

F O R E W O R D B Y

Jimmy Britt

I had a friend in High School who had a pet parakeet. I don't remember the bird's name so I'll just call him Pauli. I never paid much attention to Pauli until one spring afternoon my friend and I ran out to get a bite of dinner. He left Pauli in his cage sitting on the front porch of his house so he could get some fresh air while we were out. When we returned, about an hour later, a neighbor's cat had dragged the birdcage – with Pauli INSIDE – all over the front lawn. He couldn't get Pauli out of the cage to eat him but it was not for a lack of trying. I have no idea how long that cat tortured poor Pauli, but what I do know is that Pauli was never the same again. The most obvious change is that Pauli stopped singing. He was so shaken from the experience with the cat that he lost his song.

We all deal with problems in life. But there are the storms in life – the really wild ones – that have a way of shaking us to our core. Like when your spouse says to you, “I don't love you anymore. I want a divorce.” Or when you get the doctor's report from your tests that the lump in your breast is cancer. Or maybe your storm is the loss of a job, a

bankruptcy, or the death of a dream. These are the types of storms that really push us around, shake us up and blow us away. They threaten to steal our joy – and like Pauli – take away our song.

I can certainly relate to these types of storms. In 1999, my wife, Karen, and I started Rocky River Church in Concord, North Carolina (in the Greater Charlotte Metro area). We started in our living room with eight people and now there are hundreds of people who call Rocky River Church their “home church.” Through the years there have been many great times but there have been some really tough times, too. In fact, there were storms that shook our lives and even made us doubt our faith. In all honesty, we have faced most of the storms described in this book. It is only by the grace of God that we are still standing today. Through our own storms and trials we have learned to trust in Jesus, who says in John 16:33: *“I have told you all of this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.”*

I am so glad you picked up this book, UNSHAKABLE, by Nelson Searcy. Nelson is the Founding and Lead Pastor of The Journey Church, a multi-site church with locations in New York City and Boca Raton, Florida. I have been friends with Nelson since our undergraduate college days. Not only is he one of my best friends, he is also my coach and a trusted mentor. He has written this book to address some of the most common struggles we all face in life, whether you are leading a church, raising a family, battling doubts,

facing an illness, or in a relationship crisis – among other struggles. I am grateful to partner with Nelson to offer this practical book to help you grow in your faith and to stand strong when things go wrong.

Unshakable Blessings,
Jimmy Britt, Founding and Lead Pastor
Rocky River Church