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**“UNSHACKLED!” - Pacific Garden Mission**  
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**Daily Devotional**

*“The Build-Up” - David Capps*

ANNCR: May 15<sup>th</sup>, “The Build-Up.” Have you ever run a marathon? If so, you know it requires months of training to get into shape before feeling fully prepared for the challenge. There are actually many things we might want to do that we have to build up to before we can “take the leap.” But there’s one thing that’s completely opposite, and that’s turning to the Lord for His forgiveness and healing. Maybe you’ve recognized that sin’s become a wedge between you and God, and you want to make it right. But you feel you have to get your act together first – you have to prove you deserve forgiveness and then you can come before Jesus. But this couldn’t be further from the truth, as we’ll hear from David, who’s here to share with us his true story on this Unshackled Daily Devotional.

DAVID: My grandparents had raised me until I was nine. Then Dad took me to live with him and my stepmother. I was soon addicted to all kinds of drugs and stealing to meet my needs. When I was sixteen Dad and I got into a fight, and he threw me out.

I managed to graduate — barely — and got a job in the shipyards, where my co-workers and I smoked pot together. Several times I tried to quit using drugs but failed. I began to hate my weakness and thought about suicide many times. Some of us were arrested for smoking pot on the street, and I spent four hours in jail. That sobered me. I talked with a Christian at work who described how Jesus had turned him away from drugs.

Another co-worker was even bolder in his witness. He took me to an empty office at lunchtime and with his Bible showed me that sin leads to death, “*but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*” Now, I mistakenly thought that I had to get rid of my bad habits before I could be saved. But he explained that God accepts us just as we are when we turn from sin to Christ.

I prayed that day, giving my life to Jesus Christ and asking God to remake me. My old drug buddies didn’t think my new life would last, but they were wrong. I’m David Capps. Jesus set me free, cleaned me up and gave me joy. Two of my old drug buddies came to know Jesus, too.

ANNCR: In the book of Isaiah, God’s addressing the rebellious nation of Judah. He says in chapter 44, verse 22, “*I have swept away your*

*offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.*” Friend, while these words were spoken to the Jewish people thousands of years ago, they reveal the unchanging character of God, which is true even toward us believers today. He is the one who cleanses and restores. We cannot begin this process without Him. There is no build-up, no training. He simply wants us to come to Him. Will you receive this truth today?

CREDITS: Unshackled Daily Devotionals are produced by Pacific Garden Mission along with our Unshackled Audio Dramas. To find even more true stories of God’s saving, transforming power, visit our website, [unshackled.org](http://unshackled.org).

This episode was written by Jack Odell and Elizabeth Kupferschmid and narrated by Tim Gregory and David Kappas.

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