

Week 17: Embracing the Underdog Role

“Treat everyone with respect. Today’s underdogs might be tomorrow’s big dog”.

Just a few weeks ago, the United States hockey team won the Olympic gold medal for the first time since the 1980 ‘miracle’ team. So, of course, I had to go back and watch the movie, *Miracle*. Talk about true underdogs! They were pretty much outmanned and outgunned by just about every metric – size, speed, experience, and power. The Soviets were absolutely the better team. However, that did not stop the United States from clawing tooth and nail to beat the Soviets in what everyone would describe as a fairytale ending. I think this translates to our lives.

Let me explain.

I would say that most people spend a large chunk of their lives feeling like an underdog. We want to be the person who figures it out early. We want to make sure that we are ahead in our lives.

However, I think that most of us can confirm that this is not the case the majority of the time. I think most of us can attest to the fact that there is a large portion of the time when we feel extremely behind. Things just do not seem to work out the good majority of the time. We find ourselves comparing ourselves to others. We end up wanting to be where everyone else is in life.

Remember, comparison is the thief of joy.

However, despite these feelings, scripture tells us something way different. God often chooses to work with the underdogs in life. When the prophet Samuel set out to appoint a king and a giant

slayer, I would say the shepherd boy David was not the person who came to mind. Yet, David was chosen not because he looked the part, but because his heart was rooted in his faith in the Lord.

Before leading an entire nation, Joseph was betrayed by his brothers and thrown in prison. He truly had nothing going for him – except his faith in the Lord. In fact, his underdog story looked like a failure long before it had any purpose.

Even Moses believed that he wasn't capable of the task placed before him. He placed himself in the underdog category so quickly, and when he was called to lead a nation through Christ, his first response was not confidence – it was doubt. Yet, God still chose to work for him.

And perhaps the most profound story is Jesus Christ himself. He was born in a barn in an animal bed. I think that most people would believe that the King of all Kings would be born in some royal way – maybe a ton of riches in a giant palace. But that was far from the case. God chose to bring the seemingly underdog story to light. The list of biblical underdogs continues on and on.

Again and again, the pattern in Scripture is the same.

God does not always choose the strongest, the most experienced, or the person who appears to have everything figured out. More often than not, He chooses the person who feels overlooked, uncertain, or unqualified.

In other words, He chooses the underdog.

And maybe there is a reason for that.

When someone already believes they have everything under control, it becomes much harder to rely on God. But when you feel like the odds are stacked against you, when you feel like you don't quite measure up, when life forces you into a position where you *have* to lean on something bigger than yourself—that is often where faith grows the strongest.

The underdog season builds perseverance.

It builds humility.

It builds trust.

Just like the United States hockey team in the *Miracle* story, the odds may not always look like they are in your favor. By every measurable statistic, the Soviets were supposed to win. Yet the

Americans kept pushing forward anyway.

Sometimes life will feel exactly like that. You might feel behind. You might feel like everyone else is further along than you. You might even question whether you are capable of what lies

ahead.

But Scripture reminds us that the story is not over simply because the odds look bad.

After all, the shepherd boy David eventually became a king.

The prisoner Joseph eventually saved a nation.

The doubter Moses eventually led God's people to freedom.

And the humble birth of Jesus Christ changed the entire world.

So if you find yourself in an underdog season right now, take heart.

Being the underdog does not mean you are losing.

It may simply mean your story is still unfolding.

Stay faithful. Stay patient. And keep moving forward.

Because today's underdog might just be tomorrow's victory story.