

**Be Bold Like Shadrach,  
Meshach & Abednego**  
Supplement to **BAD TO THE BONE** by Miles McPherson

## Table of Contents

<b><i>Introduction: BAD TO THE BONE by Miles McPherson</i></b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b><i>Be Bold Like Shadrach, Meshach &amp; Abednego</i></b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>"Want to Be Promoted?" – An Illustration</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Rolling Uphill? .....	4
<b>"Make A Commitment Not to Bow" – An Illustration</b> .....	<b>5</b>
God's Protection .....	5
<b>"Closer Than A Brother" – An Illustration</b> .....	<b>6</b>
A Balanced Life .....	6
<b>"Holy Limits" – A Parable</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Numbed-Heart Parable .....	7
<b>"Peer Pressure" – A Story</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Wang Ming-Tao: Honesty .....	8

# Introduction: BAD TO THE BONE

## by Miles McPherson

**BAD TO THE BONE**, is about “fifteen young Bible heroes who lived radical lives for God.” Miles McPherson helps teenagers to relate to the struggles and victories of these young people in the Bible, and to connect with them as peers and even “role models”. He encourages teens to know that their problems and temptations are the same ones that teenagers have faced for thousands of years...and the Bible gives timeless hope and advice for conquering them!

### “The Fine Print” Quote from McPherson

Okay, before the truth police come knocking, I need to tell you that even though th(e) book shines a spotlight on teenagers in the Bible, not everyone featured here is necessarily between the ages of thirteen and nineteen. Some are younger . . . For others we don’t know their exact ages, partly because Hebrew and Greek words for children are sometimes imprecise...All in all, though, the stories in th(e) book feature young people or the lessons they learned when they were young.

The **Bad to the Bone** devotional is set up primarily to be used Monday through Friday. But, as McPherson states,

“. . . rebels for God don’t take weekends off. That’s why I’ve included an important section each week called **Weekend Warriors**. Here, too, you’ll learn about young people in the Bible. But there’s a twist. Not all of them are positive role models; just like the kids around you today, some are living for God, others are not. Either way, you can learn from their victories and their mistakes.”

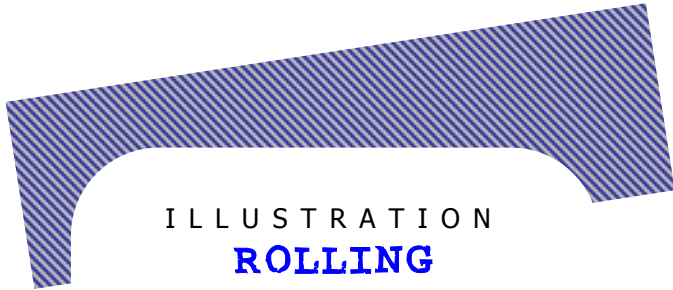
**Here’s Life Inner City is please to present the following material which contains games, read-aloud biographical stories, illustrations, experiential activities and questions that supplement the daily devotionals in Bad to the Bone.**

# Be Bold Like Shadrach, Meshach & Abednego

## INTRODUCTION

You will continue studying the book of Daniel, mostly chapter 3.

Choose a time with your students during the week to watch the *Veggie Tale* movie, "Rach, Shack & Benny...A Lesson in Handling Peer Pressure", a funny version of this story that even teenagers will love.



## **"Want to Be Promoted?" – An Illustration**

# **Rolling Uphill?**

ILLUSTRATION

## **ROLLING UPHILL?**

**Interject this activity  
before the  
"Interaction" on page  
176 of BAD TO THE BONE**

### **What's Gonna Happen:**

You will use an object's "center of gravity" to show kids that what "appears" to be getting them ahead in life may be false or a deception, and that only God's way is right.

### **What You Need:**

2 stacks of books, one stack about 6 inches high and the other stack about 12 inches high

2 yardsticks

2 funnels that are the same size, taped together at the large end with masking tape

### **What You Do:**

Set the 2 stacks of books about thirty inches apart on the floor.

Make a "track" by taping the 2 yardsticks together across one end.

Put the taped end of the yardsticks on the shorter stack of books.

Spread the untapped ends of the yardsticks apart a few inches, and put those ends on the taller stack of books.

Make a "car" by taping the 2 funnels together at the large end.

### **What You Say:**

Are you ever in situations in which you feel pressured to do the wrong thing? How do you make the right decision?

We're going to do an experiment that shows us that sometimes, wrong decisions might appear to be right. I'm going to put my "car" (hold up the taped funnels) on this track close to the shorter stack of books. What do you think will happen? Why?

(Set the car on the track close to the shorter stack of books, and let the car go. It should move toward the taller stack of books.) What happened? Why do you think the car moved up? Did it really move up? No, the car didn't really move up. Gravity always pulls things down, so it's impossible for the car to move up. Why did the car look like it was rolling uphill? Watch again, this time from the side. Do you see that as the track got wider and wider, the center of the car got lower and lower? The car was really moving downhill. It only appeared to roll uphill.

