



Falling into Sydney Harbour and almost drowning isn't the normal path to glory for an Olympic swimmer. But for one Australian champion, that fateful day when he was four years old shaped his entire life. After being rescued from the water by his older brother, he decided to overcome his fear by learning to swim – and how. Smaller than his peers throughout his life, he won school, state and national championships before attending his first Olympics aged 20.

By determination and stamina, the young man won two events – the 200m freestyle and a 200m obstacle race, in which he had to slip over and under boats to the finish line – becoming Australia's first Olympic swimming medalist. Before retiring from the pool and becoming a printer, he amassed more than 100 various medals, seven world records and about 350 trophies.

More than a century later, the name Frederick Lane (1880-1969) is all but forgotten. With the firing of the starter's gun at this month's London Olympics, new champions will step onto the winner's podium to receive their glory. But it won't be long before the adoration and glory fades.

Olympic athletes do amazing things. They really do. They train so hard and focus so sharply for so many years. The sacrifices they make are huge... like four o'clock mornings at the pool in mid winter. And for all that they do, there's only ever one winner.

But don't put too much faith in them. You'll only get disappointed. Lasting glory is for God alone. Why? Because when he walked among us as a man called Jesus, he won a victory far more precious than a gold medal. Jesus defeated death, rose from the grave offered eternal life to all who believed in him. We don't have to sprint, swim, jump or fight for it. Jesus has already done everything so that we can have victory over death. Jesus finished the race against death for all so that we might share in his glory forever.

And the gift is available for people from all nations no matter how small or poor. Unlike the Olympics, where nation competes against nation, Jesus unites all nations under his banner. He understood that there can only be peace among humanity through Him and in Him.

Jesus is standing at the winner's podium waiting to give you eternal life. Are you brave enough to bow your head and receive it?

Prayer: Dear God, please help me to place my trust in the strength of Jesus for the salvation you won for me. Amen.

Bible verse: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory (1Timothy 3:16)