

*important in my life is my relationship with Jesus Christ.*

*“When I was a teenager a local youth worker in a church challenged me as to whether or not I had a real relationship with God. Despite going to church and praying every so often I knew I was far from having any connection with God.*

*“There were things in my life that were far from what God would want. I was embarrassed that others knew what I was like, let alone a perfect and holy God. But I couldn’t fool Him; He knows me better than I know myself because, as the Bible teaches, He created me. I needed to accept Jesus into my life, which I did a little while later. He has given me more than any Olympic medals could ever give me. He has forgiven me, changed me and made me a new person. I still do wrong things that mess up my life. God the Judge said there has to be a penalty for this. But Jesus died for me and paid the sentence for my sin. I am now seen as guilt-free*



*in His eyes. That is something that no Olympic success could bring. However sorted my life might be, without Jesus it means nothing.”*

Whether you are a successful Olympic athlete, an armchair fan or someone who just takes life as it comes, the good news is that Jesus came to save sinful people, and that includes you and me!

Even Debbie and others like her, who seem to have life sorted and are successful, need Jesus. He came into the world to save people who have sinned – if we are honest that includes us all. Like it or not, we need Him. We need His forgiveness because without it we are outside God’s perfect standard.

Without Him the Bible says we will have to face terrible consequences.

Jesus died for you! He loves you and wants you to be His. Will you ask for His forgiveness just as Debbie did? Ask Him to change you and make you like Him.

That is better than any Olympic dream!

For more information about becoming a real Christian, go to:

[www.tell-me-more.org](http://www.tell-me-more.org)

or write to:  
Roger Carswell  
Spring Cottage, Spring Rd,  
Leeds, LS6 1AD, UK



Produced by Print by Design Ltd, Tel 0845 226 7306

by Jonathan Carswell

**PULLING POWER!**



## **“You might as well give up now. You’re never going to make it in the rowing world – you’re just not good enough.”**

How Debbie Flood’s former coach must have been regretting those words as he sat down in front of the TV to watch the Olympics in both Athens and Beijing!

As Debbie stood on the podium in both Games to collect her Olympic medal all sorts of things were running through her mind. She had come so far, so close, surprising so many pundits. Her emotions were running high. Exhausted, she stood there with her three team mates, arms locked, facing the blinking flash bulbs of the world’s media. Despite the incredible experience, the privilege of representing her nation, Debbie’s life is more than just about rowing...

## **Her rowing career started by accident...**

Debbie and her father used to go out running together several times a week. However, when her father picked up a nasty knee injury she was forced to look for another method of fitness training. The rowing machine in the local gym seemed an inviting option.

Being a natural on the machine, rowing on the water was the next obvious step, but Debbie was not very good at it. However, one thing she didn’t lack was determination. She committed herself to practicing her technique and improving her times. After a while she decided to enter herself into some long-distance races. She came in last...‘by miles’. Nevertheless, she continued to train each morning and evening.

Debbie with her coach, Mark Banks



It was during those hard, cold winter months of training that a coach at Debbie’s local club dealt the low blow and suggested she give up.

She left the boathouse that night in floods of tears. Rejection was something that Debbie was not used to. The trophies of any number of sports competitions were lined up on her mantelpiece – she was determined to add one for rowing too. ‘Trying something else’ would mean defeat at this, and that was not an option.

She managed to get hold of a key to the boathouse of the local all-boys’ school and from there Debbie began to train harder than ever. A top coach from down south agreed to take her on and train her,

giving her a training programme over the phone each day.

Over the months that followed, with the help of a Lottery grant, Debbie began to move up the ranks. Winner’s medals trickled in and before long Debbie was rightfully earning the respect of her peers, including the British rowing selectors.

But with all this success, and now two Olympic silver medals around her neck (though she keeps them in a sock!), what is it that makes this Yorkshire lass tick?

*“To be an Olympian is a dream come true; I would never have believed it if you’d told me a few years ago that I would achieve this. But I have to say, for me it’s not about the fame and success. Yes, I had to work very hard to get here, and naturally I am delighted to get two silvers, but I have something far better than any medal. I want to be the best and win every race I enter, but what’s most*