

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES *for* LEADERSHIP AT WORK

RAISE THE BAR ON INTEGRITY



workmatters®

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INTEGRITY

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RAISE THE BAR ON INTEGRITY was written by Workmatters' David Roth and Catherine Gates, published by Workmatters, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit launched in 2003 in Fayetteville, Ark. Our mission is to help you pursue God's purpose for your work. These studies help you push beyond sitting in rows at events where you learn, to sitting in circles in groups where you grow.

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Participant,

Congratulations for taking this step to grow as **a leader of high integrity!** We truly believe you'll be blessed beyond your expectations as you learn from Daniel's example of leadership and begin applying the biblical leadership principles he demonstrated to your own life and work.

We're confident you'll gain insights on how you can raise the bar on your integrity at work through this study and the discussions you have in your group. When you act on those insights and apply the **leadership principles** you learn, your work will go from being ordinary to extraordinary. You'll experience even greater growth as you share what you learn in community with other believers.

Workmatters wants to be a resource for you long after you complete this Workmatters Study. Be sure to visit our website at workmatters.org to discover additional resources to support your biblical leadership growth.

We pray that this study helps you tap into the power of integrity at work while also helping you pursue God's purpose for your work!

Your work matters,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Roth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Roth
President & CEO
email: droth@workmatters.org

**“ Whatever you do,
work at it with all your
heart, as working for
the Lord, not for human
masters, since you know
that you will receive an
inheritance from the Lord
as a reward. It is the Lord
Christ you are serving. ”**

- Colossians 3:23-24

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“ So whether you eat
or drink or whatever
you do, do it all for the
glory of God. ”

- 1 Corinthians 10:31

Introduction

The stories in the Bible can teach us how to work and live today. But it can be challenging to see how we can learn from people who lived thousands of years ago in another culture. They were very different times with very different people doing very different work—or were they?

WHY DANIEL?

The book of Daniel begins in 605 B.C. King Nabopolassar led Babylon in its defeat of the Assyrians, taking control of the entire region. Nabopolassar died in 605 B.C. and his son, Nebuchadnezzar, took the throne. One of his first acts was to besiege Jerusalem. God delivered the king of Judah, Jehoiakim, into his hands. Nebuchadnezzar took the silver and gold articles from the temple and placed them in the treasury of his god.

Nebuchadnezzar took many Hebrew youths captive, including Daniel and his three friends. The young men were probably around 14 or 15 years old and had to travel more than 800 miles from their home to get to Babylon. Once there, they would be groomed so that they could serve Nebuchadnezzar in his kingdom.

The culture of Babylon was counter to everything the young Hebrew men knew was right—the people worshipped idols, indulged in immoral living and ate food that was dedicated to idols, some that came from animals the Jews considered unclean. The Hebrew men had to go through rigorous training in the ways of the Chaldeans, learning their language and their heathen rituals. The goal was to completely indoctrinate the young men into the Babylonian culture.

But, as you will see, Daniel and his friends were steadfast in remaining true to their faith—a challenging undertaking given the circumstances. There were no diversity initiatives or freedom of religion laws to protect them.

AUTHOR

Written by Daniel about events that took place between 605 and 530 B.C.

DATE WRITTEN

Late Sixth Century B.C. (approximately)

