

# UNSHAKEABLE

## AGAINST ALL ODDS

### WEEK 2: PRESSURED TO CONFORM

*"Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but the Lord tests the heart." -Proverbs 17:3 (NLT)*

You're a teenager whose whole community has just been taken captive. You and your three closest friends now serve the leader of the captors. You're away from your parents for the first time; your entire way of living has been changed along with your name and even your diet. The pressure to go along with what the king wants you to do is overwhelming. How will you withstand it? This is the story of Daniel, who, as a teenager, was so confident in who God had made him to be that he resolved not to conform. How did he do it?

## OPENING PRAYER

*"Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings."*  
-Proverbs 22:29a

1. If you asked a coworker to describe your work style or reputation, what do you believe they would share with you? What would you want coworkers to say about your work?

*"When you stand before the king, don't try to impress him and pretend to be important."*  
-Proverbs 25:6

2. Describe a time when someone was pushy or belligerent in their demands to you. How did that make you feel? Now, talk about a time when someone had a humble attitude. Which one were you more interested in fulfilling and why?

*"We reject all shameful and underhanded methods. We don't try to trick anyone or distort the word of God. We tell the truth before God, and all who are honest know that."*

-2 Corinthians 4:2

3. What behaviors in 2 Corinthians 4:2 are we encouraged to embrace and how do they help guard against being deceitful or manipulative?

*"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."*-Philippians 2:3-4

4. When you have a new idea or project to present, how can applying Philippians 2:3-4 help you be successful in making your argument?

*"A wise, mature person is known for his understanding. The more pleasant his words, the more persuasive he is."*-Proverbs 16:21

5. When making a case to an authority, it is important to choose the right place, time, and words. Recall a time when choosing pleasant words led to success. Why is it important for Christians to choose their words carefully?

*"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."*-Romans 8:28

If your appeal is rejected, trust God that He let that happen for a reason. How can knowing God's promises help you to hold on in the face of apparent failure? There are more than 700 promises that God has given us in the Bible. Spend time over the next week finding a promise to claim.

## **DIVING DEEPER (optional)**

Read Daniel 1:8-19 together. How did Daniel exhibit the six characteristics we discussed in this lesson?

- Develop a reputation for being responsible.
- Be humble, not belligerent.
- Don't be deceptive or manipulative.
- Appeal to the authorities' goals and interest.
- Choose the right place, time, and words.
- Trust God if they reject your appeal.

What steps can you take toward developing these characteristics into your life? Where will you start?

**Prayer requests and closing prayer.**