



God of the Underdogs: When the Odds Are Against You, God Is For You

Matt Keller, Rick Warren

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“You will love this book. Matt’s unique way of storytelling will engage you from page one and leave you inspired to live up to your full potential!” — Mark Batterson, New York Times best-selling author, The Circle Maker

“Matt is a new voice in leadership and one you need to listen to. Matt’s book will inspire you to take on the next challenge and be the leader God has called you to be.” — Brad Lomenick, president and lead visionary, Catalyst Conferences; author, The Catalyst Leader. @BradLomenick

“Everyone loves an underdog. In this book, Matt Keller shows us that God does too. God of the Underdogs will guide you beyond your limitations and into a realm where only God-powered potential exists.” — John Bevere, author and speaker, Messenger International, Colorado / Australia / United Kingdom

- Ever felt like the underdog?
- Like you’re just not good enough?
- Like you lack the confidence to pursue your dreams?

If so, you’re not alone. The Bible is full of ordinary people that the world considered underdogs, but God chose them to change the world.

God of the Underdogs taps into a recognizable metaphor to show how the Creator of the universe wants to use you to accomplish great things for him. By weaving his own underdog story with the stories of some of the Bible’s greatest underdog heroes, Matt Keller demonstrates that men and women like Moses, Esther, King David, the apostle Paul, and even Jesus shared the “But I can’t...” sentiment. They considered themselves ordinary — but God saw them as extraordinary!

God wants to use your life in a unique way. God sees your potential. So rise up, underdog! Beat the odds, live your dream, and change your world!

God of the Underdogs: When the Odds Are Against You, God Is For You Details

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From Reader Review God of the Underdogs: When the Odds Are Against You, God Is For You for online ebook

Chavon says

I love the way this book was written. Keller presented biblical stories & concepts in a way that is easy to understand. I am interested in reading my work by him.

Lauren Mayet says

Wow

Michelle Nero says

God searches out for the underdogs and can use you in the most miraculous ways!

Jeremy Copeland says

Great stuff. I know Matt personally and can speak to the fact that his story is truly an Underdog story and that his perspective carries significant weight here.

Jon Stephens says

God of the Underdogs is written by Matt Keller, the founding pastor of Next Level Church in Ft. Myers FL.

The book examines numerous people (underdogs) in scripture and how God was for them and with them, like He is today with you and I (also underdogs). The Biblical examples include: David, Paul, Jacob, John the Baptist, Jesus, Mephibosheth, Gideon, Esther, and Moses.

The book is a very quick and easy read, and I think it would especially be an encouragement to new or younger Christians. The biblical stories are often retold with a modern day spin (i.e. "Samuel...was probably wearing pajama pants around the house and eating chips on the couch" p. 10). This kind of retelling or commentary on scripture in preaching and writing I don't really connect well with so much, but some might.

The two chapters I especially enjoyed were on Jacob and Moses. The insight on how God changed the label on Jacob was inspiring and a great reminder that our identity is in Christ alone. Keller's insights on where our credibility comes from, concerning Moses, was also excellent. "God told Moses his credibility had nothing to do with his capability, it had everything to do with God's ability" (p. 161).

Another great quote from the book, this time from the chapter on Paul, was: "Paul's pain and past became his

platform...Paul's past positioned him to be used by God in the future" (p. 34).

Throughout the book Keller tells pieces of his story as the founder/planter of his church, which I found very interesting. I would have enjoyed reading even more about that journey.

Overall I appreciate the heart of the book and I do think it would be a great resource for younger Christians for both individual reading and a small group discussion.

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Tosh Demsey says

I found this book to be both encouraging and convicting simultaneously. The author's primary assertion is the God in is the business of using ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things. He uses numerous examples from people written about in the Bible as well as from his own life to illustrate how our most common excuses for why we feel inadequate are not insurmountable if we trust in God to guide & empower us. Here's one of my favorite passages from the book "God wants to use your life in spite of anything you might think disqualifies you. YOUR IMPERFECTIONS DON'T KEEP YOU FROM YOUR DESTINY; THEY ACTUALLY POSITION YOU PERFECTLY FOR IT! When God uses you in spite of you, he gets all the credit. That's why God loves using underdogs! God has called you, the underdog, to be his man or woman to make an impact in your world. Stop making excuses. Stop thinking you don't have the credibility, the proof, or the ability to be who God wants you to be and to do what God wants you to do."

Zee says

I don't know about you, but I can say about myself there were many times when I felt like saying, "I want to do something meaningful, but who am I to do it?"

As a girl, as a youngest member of the Church board, as a youngest family member, as a job seeker... "I am just me. I lack qualifications for that kind of job. There are people who are smarter and wiser and more qualified than I am for this kind of job."

In the book God of the Underdogs, Matt Keller explores nine excuses that people utilize to basically say "I don't want / am afraid to do it because..."

Taking well-known Bible heroes, the author explores the odds against them, how they overcame their fears and worries, and how they became those whom we know – heroes. All of them were underdogs, even Jesus. This lesson is something I enjoy sharing with kids at the camps or elsewhere when they might say "The other team is stronger."

One of the other things I have enjoyed about this book is that pastor Matt shares his own personal story about how he and his wife went on a journey to plant a church and all the trials they went through: not knowing anyone, being a young family, having no support from elders... Yet, as they faithfully trudged forward, God gave them a vision how to help other ministry leaders who are in the same position.

The book is based on Bible stories, and the way they are retold helps to see the well-known personalities from a slightly different angle. It is a great book, in my opinion, and I would highly recommend it to everyone – especially those who feel like they are stuck in a rut spiritually-wise (and not just spiritually).