PURPOSE

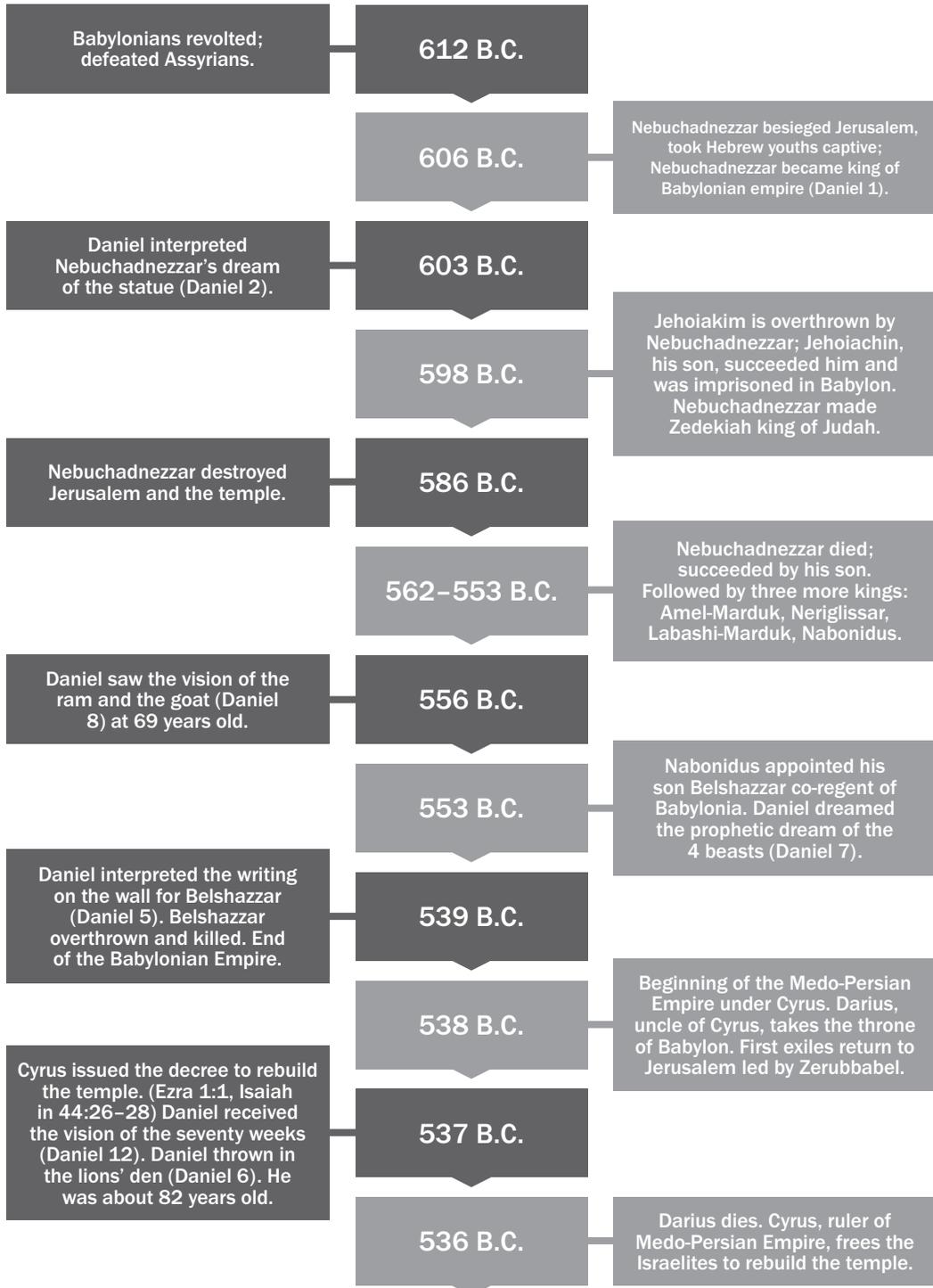
Daniel takes place during a time of judgment against Israel. The book makes a strong case for the importance of walking in integrity with respect to our relationship with God. It also demonstrates God's sovereignty over providing or withdrawing protection, authority and favor.

The first six chapters are more of a historical account of the events that occurred surrounding Daniel and his friends. The last six chapters, which will not be covered in this study, contain prophecy based on visions of future events that Daniel was given by God. Not all of the book is in chronological order.

SETTING

Babylon (modern Iraq). Babylon grew stronger and reached the height of its power under Nebuchadnezzar's reign. After his death, Babylon's power waned. In 539 BC, Babylon was defeated and its king, Belshazzar, was killed by Persians under Cyrus' rule.





Getting The Most Out Of This Study

Work consumes the majority of our lives. The marketplace is more competitive than ever, exposing us to constant pressure, high levels of stress and huge demands on our time and energy, putting pressure on us to be available 24/7. It's not uncommon for leaders to be so focused on the bottom line that they take their eyes off of the needs of the people around them and even their own needs. Time for God? It's hard to imagine how to fit that in as well. Most of us are looking for answers ... the question is, are we looking in the right places?

Your work matters to God. The Bible is filled with instruction on how we can be successful leaders who have a positive influence on those around us. It is **the** resource to guide and direct us in our lives and our work! You may or may not have organizational leadership, but you always have influence in life and in work. We want to equip you to lead well and be an excellent example to others.

This 10-session study is designed to help you see how the leadership principles in the book of Daniel apply to our lives as leaders—not just in theoretical ways, but in very practical ways that you can use to be intentional with your influence.

