

The Surprising Victory

The morning was like any other weekend morning except the 1984 Olympics had come to Los Angeles. I really didn't want to go but my friends persuaded me to go and I was about to witness cycling history at the 190km Road Race in Mission Viejo. Before the event we rode the course on our bikes and knew it would be a leg breaker with a major climb that was very steep. The first lap saw many of the ill-prepared competitors dropped on the monster hill. Alexi Grewal was riding for Team USA and on the final lap of the over 100 mile road race he broke away all alone in a breakaway bid to win the race. We stood near the feeding zone when Grewal came riding through on the final lap. Team USA Coach Eddie B. shouted encouragement as Grewal took advantage of the feeding zone confusion of other riders grabbing water bottles. He shouted, "If you are going to do it, do it now!" Grewal sped through the feeding zone in a make or break mode with a look of determination on his face.

As Grewal tackled the hill, he was caught and passed by Steve Bauer, the Canadian sprinter. Grewal struggled to stay up with Bauer and eventually stayed with him for the remainder of the final lap. Grewal was very tired and just hanging on for dear life as Bauer pulled them towards the finish line ahead of other racers who were now aware that two riders had slipped away and were chasing them in earnest. No spectator that day would have given Grewal even a long shot of a chance to win the race for the United States and it was clear that Canada would be taking home the Gold. A second place was a possibility but even that was in question as other riders began to close on the leading twosome. As they approached the end of the race, the sun was setting and there was a small ray of sunlight – almost like a spotlight focused on the finish line. In spite of his extreme fatigue and the incredible effort he had made on his solo breakaway, it was Alexi Grewal who shot out from under the finish line banner into the bright spot light made by the fading California sun.

When Jesus hung on the cross and died for your sins and mine things looked very bad. Later that day when Jesus' body was wrapped in the linen fabric and the giant stone rolled shut over the mouth of the tomb, things looked very bleak. Who could have guessed that in a short time he would emerge from that tomb in beautiful garments of white, victorious over death? Often, we will think that a situation is hopeless. All is lost. There is no way that things could turn out and then God orchestrates a solution that bests our most imaginative plans. God sometimes seems slow but He is never late.

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4:

^{2CO 4:13} It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, ¹⁴ because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. ¹⁵ All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

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