

COPYRIGHT 2022-PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION
“UNSHACKLED!” - Pacific Garden Mission
(Reg. U.S. Pat. Off.)
Daily Devotional

“What We Cannot Do” – Ellis Barber

ANNCR: February 21st, “What We Cannot Do.” Would you like to play a game? We’re calling this “The Ultimate Challenge.” How it’s played is, I’ll list a series of activities, as you attempt to complete them. Sound fun? Here we go! Do 50 pushups, now stand on your head. Identify the square root of 86, deadlift 5,000 pounds, hold your breath for 30 minutes, test and solve the string theory debate, (*Takes A Breath*)...are you still with me? I’m guessing not! As you may have noticed, the activities I gave you increased in difficulty, until they were utterly impossible for you to complete. You may have started off feeling up to the challenge, but before long, you hopefully realized I was asking you to do things you simply cannot do. Today we’ll hear from Ellis, a man who also faced impossible challenges...like atoning for the deaths he’d caused. But he also met survivors who offered him something that would have been impossible in their own – forgiveness. Ellis is here to share with us his true story on this Unshackled Daily Devotional.

ELLIS: Soon I was arrested for burglary and then car theft. I was sixteen when the judge threatened to throw the book at me, after which I

was more careful with my unlawful activities, But alcohol and drugs still held me in their grip.

One night when I was 21, a cousin and some friends and I left a party, drunk out of our minds. I was driving. We were racing another car full of drunks when I hit a smaller car head-on, killing the couple inside. I had open heart surgery to repair a lacerated aorta, but I didn't even want to live when I learned I had killed someone. I vowed to quit doing drugs, but when I was released from the hospital, guilt drove me right back to them. I was sentenced to two years in the county correctional facility. And there I stayed high on drugs, but nothing eased my guilty conscience — not even talking with the chaplain.

Finally, I wrote a letter to the victim's children, asking forgiveness. They replied that their parents loved the Lord, and they were praying for me. They even came to visit and told me Jesus loved me so much, He died for me. During a lock-down, I spent three days reading the Bible. I wanted more of God, so I went to the prison Bible study. I realized that God could forgive *me, too*. So I gave my life to Christ, and He changed me completely. I'm Ellis Barber, and today I'm married and serve the Lord in prison ministry.

ANNCR: Jesus is speaking in Luke chapter 18, verse 27, “*And he said, The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.*” Friend, Ellis struggled with so many impossible things – cleansing his sin and finding freedom from his shame and addiction – until he encountered Jesus. May we always remember what our Savior has done and what He will continue to do in our hearts and the hearts of others! Even when it’s beyond what we could ever accomplish. 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.

This episode was written by Marjorie Webb and Elizabeth Kupferschmid and narrated by Tim Gregory and Matt DeCaro.

Unshackled Daily Devotionals are made possible by our generous listeners. Would you consider supporting this production and giving a gift today?