You have four ways to grow:

1. Through **reading the Scriptures** and **providing thoughtful answers** to the questions.
2. Through **participation in the discussion** with your group.
3. Through **application of the principles** studied and discussed during the next 10 sessions.
4. Through the **community** of believers you are building.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THE STUDY

- **Pray for God to open your heart** and mind to His will and His message.
- **Mark your calendar** for the scheduled meetings.
- Sessions will **begin and end on time** to respect and honor everyone's time.
- **Participate** as fully as possible. If you're a talker, challenge yourself to listen more. If you're quiet, challenge yourself to share.
- **Maintain confidentiality** to provide a safe space for people to share experiences, and insights.
- **Read the assigned chapters of Daniel** along with suggested scriptures.
- **Answer the questions** prior to each discussion, if possible.
- As you read, **put yourself in the story**. Relate the experiences to your work experiences to bring the Scriptures to life for you.
- **Pray about specific ways you can apply the principles** from this study to your work so you can **raise the bar on your integrity at work**.

By the end of this study, you should have:

- A solid understanding of the first six chapters of Daniel and how it is **relevant** to your work today.
- A clear understanding of how to apply the leadership principles to raise the bar on your **integrity** at work and in community.
- An **actionable plan** for raising the bar on your integrity at work and in life.
- **Growth** in your relationship with Christ.

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES

Workmatters has additional resources that can augment your small group discussions. Make sure you visit:

- **workmatters.org/videos** for our latest Leadership Videos.
- **workmatters.org/blog** for the Workmatters blog.
- **workmatters.org/workplace-devotions** for YouVersion devotionals.
- **workmatters.org/workplace-scripture** for Workplace Scripture.
- **workmatters.org/audio** for audio content.

For the Facilitator

We are very excited that you are facilitating a Workmatters Study. Your facilitation will help you grow as a leader and help other people pursue God's purpose for their work. This group can also fulfill the desire many people have for community.

TIPS

Here are some simple tips to support your facilitation:

- Be sure to **get everyone's email address** so you can communicate before and after meetings.
- These studies are designed to be **facilitated discussions**. Avoid teaching. We encourage you to learn from one another.
- Focus on **quality discussion**. Don't be concerned about discussing every question or reading the questions word for word.
- Make time to share **Leadership Principles** at the end of each meeting. A complete list of suggested Leadership Principles for each session is provided at the **end of this guide**.
- Encourage everyone to **apply at least one lesson** discussed each week.
- **Build in accountability** by discussing how participants applied the principles and the difference it made.
- Make it a priority to create a **safe environment** for open conversation. Encourage confidentiality and respect for different perspectives.

FACILITATOR RESOURCES

If you'd like a bit more detail on facilitating, or additional resources to support you through the process, we've got you covered. Visit workmatters.org/studies to find the following:

- Workmatters Studies
- Facilitator Guides
- Leadership Principles templates
- Serving Together—Tips for Where to Serve in Your Community

ONE FINAL NOTE

Thank you for your investment in not only your own leadership, but also in others. You may never know just how big an impact you have, simply by being the one to start a Workmatters Study in your organization, community or church.

The marketplace needs more people like you—people who are willing to invest in others, stretch out of their comfort zones a bit, and take the initiative to start the next study.

Keep your eyes open for those who have the potential to facilitate a study. Let them know about the potential you see in them, encourage them and walk alongside them.

- **Invite** anyone interested to facilitate one session of the study with you.
- God has placed **future facilitators** in your group.
- Be a **multiplier**. Encourage two participants in your study to start and facilitate a study!

For the Individual

We are very excited that you've chosen to participate in a Workmatters Study.

FOR STUDY PARTICIPANTS: Keep in mind that meetings are designed to be facilitated discussions that encourage a rich flow of experiences and insights. We also want to encourage you to listen to the ideas and experiences of others, since that is often the source of the richest insights.

FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDIES: This study can also be used as a personal Bible study. We recommend that you answer the questions thoughtfully.

Keep in mind that you can gain even deeper insights and a richer experience simply by discussing the content and the answers to the questions with one or two other people.

ONE FINAL NOTE

Thank you investing in your leadership. You may never know just how big an impact you will have through the example you set as you apply the biblical principles you learn to your work.

The marketplace needs more people like you—people who are willing to invest in their own leadership. You can multiply your impact by taking the initiative to start the next Workmatters Study in your organization, community or church.

