UNSHAKEABLE
AGAINST ALL ODDS
WEEK 6: WHEN GOD TESTS YOU WITH SUCCESS

"If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. (Before every blessing there's a testing.) *And if you are not faithful with other people's things, why should you be trusted with things of your own?"* -Luke 16:10,12

One of the ways God tests us is with success. It's a test of our character to see if we can handle our success rather than allowing it to become dangerous to our souls. It's really a question of whether we can handle praise and financial benefits properly, and many of us are not good at it. As the leader of the Babylonian empire, King Nebuchadnezzar was the most successful man in the world at that time (Daniel Chapter 4). But with pride, ego, and arrogance, he took all the credit for his success and never acknowledged God's role in his life. In this discussion, we'll use King Nebuchadnezzar's experience as an example of how success gets us into trouble and learn the steps we need to take toward recovery.

OPENING PRAYER

Open your group with a prayer. This is only a guide – select the points you want to discuss.

"I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at home in my palace, contented and prosperous." -Daniel 4:4

1. When we are richly blessed, we ought to be praising God for His gifts. Why is it that during our most successful times we tend to focus less on God?

"This is the interpretation, Your Majesty, and this is the decree the Most High has issued against my lord the king: You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals; you will eat grass like the ox and be drenched with the dew of heaven." -Daniel 4:24-25

2. Share some reasons someone might head down a destructive path and not heed God's warnings.

"Therefore, Your Majesty, be pleased to accept my advice: Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue." -Daniel 4:27

3. Even when others have advised us, why do you think we put off doing what we know is right?

"At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored." -Daniel 4:34a

4. What are some practical steps we can take to "look up to heaven" instead of focusing on ourselves and on other things?

"My sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever." -Daniel 4:34b

5. Success can lead us into temptations that take our focus off worshipping God, but we get better when we replace pride with praise. What have we made more important than getting our focus back to God by worship, by a consistent quiet time, or by participating in a small group?

"To the nations and peoples of every language, who live in all the earth: May you prosper greatly! It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me." -Daniel 4:1-2

6. If you have recovered from something such as an addiction, or if God has saved you in another way, whom are you telling about it? Or do you find it embarrassing to share your experience with others? Since embarrassment is a pride issue, how can we overcome that?

DIVING DEEPER (optional)

1. Serving the poor obviously helps oppressed people, but what are possible benefits to you and benefits to God?

2. What is one thing you could do differently as a result of accepting the truth that God's kingdom will outlast everything you do in your life?

3. Daniel 4:35 says, *"He does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: 'What have you done?'"* Since God is all powerful, why do we question what He does rather than ask him what He is teaching us?

Prayer requests and closing prayer.