

A Race Well Run

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When our family reached Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in June of this year, none of us had any idea that at age 25, my twin brother Isaac was in the final months of his life.

What began as an apparent infection in his leg early in October culminated a month later with an emergency evacuation to Seoul, Korea.

An extremely aggressive form of Leukemia, we later learned, precipitated the brain hemorrhage that brought a close to Isaac's life while in flight to Korea.

On November 4th, Isaac's earthly race had finished, leaving us to contemplate the purpose with which he ran. It is not the length of the race, but how it is run that brings honor to a runner.

Born in 1980, Isaac was the second oldest of 10 children in the Waller family. A quiet and gentle brother, Isaac's maturity and wisdom lived out an unforgettable example to those around him.

He lived for others. Countless times we saw him lay down his expectations and rights so that he could meet the needs of other people.

Isaac was also a man of conviction. He could not be pressured to break the speed limit or dishonestly adjust his timecard.

Like a runner with his eyes fixed on the goal, Isaac's life was

characterized by leaving the good to take hold of the best.

In Washington DC, his character and skills brought rapid promotion and advancement in the field of computer aided drafting, but two years later he left it all to be with his family in a move to a farm in Grantsburg, Wisconsin.



Again laying aside lucrative career potentials, Isaac served at the Character Training Institute in Oklahoma City, helping others to develop the character that brings greater joy and purpose in life.

For Isaac, faith was not just something tacked on to his schedule. His faith was the very core of his being. Rising very early for daily Bible reading and prayer, Isaac took hold of a purpose in life with an eternal perspective.

In his brief life Isaac did many good deeds, but his confidence was not in himself. He knew that faith in Jesus Christ was the only way to have a relationship with God.

Leaving the comforts of America and security of a job, Isaac left with his family for volunteer service to the people of Outer Mongolia.

Working with a branch of the Character Training Institute, Isaac again selflessly poured out his time

and energy in trainings and graphic design work.

We will always hold dear the four months that we spent together serving in Mongolia as a family of twelve, little realizing how quickly Isaac was approaching the finish line of his life.

Isaac finished his course with joy. Even in his final days of pain and suffering, Isaac's face bore a smile and a radiance that we can only attribute to the grace of God.

Meeting as a family a few days after Isaac's death, we unanimously chose to bury his body in Mongolia, the land where he had so selflessly poured out the last months of his life in service to others.

Isaac's funeral in Mongolia was attended by hundreds who had been touched by the sacrifice and love of this young man. Upon his tombstone are engraved the words: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Isaac has crossed the finish line, but we are still in the race. Like a fallen hero, his example lives on in our hearts, inspiring us to run with honor the race that is set before each one of us.



The Twins, Adam and Isaac

Through a life focused on eternal reward, Isaac has shown us the meaning of Jim Elliot's words;

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."