If you will prayerfully consider being a multiplier, you can trust that God will equip you if it is what He is calling you to do.

“ Know what your ‘non-negotiables’ are and write them down in a visible place in your office to remind you. It will help you choose the best response when potentially compromising situations arise. ”

–Workmatters

“ For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He holds success in store for the upright, He is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, for He guards the course of the just and protects the way of His faithful ones. ”

- Proverbs 2:6-8



OVERVIEW

We spend the majority of our lives at work. The marketplace is more competitive than ever, exposing us to constant pressure, high levels of stress and big demands on our time and energy. The model for success we observe demands that we are available 24/7. It's not uncommon to see leaders compromising their health, their family and even their values. Time for God? It's hard to imagine how to fit that in as well. Most of us are looking for answers ... the question is, are we looking in the right places?

Workmatters believes strongly in integrating faith and work. We believe the Bible has answers for how we can be successful leaders who live lives of integrity. It is *the* resource to guide and direct us in our lives, and that includes our work! We believe we are all leaders. You may or may not have organizational leadership, but you always have influence in life and in work. We want to equip you to lead well and be an excellent example to others.

The book of Daniel holds answers that are relevant to today's workplace challenges. Daniel and his friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, were captives in a culture that directly challenged their beliefs and what they knew in their hearts was right. They had to resist being indoctrinated into a culture plagued with false gods, non-kosher foods and immoral practices. (Sound familiar?) They had to exercise self-control on a daily basis to act with integrity based on their beliefs and keep themselves from falling into sin.

This 10-session study is a powerful case study exploring the leadership principles of Daniel and how those principles apply to our lives as leaders—not just in theoretical or theological ways, but in very practical ways that we can put to use to manage current and future challenges with integrity.

We all face various temptations—situations in which we must turn to God and trust Him for wisdom, direction, success and sometimes deliverance. Daniel and his friends literally faced the threat of losing their lives. Our circumstances are rarely life threatening (although they can be), but they might threaten our livelihood, our financial health, our families or our spiritual beliefs.

WHY DOES INTEGRITY MATTER AT WORK?

Read **Proverbs 10:9** in the margin.

Let's begin by getting on the same page regarding what we mean by integrity.

INTEGRITY DEFINED*

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word translated "integrity" means "the condition of being without blemish, completeness, perfection, sincerity, soundness, uprightness, wholeness."

In the New Testament, integrity means "honesty and adherence to a pattern of good works."

*Source: www.gotquestions.org/Bible-integrity.html

Integrity means "wholeness"—being the same person at all times. It refers to having upright moral character. A person of integrity consistently does the right thing, even when it isn't easy. Our basis for integrity is rooted in God's character. His standard is our moral standard.

Why does integrity matter in the workplace?

- A person who operates with integrity possesses the wisdom and courage to do what's right at all times. "At all times" is a big statement.
- When we work with integrity, our work honors God and allows us to have peace of mind.
- When we work with integrity, people can trust our character and decision making.

Having high integrity, as we'll learn through Daniel and his friends, starts with a relationship with God and includes your physical and emotional health, how you manage your finances, your relationships with others, how you communicate and how you use your resources. Low integrity in any of these areas can and will impact all of the others.

“Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.”

– Proverbs 10:9

FACILITATOR:

The important point to drive home is why we need to be intentional about our integrity at work.

FACILITATOR:

- Explain that you will all be praying about areas and ways you can increase the integrity you bring to your work.
- We all have room to grow.
- You will have the opportunity to explore ways to crank up your faith, and seek and trust God as you boost your Integrity Quotient.

BOOSTING YOUR IQ

You are most likely familiar with IQ as a measure of intelligence. In this study, we won't measure your intelligence. We trust God has blessed you with as much as you need. We do want to give you the opportunity to measure a different type of IQ—your Integrity Quotient.

Our **IQ**, or **Integrity Quotient**, affects the excellence of our work, how we relate to others in our work, how we navigate the ethical landscape of our work, as well as the results we achieve through our work—not to mention the influence we have on others. If you have a high IQ, you are more likely to do what's right even in high-stress situations when it's risky and requires a great deal of courage.

WHAT'S YOUR IQ?

We all have room to grow when it comes to integrity. The statements below are not all-inclusive but give you a starting point, especially as it pertains to what you'll learn in this study of Daniel.

The questions are categorized to help you identify your areas of greatest opportunity. The highest total in each area is 25 and the highest overall IQ you can get is 125.

