little concern for what lies ahead? Cya Sunday morning in Sunday School & Worship, PK.