

The Cinderella Man

Jim Braddock was a promising boxer in the 1920s. He went all the way to the title fight in 1929 but narrowly lost to Tommy Loughran in a 15-round decision. Braddock was greatly depressed by the loss and badly fractured his right hand in several places in the process. He plummeted into poverty.



He gets a fight here and there, but his purse is less and less. The Great Depression strikes and he loses everything. He has a family with three children to look after, so he takes a job as a longshoreman for a while, and subsequently has to resort to \$6.15 a week on welfare. Due to frequent injuries to his right hand during his work on the docks, Braddock compensated by using his left hand, and it gradually became stronger than his right.

All this time, Joe Gould, his friend and manager, is at Madison Square Garden talking to promoters and boxing clubs. "Isn't there a fight you can get him in?"

The whole world thinks Braddock is done; it's over. Every time he throws a right, he breaks his hand, the fight crowd says.

But Gould doesn't stop encouraging him. He doesn't stop believing.

He tells anyone who will listen: "I got this great fighter ..."

"We know, Gould. You tell us all the time. You won't stop singing his praises."

"You're right," Gould responds. "I won't stop because I believe in him!"

Gould persisted, and eventually arranged for a series of fights, which Braddock won.



Considered little more than a journeyman fighter, Braddock was hand-picked by World Heavyweight Champion Max Baer's handlers because they thought Braddock would be an easy payday for the champion.

But on June 13, 1935, at Madison Square Garden, Braddock upset Baer to win the World Heavyweight Championship as a 10-to-1 underdog in what was called "the greatest fistic

upset since the defeat of John L. Sullivan by Jim Corbett." For this unlikely feat, he was given the nickname "Cinderella Man."

(more)

In a time when the world needed a hero, in the midst of the Great Depression, Jim Braddock showed up. A “washed-up fighter” who wouldn’t quit because he listened to the voices of those who believed in him.

Braddock’s wife, Mae, told him to remember who he was and listed the meaningful roles he had played in so many lives.

Do you need to be believed in?



Before a big challenge, stop and reflect on who you are, on who God says you are. Think of all the roles He has for you:

- His child (1 John 3:1)
- His beloved (1 John 4:7)
- His treasure (Malachi 3:17)
- His warrior (Ephesians 6:10-18)
- His workmanship (Ephesians 2:10)
- One of His own special people (1 Peter 2:9)

Being reminded of who you are in Jesus will help put into perspective any criticisms from others or any self-doubts or fears that would keep you from doing all that He intends for you to do.

Believe in the voice of the One who believes in you.

My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of My hand (John 10:27-28 NIV).

– Beecher Hunter