Don't worry about how high your IQ is, or how low it is. Guard against beating yourself up, if it's low, or pride, if it's high. The purpose of this exercise is simply to gain self awareness and identify opportunities for growth.

Rate yourself honestly and transparently—that's part of your integrity, right? Remember, God already knows your true IQ.

You'll do this exercise again at the end of the study so you can see your growth.

Review the following statements and rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5—1 being “Not at all” and 5 being “Almost Always.”

RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

I actively nurture a relationship with Christ so that I am following His will.

1. I actively nurture my relationship with Jesus Christ through daily prayer, reading the Bible and other practices.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I put my trust in God, not men, material things or position.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I am obedient to what I sense God is leading me to do.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I give God the glory and thanks for all my successes and blessings.

1 2 3 4 5

5. I pray and turn to God’s Word when making decisions.

1 2 3 4 5

► **Total for Relationship with Christ:** _____

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

I nurture my relationships with people so I am loving and supportive.

6. I make quality time on a regular basis for my close relationships (spouse, children, parents, other family members, friends).

1 2 3 4 5

7. I am intentional about biblically guiding and setting a good example for my children and/or younger people whom I influence.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I am open and honest in all my communications.

1 2 3 4 5

9. I take time to pray for and with others.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I invest time in mentoring/discipling another person.

1 2 3 4 5

► **Total for Relationship with Others:** _____

WORK

We were designed by God to work and have our work bless us and others. I am doing my work with excellence.

11. I perform my work with excellence to the best of my abilities each day.

1 2 3 4 5

12. I am honest and truthful in all my work-related dealings.

1 2 3 4 5

13. I am courageous in my decision-making to do what's right, even when it's unpopular.

1 2 3 4 5

14. I speak the hard truth in love to those I influence for their benefit.

1 2 3 4 5

15. I do not compromise my values for any reason, even if under threat of being rejected, losing my job or physical harm.

1 2 3 4 5

► **Total for Work:** _____

PHYSICAL HEALTH

My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. I do my part to keep my body healthy.

16. I take care of my body, knowing it is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

1 2 3 4 5

17. I avoid the temptation to indulge in unhealthy food and drink.

1 2 3 4 5

18. I get the exercise I need to keep my body fit and healthy.

1 2 3 4 5

19. I sleep seven to eight hours a night.

1 2 3 4 5

20. I make time for recreation.

1 2 3 4 5

► **Total for Physical Health:** _____

RESOURCES

I honor the gifts of time, energy, money and material things I've been blessed with, using them with wisdom and to bless others.

21. I recognize everything I have is not mine, but God's.

1 2 3 4 5

22. I use my money and resources wisely.

1 2 3 4 5

23. I am generous with my time, money and resources.

1 2 3 4 5

24. I manage my priorities so I make the most of my time and energy.

1 2 3 4 5

25. I resist the temptation to strive for things I do not need.

1 2 3 4 5

▶ **Total for Resources:** _____

▶ **Total IQ:** _____

Any surprises? What did doing this assessment reveal to you, if anything?

What one thing would you like to work on as a result?

FACILITATOR:

Ask participants what doing the exercise revealed to them. Be prepared to share what it revealed to you about opportunities to boost your integrity at work.

It's almost guaranteed that you will face situations that challenge your abilities, threaten your security, tempt you to compromise your values or hesitate to share your faith fully. Those experiences can wear down the resolve of even the most committed follower of Jesus if your relationship with God isn't kept strong.

Here are some indications that you may be in need of strength from God:

- The heat is getting turned up on a project because of increased demands on your time, resources and energy.
- A situation challenges you to go against what you know is right.
- A change threatens your job security or your very livelihood.
- Your passion has been squelched by long hours, fatigue and unpleasant tasks.

Regardless of what you do or where you work, you most likely experience one or all of these situations weekly.

During this study, you have the opportunity to reflect on how you handle your temptations. As you apply the biblical leadership principles you learn, you should find you grow in the following areas:

- Integrity in the midst of cultural expectations
- Poise under pressure
- Influencing others
- Building stronger relationships
- Servant leadership
- Clarity when deciding on the best course of action
- Courage to do the harder right
- Trust in God's direction and provision
- Passion for your work

The key to getting the most out of this study is to open your heart to God so He can increase your wisdom, strength and courage, empowering you to make right choices at work.

So pray about it, and write down any thoughts or insights revealed from these prayers. The extent to which the challenges you face help you grow in your leadership is up to you ... and God.

