

FOREWORD

BY GARY THOMPSON

Growing up, I didn't really know what love was. My dad struggled with alcoholism, and my parents divorced when I was just 10. From then on, life was a series of moves, bouncing between my mom, my aunt, and my dad. It left me feeling insecure, always wondering if I belonged, struggling socially, and questioning if anyone really cared.

Then through Little League I met a family who invited me and my brothers to church. Every Sunday, they'd offer to pick us up, no questions asked. They weren't pushy or preachy—they were simply kind. And their kindness sparked a thought in me: *If Jesus loves me and He's real... I'll follow Him.* That single thought changed everything. I met Him, found that He is real, and discovered that He truly does love me. I gave my life to Him, and in return, He transformed mine.

After I accepted Jesus, I felt a call to ministry. It took me by surprise since I really didn't grow up in the church. But God had a plan, and I followed it. I went to Atlanta Christian College, started in youth ministry, and eventually moved into full-time ministry as a pastor. I love being a pastor. The greatest joy of my life is watching lives transformed by Jesus. At our church, we say, "Come as you are." It doesn't matter where people have been or what they've done; we just know

that Jesus is the answer. Watching our church grow has been an incredible blessing. After years as a mobile church, we're now rooted in one building, which means we can pour our energy into serving people instead of setting up and tearing down every week.

I don't have one of those wild, life-altering storms that some people face, but I won't say it's always been easy. There have been plenty of challenges—processing my insecurities, a premature child, heartbreak from losing adult family members, and guiding a church through COVID. But through every storm, I've learned to hold onto Jesus. We all face storms, big or small, and each time I've found He's right there with me, enough to get me through. That's what makes us unshakable. Jesus gives us the hope to keep looking forward, to trust that there's something beyond what we can see. He carries us through our storms and, as Ephesians 3:20 says, "He is able to do far more than we can ask, think, or imagine."

What I love most about this book, *Unshakable*, is that it reminds us of this truth: no storm is too big or too small for God. Whether it's finances, illness, loss, or just the daily grind of life, Jesus offers us a solid foundation. Nelson's book is a guide to finding that foundation for yourself. There's a chapter in here for every type of storm, a reminder that no matter what you're facing, God is with you. He understands, too. Jesus became human, faced our storms, and endured our struggles so that He can walk through them with us. He empathizes with us and is right there, holding us up when we feel weak.

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I've had the privilege of working with Nelson for over a year now as my mentor, and I can tell you that his heart for this message is real. This isn't just a book; it's a tool for finding hope and holding onto faith when things feel shaky. And I believe that no matter where you are on your journey, you'll find something in these pages that speaks to your heart.

So, to anyone out there wondering if they're strong enough, wondering if they can make it through—know this: you don't have to stand alone. Jesus is your strength, your refuge, your anchor in every storm. And with Him, you can be unshakable.

Your eternity starts now,

Gary Thompson

Lead Pastor

Life Now Church