How is this like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's decision to NOT follow the crowd and be defiled by the King's delicacies? And as you will read tomorrow in Daniel 3, how is this like their decision to NOT bow to the idol, even though that SEEMED like the only way to get ahead in the Babylonian society? Pressure to do something that is wrong to you may seem like it will get you ahead, but in the end, only God's way works, as these young Hebrews found out.

Rolling Uphill? is adapted from [Amazing Science](#), pp.57-58 edited by Julie Meiklejohn ©1999 Group Publishing Inc.



ILLUSTRATION  
**GOD'S  
PROTECTION**

Interject this  
illustration after the  
“Memory Verse” on page  
178 of **BAD TO THE BONE**

**What's Gonna Happen:**

You will submerge paper under  
water, and the paper will stay dry.

**What You Need:**

Small clear drinking glass, about  
6-8 ounces

Large bowl (clear is best but not  
essential) containing at least 6  
inches of water

Piece of plain white paper

Marker

**What You Do:**

Have each student write his/ her  
name on the piece of paper

Wad up the paper and push it to  
the bottom of the glass

Invert the glass (upside down)  
and push into water

Raise glass, remove and unfold  
dry paper.

You may want to practice once or  
twice to be sure it works for you.

**“Make A Commitment Not to Bow” –  
An Illustration**

**God's Protection**

**What You Say:**

We just read about “Rack, Shack, and Benny’s”  
incredibly bold decision to be thrown into the fiery  
furnace because they would not bow to the idol!  
How did God respond to their bold decision?

Just as God was with them, He also is with us today  
and has His angels watching over us. The Bible says  
in Psalms 91:11 that He has given His angels the job  
of protecting and caring for us and watching over us  
in all our ways.

This piece of paper is going to represent you, so I  
want each of you to write your name on it. This  
glass is like one of God’s angels, and the bowl of  
water is like anything that might harm us... it could  
represent the fiery furnace for our three Hebrew  
friends.

Let’s crumple “you” up a bit, and let’s put “you” in  
the care of God’s angels. “You” are now ready to  
face the world and all of its potential dangers.  
(Invert the glass and put it into the bowl. While the  
glass is in the water, continue to talk.) Can you see  
what is happening? Is the water getting to the  
paper?

(Remove and unfold the paper.) No way. Not a drop  
of water on the paper. So remember in the same  
way the glass protected the paper, and God’s angels  
protected Rack, Shack and Benny, so He will send His  
angels to watch over and protect each of YOU when  
you make bold decisions to live for Him.



ILLUSTRATION  
**A BALANCED  
LIFE**

Interject this illustration after the third paragraph on page 179 of **BAD TO THE BONE**

**What's Gonna Happen:**

You will use a quarter to balance two forks on the top of a bottle.

**What You Need:**

- 2 identical forks
- 2 strips of paper, 2 inches by 6 inches each
- A quarter
- A bottle (any kind)
- Clear tape

**What You Do:**

On one strip of paper write the word "God" vertically, and on the other strip write the word "friends" vertically.

Face the tines of the two forks toward each other. Align the tines so that the quarter can be put in the top gap. Overlap the tines as much as you can.

Set the edge of the quarter on the edge of the bottle top. If all goes well, the whole set-up will stay put – a real "balancing act".

After practicing a time or two, tape the paper strips onto the forks. Now, practice with the added weight of the strips.

**"Closer Than A Brother" – An  
Illustration  
A Balanced Life**

**What You Say:**

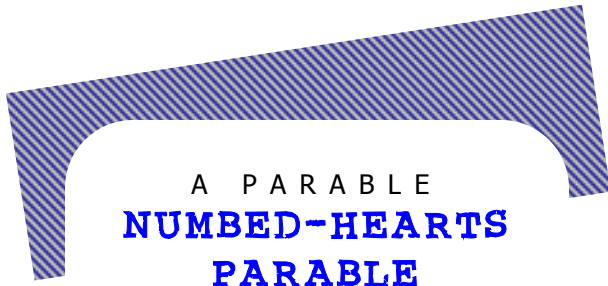
Here's an illustration of what Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego provided for each other.

Let's imagine that one of them is this quarter, and life is this bottle. Now, do you think this quarter (one of our young Hebrews) could balance on the very edge of the bottle top? You don't think so, huh? Well, let's try it. (Try balancing just the quarter.) You're right, it won't stay.

But with the encouragement and commitment of his friends to stick together, perhaps he will be able to make it. Here are two forks. One represents God, and the other represents the other two buddies. With God on one side and committed Christian friends to stand with us on the other side, we don't have to fall to temptation or peer pressure. Let's put them all together – see, it balances. It does fall; it doesn't bow down.

