

## Leader's Guide for Sunday, March 12, 2017

### Unshakeable: When God Tests You with Success

#### Announcements:

April 29 is our #4Lincoln "Day of Service." Ask your Life Group to hold this ½ day open (morning). More details will be coming, but if you know how large your group will be, you will be ready to choose an activity.

#### Quick Review:

After hearing Mark's message, how would you react to the following statement? "Success is as much a test in your life as is suffering."

#### My Story:

- If someone says to you, "I have good news, and I have bad news," which do you want to hear first? Why?
- Describe the most humbling experience in your life. What did you learn from it?
- [Is there those in your group who, because of their career, has to deliver bad news on a regular basis? How do they handle these situations?](#)

#### Digging Deeper:

1. In Daniel 4:27, after Daniel has given Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of the dream, Daniel tells the king to repent, and maybe God won't do this to you (my paraphrase). Does this mean God would change His mind? Does God ever change His mind? Look up the following verses that seem to come down on two sides of this issue. How do you reconcile these ideas?
  - Verses that seem to say God changes His mind: Jeremiah 18:7-11; The Book of Jonah (especially Jonah 3:10); Genesis 6:6 (God was sorry He made man.); Exodus 32:14
  - Verses that say God does not change (or, change His mind): Numbers 23:19; Malachi 3:6; Psalm 102:25-27; James 1:17
  - [From John Piper: God's responses are not like man's. They are never based on ignorance of what you and I will do. He foresees our changes and knows the perfect response to each change, and plans to respond according to his own perfect wisdom and righteousness and goodness and power to maintain his plan and purpose in the world. This is not the way humans respond. "God is not man that he should lie or change his mind" \(1 Sam. 15:29\). In other words, God's variations, as we experience them, are part of a unified and unchanging plan to accomplish his great purposes in the world.](#)
  - [Anthropopathism is a figure of speech in which the feelings or thought processes of finite humanity are ascribed to the infinite God. It's a way to help us understand God's work from a human perspective. In \[Genesis 6:6\]\(#\) specifically, we understand](#)

God's sorrow over man's sin. God obviously did not reverse His decision to create man. The fact that we are alive today is proof that God did not "change His mind" about the creation.

2. 1 John 2:16 lists three "downfall causers." Read this verse and put these three issues in your own words.
  - The Bible gives us examples of people who failed after success (Moses, David, Solomon, for example); those who failed then succeeded (Peter, James), and those who handled success well (Joseph, Esther).
  - Of the three mentioned above who failed after success, which "downfall causer" would you say is illustrated by their story? (Use your general knowledge of these stories, or find the stories: Moses- Numbers 20:8-13; David- 2 Samuel 11; Solomon -1 Kings 11.)
  - Read through the Moses section in Numbers 20. Was it fair of God to punish Moses after everything Moses had done for God and the Israelites? Why did God come down so hard on Moses for what might look to us like a minor infraction?  
Leaders: There is no right answer here. Give your group an opportunity to discuss.

#### Taking it Home:

1. What test of success are you facing (failing?) in life right now? Are you handling it well? What would you do to handle it better?
2. At the close of Mark's sermon, he discussed four things that Nebuchadnezzar learned about God. The 2<sup>nd</sup> was that God's approval matters more than all other's approval. Whose approval do you seek? Why do you think that is?
3. Nebuchadnezzar had his (big!) issues, but it looks like he finished strong. What attitudes do you need to have towards God and others to finish strong?