

The following is an excerpt of Rebekah's fourth book which is currently in progress. Entitled, "I Wonder as I Wander", it is a 366 day devotional book that addresses the very personal issues, musings, blessings, and life lessons that transpire over the period of a year. Obviously, with writing one devotional story per day, the work will not be complete until December 31.

February 16

Rebekah Trittipoe

Race day dawned crisp and cold. Well, actually, since the race started in the dark, we watched the day dawn as we ran. With the winds calm, the 30 degree temperature felt warm enough for me to wear my running skirt rather than the tights I normally prefer at this time of year. Good thing, too. I warmed up quickly and even had to remove my gloves within just a few miles. I was running relaxed and surprised that I was not feeling the anticipated angst of being forced to run a pace other than my own. I wondered if perhaps the day would be better than I thought.

As I visited with friends and met new people last night at the prerace briefing, I occasionally thought about what awaited me with the advent of the new day. I had written about suffering yesterday, fully resigning myself to the inevitable. Somehow, I felt a calm that I have not experienced in a long time. I chatted easily with folks and realized a number of opportunities to share my recent prayer to have God “restore my joy”. The comments I made came naturally and were not at all contrived. I was also able to share my faith and experiences when people wanted to talk about the book I wrote about the Amazon race a few years back. As I finally laid my head on the pillow at the 4-H camp, the start and finish of the race, I was thankful that God was so obviously being faithful to allow me to represent him in such a unique environment.

As I ran with my iPod plugged into my ears, I consciously tried to be content with my position and just do what I was supposed to be doing: run smooth, run efficient, eat before I’m hungry and drink before I’m thirsty. I was feeling surprisingly strong and so happy that I had decided to run. On the return loop, I did run into a bit of a bad stretch when I was feeling tired and losing patience that is so key in these races. Nevertheless, I banked on more calories being a key to a comeback and my body responded appropriately. I was pleased to get to the last aid station, needing only to conquer another 3.5 miles until the race was complete.

As happened so much throughout the day, I would all of a sudden mentally tune into the song that was playing on my MP3 player. It was phenomenal how appropriate songs would play at just the right moment. Perhaps the best example was about one mile from the end. As the first notes of the bold introduction wafted through my earpieces, I exclaimed out loud, “I don’t believe it! This is great!” A song by Twila Paris entitled “Runner” had worked itself into my heart a number of years ago. It inspired me then and was God-sent in the late stages of the race. He was so faithful to make my suffering bearable, buoying me and allowing me to set my sites on future challenges. It was worth it all.

*Courier valiant, bearing the flame
Messenger noble, sent in His name
Faster and harder, run through the night
Desperate relay, carry the light
Carry the light*

*Runner when the road is long
Feel like giving in but you're hanging on
Oh runner, when the race is won
You will run into his arms
Obstacle ancient, chilling the way
Enemy wakened, stoking the fray
Still be determined, fearless and true
Lift high the standard, carry it through
Carry it through
Mindful of many waiting to run
Destined to finish what you've begun
Millions before you cheering you on
Godspeed dear runner, carry it home
Carry it home*