



UNSHAKEABLE

GROUP GUIDE
2nd Quarter, 2023

UNSHAKEABLE

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ABOUT

If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.

Friends of Daniel, Daniel 3:17 - 18

The book of Daniel shows us examples of what UNSHAKEABLE faith looks like, inside and out, through every success and struggle we might experience. Daniel and his friends were exiled to the most wicked city of his day, Babylon, yet they remained strong in the Lord through every adventure and challenge. In this sermon series, we journey through book of Daniel to discover, learn, and practice for ourselves the powerful truths that made this great prophet UNSHAKEABLE.

Ground Rules

Here are some guidelines for your gatherings.

Confidentiality

If the group is going to move towards authenticity, then what's shared in the group should stay in the group (note: for situations that you are not qualified to speak into, use a referral to Cornerstone Counseling).

Don't Rescue and Don't Fix

Let people openly share without trying to solve their problems. Only give advice if they request it.

No Crosstalk

People feel valued when we listen. The opposite is true as well: people will feel devalued if they are constantly interrupted. If someone has the floor, no other conversations should be happening.

Give Everyone a Chance to Share

Everyone has something to contribute and everyone should feel heard. Don't be too quick to provide all of the answers. Give others space to share.

Use Humor Responsibly

Our conversation should build up rather than tear down. Humor can be a great thing provided it is not used as the expense of others.

Use 'I' Statements

Groups are an opportunity for self-reflection. We should be quick to reflect on how what we are studying should shape us personally, and slow to tell others how it should shape them.

Fight for the Relationship

Real relationships only thrive when we commit to 'fight' for the relationship. We will not hide from conflict or disagreement, but will instead discuss them in an open and healthy way.

Leader Guidelines

Thank you for taking the time to invest in others by leading a group. As a leader, your task is to create an environment where real relationships can thrive. Here are some things to keep in mind as you do that:

Multiply.

The mission of the church is to multiply disciples. Groups are one of the environments where this occurs. You are involved in the discipleship of each person in your group. We ask that each of our group leaders has someone who they are equipping to be a disciple-maker.

Create a safe environment.

When we say 'safe', we mean an environment where participants can freely share without feeling belittled or that what they share will get spread beyond the group. When we say 'safe', we also mean a group where participants can encounter Jesus and His plan for their life.

Recognize that your group is unique.

This booklet is designed to be a general guide, but every group is unique. So when you're planning, take into account what does and doesn't work for your group and shape the session to their personalities and needs.

Review the ground rules.

Periodically, remind your group about the ground rules for the group.

Ask lots of questions.

Engaging leaders draw participants into the discussion. Ask many questions and lead your group into self-discovery. Follow the 70/30 rule: your goal should be to talk for less than 30% of the time. If you're going over that, then people in your group are going to feel limited in their ability to engage!

Get feedback.

Improve your group by asking others for feedback.

Seek wise council.

There are some questions you won't be able to answer and some situations you aren't trained to handle. That's OK! Know who your wise council is (whether a coach, minister, or another disciple-maker) and turn to them in your time of need.

For more on this topic, check out *Servant-Leadership Training* and the *CCW Group Leader Training 2.0* resource on RightNow Media.

Before the Session

Prepare for the Session: As a group leader, it's essential to be prepared. Before the group session:

1. **Pray.** God is the one doing the transformation.
2. **Take time to read over the Bible passage.** Write down questions and observations.
3. **Preview the session guide.** Highlight important questions to ask and add your own.
4. **Tap into study resources.** Check outside sources to expand your understanding of the topic. Some recommended resources include: The BibleProject, RightNow Media, and the CCW Resource Center.

During the Session

Share: Take time to review the content from last week. Use this time to check on:

- **Prayer Requests:** Follow up on any prayer requests that were made the previous session.
- **Application and Challenges:** Take time to provide accountability for any goals that the group set the previous week ('This week, I would like to...').

Transition: Introduce the topic (we give you an example each session).

Read It: Read through the Scripture passage. If it's a larger section of scripture, break it into smaller sections and ask questions throughout.

Talk About It: Make sure the passage is understood by:

1. *Retelling* the story in your own words.
2. *Asking review questions.*
3. *Seeking additional questions.* Check to see if your group has additional questions about the passage.

Apply It: The apply it section may have both (a) application questions and (b) challenges. Challenges are real-life ways to put Biblical Truth into effect this week.

Pray Together: Find creative ways to engage your group in prayer.

After the Session

Follow Up: Be present with group members throughout the week by: (1) Reminding them of their application/challenge commitments, (2) Checking in on needs and prayer requests and (3) Finding opportunities to do life together.

Input Group Attendance: Fill out your Group attendance in the ChurchTeams email that you receive.

