

# Nieto Eyes Gold After Restoring Relationship With God

The high jump finals are set for Tuesday, and American Jamie Nieto is in the hunt for a medal after just missing out in 2004.

CBN's Shawn Brown talked to Nieto about how his Christian **faith** helped him come back after that disappointing loss.

After missing a medal in the 2004 Olympic Games, then failing to qualify for the Beijing games in 2008, Nieto did what he wasn't even sure he could do: become the oldest high jumper to ever make Olympic U.S track and field team with his sights set on a gold medal.

## Putting God First

This time around he's leaning on what he learned from his loss during the '04 games.

"You go to the Olympics and jump the best you've ever jumped in your whole life," Nieto told CBN News. "I mean there's a small number of people who have ever really done that. And fortunately, I was one of them. And I just felt like, I don't know ... now what?"

Even though Nieto had reached his personal best in the high jump, with no medal to show for it he couldn't shake off his disappointment.

He lost his desire to compete. He was also losing a grip on his relationship with God, and his jumps suffered because of it.

"My relationship with God was slipping a little bit because I wasn't dedicating as much time to God and, you know, **reading**

**the Word** and stuff like that and due to traveling,” Nieto explained.

“I don’t feel like I was out there, you know, sinning, or doing a bunch of stuff, but just getting caught up in life,” he said.

Jamie’s performance only got worse. That’s when he realized he needed to restore his relationship with God.

“I wasn’t jumping as well as I wanted to and I got to a point where I was, like, ‘I’ve done everything I can do, you know, physically, mentally and spiritually,’” he recalled.

“And finally, I just got to a point, it was in June, I was like, ‘Lord, I give up. I’m done trying. I’m done trying to high jump.’ And then once I did that, BAM! I started jumping good again.”

Unfortunately, Nieto failed to qualify for the Beijing games in 2008 and thought that perhaps God had another plan for him. So he threw in the towel.

### **‘I Want Them to See God in Me’**

But Nieto still harbored the Olympic dream and he decided to give it one more go at the Olympic trials in Eugene, Ore., this past June.

Now at 35, he is in London hoping to capture the medal that got away.

“I’ve been **praying**. I’ve been reading my Word,” Nieto said. “I’ve been doing everything I feel like I need to do because I want to be ready physically, mentally and spiritually.”

Brown asked Nieto: “What do you want people to see when you’re jumping?”

“I want them to see God exuding out of me, you know what I mean,” he replied, “My relationship with Him exuding out of

me.

“When they see me jump, I want them to know that God is working through me right now,” he said. “It’s not me. So, that’s what I want the people to see, that I’m a Christian and you know, the things I do are not for me, they’re for Him and to glorify His name in all ways possible.”