

LOOKING UP!

By Matt Huddleston

Jason McElwain, a high school senior with autism, was the basketball team manager for three seasons, diligently fetching water, chasing rebounds in warm-ups, and mopping up sweat. However, in February 2006, Jason’s coach rewarded the young man by allowing him to suit up for the last game of the season. Then, with the team ahead by twenty points and only four minutes to go, the coach put Jason in the game.

Jason missed his first two shots, but his third was a three-point swish. As the ball went through the net, the gym erupted with applause. Jason made six three-pointers — a Greece Athena High School record — to finish with twenty points in a little more than four minutes.

With each basket, the crowd became more enthusiastic. By the time Jason hit his last shot, everyone was jumping up and down. When the game ended, the bleachers emptied onto the court as the crowd gathered around Jason, and his teammates hoisted him onto their shoulders.

Often our world looks at weaknesses and limitations as just that, something that would set us back. Paul wrote God’s word to him regarding his weakness. “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses so that Christ’s power may rest on me.

What limitations are you withholding from God’s grace? Do you shun others who could revel in His mercy? Do you neglect the truth that He can do great things in and through you? Do you fail to look up for help, guidance, and direction?

SERMON NOTES

God Can’t Help Me

September 5

Some think, “God can’t help me because...”

- I shouldn’t _____
- I have _____
- There are _____
- I have _____
- The way I have _____
- Because the _____
- There isn’t _____

The prodigal son returns because he believes...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What can you imagine?

- Do you dream of _____?
- Do you wish for _____?
- Do you see the _____ for _____?
- Do you desire _____?

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ROM. 5:8, 6:1-4

Next Week:

WHEN I’M GOOD
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PERSONAL STUDY

It is rewarding to invest time each day in God's Word.

Mo Psalm 46:9-10

Be still. God is in control. Yield today to Him. If you are running the wrong way, the first thing to do is stop and listen for the right directions. Your haste may create great waste. Seek Him first.

Tu Ephesians 3:20–21

Greater than I can imagine! Who received the most from God? Was it Peter after he denied he knew Jesus? Paul, persecuting the church? The demon-possessed man, the Samaritan woman? God can redeem you.

We 1 Corinthians 2:9

Dare to dream just a bit. What is awaiting us in Heaven? God gave us imagination and wonder to spur us on in this life. Dream of the great God has in store. Let that vision inspire you.

Th Ephesians 3:20–21, Psalm 81:10

His power at work in us! Think of an open-mouthed, hungry baby bird. Is that the way your soul hungers for Him? He has promised. He has shown great examples. Open your heart, and He will fill it.

Fr John 14:26, 15:26, Romans 8:26-27

His power at work in us! The Spirit helps in our weakness, interceding for us to the Father. He will testify about Jesus, teach us, and help us remember God's word.

Sa Ephesians 3:20–21, Acts 16:33

Now—Immediately! All week we have seen the power and purpose of God. The jailor lives out one of his worst fears. But when God's grace is shown, he immediately takes action. Will you obey God today?

STUDY & DISCUSS

- Read Ephesians 3:20-21. This passage is both a corporate and personal promise. Paul writes to the church in Ephesus as well as to the individuals there. “Now” can be used to define time for the congregation and the individual. “More than we can ask or imagine” and “his power at work within us” points to both the corporate and individual.
 - ◇ What is the value of a congregation which adopts this belief?
 - ◇ What is the value of an individual who embraces this belief?
 - ◇ Which comes first, the individuals pursuing this promise, which inspires the congregation, or a full-believing community, leading the individuals to practice this promise better?
- How literal do you think all of God's promises can be taken?
- Describe a storm in your life when you experienced great grief or heartache. How did you feel about God during that time?
- Why is it hard to see God's answered promises?
- Share a time when you could clearly see God's answer to your prayers for help.
- What do you feel is God's greatest promise?