CHOSEN (IDENTITY P.1)

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- What is something that you have been chosen for (e.g. a team, an award)?
- What does it feel like to be 'chosen' for something?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

In a world full of compromise, unshakeable faith seems almost impossible. But in the story of Daniel, we encounter a group of friends who were committed to following God no matter the personal cost. Over the course of nine weeks, we will look at the factors that helped them to hold onto faith in a fractured world.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Daniel 1**

Talk About It

- (1 - 7) Who was selected for service to the King? What was given to those who were chosen? Why might these men have been given new names?
- (8) What difficult decision did Daniel make? Why might the food defile him?
- (9 - 10) Why was the man overseeing Daniel hesitant to allow him to give up eating the food?
- (11 - 13) What test did Daniel ask the overseer to allow his friends to perform?

- (14 - 16) After the ten day period, what did the overseer discover?
- (17 - 21) What characteristics did God grow in Daniel and his friends? What was the king's impression of these four young men?
- How did God show up when Daniel refused to compromise his convictions?
- What are some facets of our faith that we are asked to compromise in our day and age?
- What are the challenges we may face if we don't go along with the crowd? What is the cost of compromising?
- How have you seen God's blessing in the midst of your faithful pursuit of Him?

Weekly Questions:

- What principles did we discover about becoming a person of unshakeable faith from this passage?
- How might I begin practicing this principle in my life in the upcoming week?

Pray Together

GOD FIRST (IDENTITY P.2)

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- What is an odd dream that you've had?
- Have you ever had a dream that you believe may have meant something more?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

Too often, Christ-followers have a 'multiple kingdom identity disorder'. They belong to God's Kingdom and an earthly kingdom... and the lines get blurred. Today, we'll be looking at how Daniel interacted with the kingdom that he found himself within.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Daniel 2**

Talk About It

- (1 - 3) What was troubling King Nebuchadnezzar?
- (4 - 9) What demand did the king make of his wise men and advisors? What was the cost of failing this challenge?
- (10 - 13) What did the king decide to do because of the wise men's failure?
- (14 - 18) How did Daniel prepare for his meeting with the king?
- (19 - 23) How did Daniel respond when God revealed the king's dream to him?
- (24 - 30) Who did Daniel point to as the source for his interpretation? How did

Daniel honor God in his words?

- (31 - 35) What was the dream of the king?
- (36 - 45) What was Daniel's interpretation of the dream? What did the different layers of the statue represent? What did the crushing stone represent?
- (46 - 49) How did the king honor God, Daniel, and Daniel's friends?
- How did Daniel display his unshakeable faith in this story?
- When have you had to look to God for answers to things you didn't understand?
- When Daniel saw the big picture, what did he discover about all of the kingdoms of this earth?
- How might understanding the king's dream about the smashing stone shape our own kingdom allegiance?

Weekly Questions:

- What principles did we discover about becoming a person of unshakeable faith from this passage?
- How might I begin practicing this principle in my life in the upcoming week?

Pray Together

WORSHIP

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- What is your favorite way to worship?
- Do you have a favorite worship song?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

God covet's our worship. The first two of the Ten Commandments deal specifically with our worship of God (no 'gods' and no 'idols'). But we live in a world that will constantly push us towards the worship of other things. Today we'll look at a story of when Daniel's friends were faced with this very challenge.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Daniel 3**

Talk About It

- (1 - 7) What did the king build? What did he expect people to do when they heard music? What was the cost of failing to worship the idol?
- (8 - 15) What was the accusation that was brought against the three friends?
- (16 - 18) How did the three friends respond to the threats of the king? What claim did they make about God?
- (19 - 23) What happened at the furnace as a result of the king's anger?
- (24 - 27) What event shocked the king?
- (28 - 30) What did the king find amazing

about the faith of the three friends? As a result, what changes did he make to his law?

- What are the range of emotions that you believe the three friends experienced over the course of this story?
- How do we see their unshakeable faith in action?
- As a group, make a list of things that are often worshipped in our culture.
 - Which of these are you sometimes tempted to give your worship to? What does that look like?
 - What would it look like to set aside your worship of this idol and to worship God alone?

Optional: Listen to the song, 'Burn Us Up' by Shane & Shane

Weekly Questions:

- What principles did we discover about becoming a person of unshakeable faith from this passage?
- How might I begin practicing this principle in my life in the upcoming week?

Pray Together

Session Four

HUMILITY

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- What is an accomplishment that you are proud of in your life?
- When has your pride gotten you into trouble?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

Pride stands in the way of unshakeable faith. It puts the 'I' before God, causing us to rely on our own ability, competency, and strength. Instead of turning to God as the answer to our struggles, we turn to ourselves. Today, we'll take a look at a story of a king whose pride caused the topple of an empire.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Daniel 5**

Talk About It

- (1 - 4) What foolish action did the king take at the party that he was hosting?
- (5) What unexpected event halted the party's proceedings?
- (6 - 9) How did the king react to the writing on the wall?
- (10 - 12) How did the queen describe Daniel?
- (13 - 16) What did the king offer to Daniel is he interpreted the mysterious message?
- (17 - 21) What were the consequences of

King Nebuchadnezzar's pride?