Each one provided balance for each of the others. Do you have friends who will support, encourage, and balance you? Are you that same kind of friend to them? It won't work without both.

A Balanced Life is adapted from [Simple Science](#), pp.23-24 by Heno Head, Jr. ©1997 Standard Publishing Cincinnati, Ohio



A P A R A B L E  
**NUMBED-HEARTS**  
**PARABLE**

Interject this parable  
before the “Interaction”  
on page 182 of  
**BAD TO THE BONE**

“Holy Limits” – A Parable  
**Numbed-Heart**  
**Parable**

**Read the following parable aloud (or  
ask a student to read it aloud)**

The effect of sin on a person’s heart is like the woman who fell in love with a beautiful jewel. The jewel was secured on a golden stand in the middle of a grand auditorium, with one powerful light shining down on all its brilliance. The jewel was so revered...that (it was agreed that) anyone who entered the room had to remove his or her shoes and could only gaze at it from a distance.

Since the jewel could not be moved from its place, the woman decided to move closer and marvel at the jewel there on its stand.

As the woman approached the jewel, she did not realize the floor was embedded with razor-sharp shards of glass that protruded from the floor. She was so enraptured by the jewel’s beauty that at first she didn’t even notice the deep cuts on her feet from the shards. Then, suddenly screaming in pain, the woman fled from the jewel and fell to the ground because of the pain in her feet.

At first she didn’t want to get up ever again, but soon the beauty of the jewel enticed her to rise. And once again she crossed the shard-filled floor to gaze at the jewel. And again the shards cut into her feet. She ran back to a safe distance a second time, but before long, the beauty of the jewel made her forget about the glass shards, so she walked on them again to get to the jewel.

This went on and on until the woman had lost all feeling in her feet. There she stood, marveling at the jewel while her numb feet rested on the sharp spikes of glass.

And she bled to death.

**Although we may see the danger of sin at first**, if we don’t heed the warnings of our conscience, our hearts soon become numb to sin’s effects, and eventually they overtake us. But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to give even one inch of compromise to sin. “Not one inch, dude, not one inch.”

**Numbed-Hearts Parable** is adapted from Body Builders, p. 46 by Michael D. Warden ©1998 Group Publishing Inc.



STORY  
**WANG MING-TAO:  
HONESTY**

**Interject this story  
before the “Interaction”  
on page 184 of  
BAD TO THE BONE**

**“Peer Pressure” – A Story**  
**Wang Ming-Tao:  
Honesty**

**Read the following story aloud (or ask  
a student to read it aloud)**

Wang Ming-Tao was born in China in 1900. He didn't want to be in full-time ministry because pastors in China received poor salaries, and they weren't respected. But in 1918, Wang came down with a sickness that almost took his life. While he was ill, he promised God he would go into ministry if he survived the illness. Wang survived, and he kept his promise.

Wang started a Christian church that faced many difficulties over the years. During the Sino-Japanese War from 1937 to 1945, the Chinese city of Peking fell under the control of the Japanese enemies. The Japanese-led “Christian church” pressured Wang to join its ranks, but he refused because he did not believe the same things about God that they did. He made this decision knowing that he would probably be killed for his stand. In fact, Wang kept a coffin in his house in preparation for the response of this Japanese group. Miraculously, they never took action against him.

In 1949, the communists came to power in China. The communist government heavily persecuted the Chinese Christian church. Strict rules were imposed on the church, and many church leaders were imprisoned. Wang Ming-Tao stood strong and continued as a leader in the Chinese church, until he too was put into prison by the communist government. While in prison, Wang faced endless questioning and interrogation. He was a prominent Christian leader, and the government knew that breaking Wang would really hurt the church. So the officials pressed, persecuted, and badgered Wang until he was so exhausted that he confessed to resisting state control of the church. Because he “confessed” what they wanted to hear him say, the government released him from prison.

After his release, Wang Ming-Tao regretted his decision to sign the confession. He felt that cooperation with the torture tactics of communist intimidation was a betrayal of his Lord. While he dreaded returning to the harassment and persecution of the Chinese prison, he felt he had to be completely honest and upright before God. So Wang and his wife appeared before the government and revoked (took back) their confessions. As they expected, they were both quickly thrown into prison for their bold honesty, and they remained there for the next twenty years!

Do you think Wang made the right choice when he revoked (took back) his confession? Would you have made the same choice? Why do you think Wang signed the confession in the first place? Think about the last lie you told. Why did you break the truth?



**Proverbs 29:25** says that most dishonesty comes from fearing people more than fearing God. For example, sometimes we lie to avoid getting in trouble. Sometimes we lie to make others think highly of us. Other times we lie to get our way with people. But if we fear God, we must be honest. Like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, Wang knew that God's opinion and judgment are much more important than that of anyone else.

Wang Ming-Tao - **Honesty** is adapted from Character Counts, p. 46-47 by Karl Leuthauser ©1999 Group Publishing Inc.