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Karen Wiser says

God of the Underdogs by Matt Keller is an inspiring book aimed at infusing you with hope and courage to change the world through the power of Christ in your life...even if you are an "Underdog"....which we all are to one extent or another!

God of the Underdogs by Matt Keller is a wonderfully encouraging book! I enjoyed the presentation and the transparency found throughout the work. The resounding message that each of us are created for a unique purpose that God has designed specifically for us, despite our challenges, is easily communicated throughout the chapters.

The book identifies nine excuses that we frequently allow to become road blocks in our lives and prevent us from accomplishing all that God has planned for us. In his gentle and transparent delivery, Matt authentically reveals some areas of struggle that he has had during his ministry and subsequent planting of the church: Next Level Church. In tandem, he highlights the lives of men and women from the Bible that were certainly Underdogs, but chose to confront their obstacles and in turn the power of God was released in a mighty way in their lives to change history.

The book took me to a level of contemplation beyond a shallow quick once over. Instead, as I read each chapter, I found myself challenged by the reasons for why we become paralyzed in our response to God. The book motivated me to dream bigger for Him!! It incited me to trust Him for more!! My favorite quote from this book is: "The more light we let in, the less darkness can stay!"

God of the Underdogs by Matt Keller needs to be on your reading list for 2014!

Thank you to Thomas Nelson Publishing for this review copy of God of the Underdogs by Matt Keller through Booksneeze. This review and the opinions given within are strictly my own.

Patricia says

Good choice of stories, quick read, inspiring for discouraging times.

Joshua Foote says

Great bible application for God's workers

The book was very good I expected a feel good type book after seeing who reviewed and did the forward to the book in that way it didn't disappoint however not theologically deep and mainly the author's story on his church plant over and over with bible big players interspersed

Mark says

1.5 Stars

Overall, a disappointing read.

The book starts out promising and I actually found it pretty funny in the first chapter. It's entirely possible that this book just isn't for me. I found myself having trouble considering myself an underdog pretty early on in the book. Perhaps I don't dream big enough, but I don't often feel unqualified in a way that allows me to relate to the examples in the book. There's very few examples in my life of being told I'm not good enough to do something. My own procrastination and ADD is a far bigger deterrent to following my dreams than anyone else is.

By the end of chapter two, I was over the humor. It wore on me quite quickly, becoming corny and forced; at times I could almost hear the drum hits (ba dum tiss). It also became clear during this chapter that we were in for a super repetitive and redundant book. The repetition isn't necessarily saying the same thing over and over again (although he does tend to do that, as well), it's more of a clear pattern with each excuse. It goes like this: "Excuse X: Everyone deals with this, but God is for you!" This repeats in each chapter, along with his habit of "here is my point.....let me say that again because you need to understand it....here is my point in a different font and separated from the text above." His constant use of the word "underdog" is also grating at times. I get it. It's the title, but let's try to keep the usage under a 1/3 of the words in the book.

The strongest part of the book may have been the last few paragraphs. Ideally, these should have been moved to the beginning of the book. The bonus content section of the book was also pretty good and probably should have been included in the book proper, rather than as an add on. And seeing as how it has a salvation prayer in it, it's disappointing that he tells people to stop reading if they feel the previous 9 chapters gave them what they needed. I get that it's a book geared towards Christians and that it's about being an underdog and overcoming that through a reliance on God, but what is more important than salvation? My mother in law always complained that our church didn't give a call to salvation after every service, but that's how I feel about this. You're leaving the most important aspect of Christianity as an optional chapter? That's not fair to those who skip it.

In the end, the basic premise is listed right on the front cover: "When the odds are against you, God is for you." Do I think that's true? Absolutely! But I don't think it's that simple and Keller doesn't do a good enough job of highlighting the work a person needs to put in in order for things to work out. He mentions in passing the work he had to put in to get his church off the ground and the obstacles he had in his way, but these are glossed over in favor of examples from the bible. I think he could have cut a lot of the repetition and focused

more on the work that's necessary and had a book of a similar length with more to offer. I think that this would have worked well if it were written in a style reminiscent of Donald Miller's *Scary Close*, which is essentially a self-help book disguised as a memoir. Keller could have written a more detailed memoir about getting his church off the ground interspersed with the same biblical examples and given us a more successful book.

Carrie says

Matt Keller had come to our church and preached the beginning of this book's message. We all scooped up a copy after his sermon. It has great message. If you need a cheerleader to cheer you on, Matt is your guy! He applies biblical principles to show God loves fulfilling His Purpose through society's underdogs. Great for Christians at any stage in their walk.

Patricia C Robbins says

Praise God for His Greatness

The more I learn about God the more I realize than I cannot comprehend how great His love is. We can never repay Him for the sacrifice He made for us. Even our "works" pale when compared to His acts of love. O, Lord, how excellent is they Name.

Mark Perkins says

Great book. We are all underdogs to some degree or another. But the great thing is that God uses us underdogs to do great things for His kingdom.

Karen Murano says

Pastor Matt is so personal through his writing. Immediately caught up in his story, I felt like I was sitting in a small group listening to his passion for people and the dream to fulfill the vision of Next Level Church as God birthed it into his and Sarah's hearts. He completely nails the struggle of feeling like an underdog, of fighting excuses, and of fighting the good fight of faith to accomplish this unbelievable dream. They had every reason to quit, to stop believing, and to accept mediocre - but NO. This book dares you to chant, "No More Excuses" and press on, press in, and believe in yourself. I was especially touched by chapter 3 - Jacob's struggle to let go of his scarred reputation and how he embraces a new name. I, too, have a new name.