- (22 - 23) How did King Belshazzar fail to learn from his father's mistakes?
- (24 - 28) What was Daniel's interpretation of the mysterious message?
- (30 - 31) What was the consequence of the king's pride?
- Why is pride so detrimental to an unshakeable faith?
- How have you seen your own pride become a barrier in your relationship with God?
- What would it look like for you to become a person of humility?

Weekly Questions:

- What principles did we discover about becoming a person of unshakeable faith from this passage?
- How might I begin practicing this principle in my life in the upcoming week?

Pray Together

INTEGRITY

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- When has doing the 'right' thing gotten you into trouble?
- What does it mean to be a person of integrity?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

Integrity is essential to an unshakeable faith because it calls us to obedience even in the darkest of moments. Today, we'll be looking at a time when Daniel's integrity got him into trouble.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Daniel 6**

Talk About It

- (1 - 5) What realization did the other leaders come to regarding Daniel and his character?
- (6 - 9) What law did the leaders place before the king? How were they using this to create a trap for Daniel?
- (10 - 11) What did Daniel do when he heard that the law has been passed?
- (12 - 16) What were the consequences to Daniel because of his actions?
- (16 - 18) How did the king react to Daniel's predicament?
- (19 - 24) In the morning, what did the king

discover at the lion pit?

- (25 - 28) How did the king honor God after this event?
- Why was Daniel unwilling to find other opportunities to pray before God? Why wasn't he willing to search for a compromise?
- How is integrity viewed in our culture? When have you been asked to compromise your integrity?
- Why is integrity so central to an unshakeable faith?
- How can we grow in our ability to choose integrity even in the toughest of situations?

Weekly Questions:

- What principles did we discover about becoming a person of unshakeable faith from this passage?
- How might I begin practicing this principle in my life in the upcoming week?

Pray Together

FUTURE FOCUS

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- What is something that is on your bucket list?
- Would you want to know your entire future? Why or why not?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

An unshakeable faith is rooted in knowing the future. This won't be a detailed account of the events of your life - but a confidence in God's master plan and the victory that Jesus has already won. In our study, we're going to look at a series of visions that Daniel had that reinforced his faith in God.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Daniel 7**

Talk About It

- (1) When did Daniel have this series of visions?
- (2 - 8) In his vision, Daniel saw four different beasts. What was each beast described? What do you think is the meaning of this vision? How would you react to receiving a vision like this?
- (9 - 10) How does Daniel describe the figure of the 'Ancient of Days'?
- (11 - 12) What happened to the beasts when the Ancient of Days took his throne?
- (13 - 14) Who came to the Ancient of Days?

What was given to this person? What do you think is happening in this portion of the vision?

- (15 - 16) Why was Daniel anxious and alarmed?
- (17 - 18) What interpretation of this vision was Daniel given?
- (19 - 22) How does Daniel describe the fourth beasts? What actions did it take?
- (23 - 28) What interpretation was Daniel given regarding the fourth beast?
- Speculation aside, what can we learn from these visions?
- **Read Matthew 20:28 and Matthew 9:6.** What title does Jesus claim for Himself in these passages?
- What does it mean for Jesus to be the 'Son of Man' in Daniel?
- How might knowing these things about Jesus' ensured future victory grow your faith? Why is this the most important thing that we can know about the future?

Weekly Questions:

- What principles did we discover about becoming a person of unshakeable faith from this passage?
- How might I begin practicing this principle in my life in the upcoming week?

Pray Together

DIVINE PERSPECTIVE

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- When is a time that your perspective has changed about a person, event, or situation? How did that perspective change shift your attitude towards that thing?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

It may go without saying, but our perspective is limited. We can only see so far. And too often we carry in our own biases and attitudes. But we follow a God that sees the whole picture - He has perfect perspective. An unshakeable faith comes from having knowing that God has everything under control.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Daniel 8**

Talk About It

- (1 - 2) When did Daniel receive this vision?
- (3 - 4) How does Daniel describe the first of the animals that he saw?
- (5) How does Daniel describe the second animal that he saw?
- (6 - 7) What happened when the ram and the goat encountered one another?
- (8 - 9) What happened to the horn of the goat?
- (10 - 12) What did the 'little horn' do as it grew in power?

