



# STARTING OVER

## NEW STARTS.

Hey guys. Emilie here.

When I was in high school, my dad took a new job which meant we had to move from Michigan to Texas.

The south was a foreign land.

No one knew I was referring to carbonated sugar drinks when I used the word, "pop."

Strangers struck up conversations in lines, registers, and parking lots. Instead of sweaters and hot cocoa, my first Christmas in the south consisted of shorts, tank tops, and sandals.

It was a new start I didn't ask for and it took awhile to adjust.

Like me, Daniel was forced to go to a foreign land - but along with new languages and customs, his *faith* was attacked from every angle.

But Daniel didn't falter. He prayed as he always had, even facing death. He surrounded himself with friends who were equally faithful (Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.) And in turn, God was faithful to all of them.

New starts can be tedious, scary, and doubt-filled - but even in those moments, if we seek God, we will find Him. And that's a promise.

# IN THE BIBLE.

## **Daniel 3:16-18**

16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. 17 If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. 18 But even if he doesn’t, we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.”

## **Daniel 6:6-10**

6 So the administrators and high officers went to the king and said, “Long live King Darius! 7 We are all in agreement—we administrators, officials, high officers, advisers, and governors—that the king should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the den of lions. 8 And now, Your Majesty, issue and sign this law so it cannot be changed, an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked.” 9 So King Darius signed the law.

10 But when Daniel learned that the law had been signed, he went home and knelt down as usual in his upstairs room, with its windows open toward Jerusalem. He prayed three times a day, just as he had always done, giving thanks to his God.

## **Jeremiah 29:13**

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

## **Romans 5:1-5**

Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. 2 Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and

joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

3 We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. 4 And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. 5 And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

## QUESTIONS.

1. Have you ever had to have a new start, wanted or unwanted? What was that like?
2. What can we learn from Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego about new starts?
3. Is there something you need to start anew this year? How can you begin to walk forward in that? How can this group help you with that?

**Whenever you read the Bible, ask yourself these three questions:**

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about yourself and the world?
3. How is this going to change who you are and how you live?