

I was listening to a podcast about a child, Roderick Sewell, who was born with his legs badly deformed from the knee down. His mother made the difficult decision to have the doctors amputate both of his legs just above the knee. While caring for him, she missed so much time from work she had to leave her job. She was even homeless for a while. When her son was about 8, a group for disable athletes, Challenged Athletes Foundation, spotted him playing in a park and asked if he wanted to be an athlete on the Paralympics team. This started a change in his life. The group provide him with new prosthetics for running, and his world opened. Now he could go to the store or walk to the park on his own. He went on to take the gold in several events in the Paralympics when he was a teenager.

Then he decided to do something no bilateral amputee had ever done. He would try to complete an Ironman. He finished the Kona Ironman World Championship in 2019 at the age of 27. The Kona Ironman is the hardest of the Ironman series. It is 2.4 miles swimming in the ocean. A 112-mile bike ride, and then a full marathon, 26.2 Miles, all in one day. The coarse needs to be finished in 17 hours. All without legs.

One of the questions he was asked was: 'What do you think when you are getting ready to start a 26.2-mile run? How do you motivate yourself to take that first step?' The answer was amazing. "I think about the story of my life. I could quit at any point, but that is not a good story". He would just be one of a lot of athletes that did not finish. He wants his story to be a great story.

Each challenge in an Ironman requires different tools. Swimming he needs to kick, biking requires pedaling a bike, and running requires...well legs. As he faced each challenge, he had to adapt. Different legs for each challenge. If he needed to swim, he put on swim legs. The bike required different prosthetics, and he had blades for running. He did what he needed to do to reach his goal.

So how do we adapt when we have a new challenge? COVID hits and what do we do? Quit, or put on a mask, wash our hands, and go to work? The doctors and nurses knew what to do; gown up and get to work. People lost jobs but started delivering meals to others. Some kept their jobs, but put on a mask, put on gloves and staffed food banks, made sandwiches, and delivered meals to shut ins.

The challenges never stop coming. God's work is never done. Adapt and keep doing God's work. How do you want your story to be told? Will it be a great story of generosity and courage in times of trial? I hope so.

Matthew 9:37-38: ³⁷*Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."*