- (13 - 14) What would be the sign of the fulfilment of this vision?
- Before moving on to the interpretation, what might this vision mean? In Scripture, the image of a 'horn' is often used of a ruler or kingdom. How might that shape your understanding of this vision?
- (15 - 17) Who arrived to interpret the vision for Daniel?
- (18 - 21) Who does the ram in the vision represent? Who does the goat represent?
- (22 - 26) Who does the 'little horn' represent? What will happen to this horn?
- Why do you believe God chooses to communicate to Daniel in these vivid images?
- While this vision may be difficult to understand, what it shows us is that God sees the big picture. How might understanding this idea lead to an unshakeable faith?
- Why doesn't God fill us in on the specifics of His overarching perspective?

Weekly Questions:

- What principles did we discover about becoming a person of unshakeable faith from this passage?
- How might I begin practicing this principle in my life in the upcoming week?

Pray Together

PRAYER (CONFESSION)

Icebreaker

Spend some time opening conversation with this question:

- Where do you find yourself praying most often? What do you pray about most often?

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

Unshakeable faith comes alongside the understanding that God hears our prayers. In this session, we will look at a prayer that Daniel desperately communicates to God.

Read It

Scripture reference: **Daniel 9**

Talk About It

- (1 - 3) What was Daniel distraught about? How did he approach God?
- (4 - 6) What had the people of Israel done wrong? Why does Daniel make this confession on their behalf?
- (7 - 10) According to Daniel, what belongs to Israel as a result of their disobedience? What belongs to God?
- (11 - 12) How was this punishment proving God to be true to His Word?
- (13 - 15) For what reason was God allowing this calamity/disaster to continue to be experienced by the Israelites?
- (16 - 19) What does Daniel pray for God to do?

- (20 - 23) Who comes to Daniel with a message?
- (24 - 27) This vision includes mysterious time markers (weeks or heptads). What are the events that will occur over the period of this time?
- Why do you think that God gave Daniel another vision in answer to his prayer?
- When have you interceded for another person before God? Why might this be an important practice?
- When have you experienced God answering your prayers in unexpected ways?

Weekly Questions:

- What principles did we discover about becoming a person of unshakeable faith from this passage?
- How might I begin practicing this principle in my life in the upcoming week?

Pray Together

A GOD-SHAPED LIFE

Transition

Transition your group into the study by saying something like:

In the book of Daniel, we've seen Daniel and his friends live out an unshakeable faith. This faith was rooted in God, but was strengthened through prayer, a God-shaped vision of history, and the integrity of the faithful. In the last few chapters of the book, Daniel is given a series of visions that point to the future: the rise of the Greek and Roman empires; the Maccabean revolt; the destruction of the Temple. As we wrap up this series, we'll look review principles that make us a people of unshakeable faith.

Talk About It

Stand Strong: Ephesians 6:10 - 13

- What should we put on in order to stand strong? What is the 'Armor of God'?
- What do we stand strong against?

Resist the Adversary: 1 Peter 5:8 - 10

- How does Peter describe Satan?
- What is Peter's prescription to overcoming the plan's of the adversary?

A Mature Body: Ephesians 4:11 - 16

- What did Jesus give to His people so that they might be built up?
- How are we told that we will avoid being 'tossed back and forth'?
- According to the author of Ephesians, what does Christian maturity look like?

Facing Temptation: 1 Corinthians 11:12 - 13

- What are the truths that we should hold on to as we face temptation?

Unswerving Hope: Hebrews 10:19 - 25

- Why can we draw near to God confidently?
- What is the 'hope' that we are called to profess?
- According to the writer of Hebrews, what does that 'hope' look like in an actionable sense?

Weekly Questions:

- What principles did we discover about becoming a person of unshakeable faith from this passage?
- How might I begin practicing this principle in my life in the upcoming week?

Pray Together

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **RIGHTNOW MEDIA**

Get a free RightNow Media account to get access to thousands of study resources. Some potential resources include:

- **The Book of Daniel: Exile, Identity, and the God who Saves** (Shane Wood): Shane J. Wood, Dean of Graduate Studies and professor of New Testament studies at Ozark Christian College, paints a picture of the fate of evil and good. The questions that you will wrestle with in this study are who are you and who you worship. Once you have determined those answers, you will know what to do and where to go regardless of your circumstances.
- **Daniel and Esther: Living for God in a Foreign Land** (Ernesto Duke): What can we learn about living as exiles? What are Daniel's prophecies all about? Is Esther a role model? Why is her experience in exile so different from Daniel's? Engaging God's Word is an in-depth exploration of the Bible, designed to help you make sense of what you're reading and help you find your place in God's great unfolding story. Originally developed for students at Eternity Bible College, these courses have been adapted from our year-long Old Testament Survey to fit seamlessly into the busiest of schedules. Whether you watch on your own, or in a small group setting, these quick, engaging videos will help take you deeper into God's Word.

- **THE BIBLE PROJECT** (www.thebibleproject.com)

The Bible Project offers a variety of amazing resources. These videos expand on many of the ideas that we have touched on in this series.