

**What is your favorite
underdog story?**

Answer:

Answer:

**Why do we love stories
about underdogs and
nobodies who take a stand?**

WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT IT



The Jewish religious leaders—the Pharisees—were a big deal in Jesus' day. Picture the Pharisees like your pastor, but with the power to control your education, job, and who your friends were. More importantly, they controlled who could access the temple, which was the hub of Jewish life. They were powerful people! Anyone who crossed the Pharisees, right or wrong, risked being thrown out of the temple. They would then be living as an exile in their own town.

On the other end of the spectrum, people born with a disability in the first century had no power. Disabilities were mistakenly believed to be the result of a person's sins, so these people were ostracized from the temple and typically became beggars for the rest of their lives. In the following passage, the blind man we will read about truly was a nobody—that is, until he encountered Jesus!

After encountering Jesus, this blind nobody transformed into a scrappy defender of Jesus—even to the Pharisees! To be scrappy is to be feisty and determined, to stand up to scary situations and stand up for what's true. This man's encounter with Jesus gave him something worth fighting for, so he stood up to powerful people and spoke the truth.

As you read, notice how the formerly blind man became a leader for the Kingdom of God in his interactions with his neighbors, his family, and the Pharisees. Sometimes, leaders don't lead from a place of authority but as underdogs with scrappy but confident faith! This man knew that his faith was worth defending even though the odds were stacked against him.

Read John 9:1–41 and answer the following questions:

What do you think it was like for this man to go from a lowly beggar to standing up to the Pharisees?

Where do you think he gets the boldness he exhibits throughout this passage?

Have you ever felt this kind of boldness because of your relationship with Christ?

Do you ever feel like an underdog when it comes to sharing your faith or taking a stand for what's right? When?

A SECOND LOOK



At the age of 17, Hugh Herr lost both of his legs below the knee after a climbing accident. While for many this might signal the end of a beloved hobby, for Herr it was the beginning of a vision to help enable other amputees to live out their passions without limitation.

During his rescue from the accident on Mount Washington, NH, one of the rescuers died trying to save Herr's life. Herr says as he recovered from the accident, he was inspired to do something meaningful that would honor the memory of his rescuer.

This inspiration, plus a desire to return to the sport of climbing, led Herr to begin designing and building prosthetics. Not only did his work give him the tools he needed to climb again, but he also became a leader in the prosthetics-building industry. Herr now uses his experience and expertise to enable others to pursue their passions and gain more mobility.

While his accident was a life-changing experience, his experience with tragedy and redemption pales in comparison to a Christ-follower's experience with Jesus! While Herr had to lose something before he was inspired to action, Christ gives us something—himself—and leads us toward life transformation. What a difference in power!

While both Herr and the blind man had a life-changing experience that caused them to overcome adversity and influence others, the man born blind didn't just have earthly influence. He became a leader with eternal impact. Jesus wants to do the same thing in your life.

Answer:

Where do you think Herr's inspiration to overcome came from?

Where did the man born blind's inspiration come from?

Where are you an underdog in your leadership for Jesus? (i.e. Where do you feel like you don't have power but you know that you need to stand up for your faith?)

What would it look like to depend on Jesus and follow him in that area this week?

APPLY IT



Pick one area where you are an underdog and may need to be scrappier in your leadership. Maybe that area is a leadership position you already have, or maybe it's a place where you need to stand up as a leader for the first time. Make a plan to take one step toward being bolder in your leadership in that area this week.

Be specific:

What are you going to do?

When are you going to do it?

Is there someone who can keep you accountable?

THINK ABOUT IT

"Courage is not something that you already have that makes you brave when the tough times start. Courage is what you earn when you've been through the tough times and you discover they aren't so tough after all." – Malcolm Gladwell

MEMORIZE/MEDITATE ON THIS VERSE

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9 (ESV)