► What do you most want to get out of this study?

Be sure to write it down. You'll want to refer back to it in Session 10.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We'll discuss **Boosting Your IQ** each week to share experiences and support one another through challenges. You can experience even greater support by choosing an accountability partner. This is someone in the study you partner with to hold each other accountable to the specific commitments you both make as you go through the study.

When you share your commitments with another person who cares about your success, you'll see that it helps you rise above the challenges that might otherwise hinder your progress and supports you in staying motivated even when it's hard.

“ According to Scripture, virtually everything that truly qualifies a person for leadership is directly related to character. It's not about style, status, personal charisma, clout, or worldly measurements of success. Integrity is the main issue that makes the difference between a good leader and a bad one.”

—John MacArthur

FACILITATOR:

- Having an accountability partner can make a big difference in each person's success.
- Encourage everyone to identify one person they will connect with on a weekly basis to share commitments, challenges and successes.
- It may not be practical for everyone in the group, but it will be very beneficial for those who do it.

NEXT STEPS

FACILITATOR:

- Don't do this alone! Invite participants to facilitate the session of their choice.
- No pressure. Not everyone is comfortable facilitating discussion.

FACILITATOR:

- Let everyone know you'll send an email reminder of the activities and invite them to contact you if they have questions.
- Ask them to let you know if they will not be able to attend a session.
- Close in prayer.

READING: Read Daniel Chapter 1. If you're feeling ambitious, you can read through the first six chapters of Daniel to get a sense of the stories you'll be studying.

PRAYER: Pray that God will show you where you can improve in your integrity at work.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Pray about and connect with one person who can be your accountability partner. Ideally, that person will be a fellow participant.

MORE OF GOD AT WORK

GOD'S PROMISES ON INTEGRITY

Daniel and his friends were willing to speak up for their faith. They challenged the practices they knew were wrong and even faced death for the sake of honoring God. They had to—they trusted completely in their God! Do you?

As you go through this study, we challenge you to notice how you handle stressful and challenging situations, to hit the pause button and seek God's direction rather than reacting. This challenge comes with several promises. Not promises for worldly riches, but for things of much greater value.

Consider these promises of God when we commit to following His ways:

- **Proverbs 11:3** “The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.”
- **1 Peter 2:12** “Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.”
- **Psalms 41:11–12** “I know that you are pleased with me, for my enemy does not triumph over me. Because of my integrity You uphold me and set me in Your presence forever.”
- **Proverbs 2:6–8** “For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding. He holds success in store for the upright, He is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, for He guards the course of the just and protects the way of His faithful ones.”
- **Titus 2:7–8** “In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.”

So, with such promises in mind, you have a tremendous opportunity to see God work even more powerfully in your work: Seek God and trust Him through the temptations you face at work.

“ In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us. ”

- Titus 2:7-8



SESSION 2 | Men of Integrity

[5 MINUTES FOR 30-MINUTE DISCUSSION
10 MINUTES FOR 60-MINUTE DISCUSSION]

2

KNOW YOUR NON-NEGOTIABLES

Completing the IQ Assessment most likely revealed a few areas of opportunity for you. After having some time to process what you saw, consider those areas that surprised you. Chances are that your integrity breeches are manageable. But consider that it's the small compromises made over time that lead to major issues down the road.

We all need to know what our non-negotiable values are—those values that we must adhere to, no matter what circumstances arise. Some examples include being faithful to our spouse, telling the truth, being trustworthy with company resources, etc.

► **As you consider your IQ Assessment results, what values and commitments need to be included in your non-negotiables?**

FACILITATOR:

- Start meeting promptly at the agreed upon time.
- Give thanks for the opportunity to study God's Word and for the people who are part of the study.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to fill each person and provide insight, understanding and wisdom as you study together.
- Ask for God's blessing on your time together.

SCRIPTURE: DANIEL TAKEN CAPTIVE IN BABYLON

Daniel 1:3–8

Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility—young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service.

Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego.

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.

DISCUSSION

[15 MINUTES FOR 30-MINUTE DISCUSSION]
[20 MINUTES FOR 60-MINUTE DISCUSSION]

“ The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your predecessors have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the Lord. And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. ”

- Isaiah 39:6-7

HOW DANIEL GOT TO BABYLON

Read Isaiah 39:6-7 in the margin.

The prophet Isaiah predicted the exile of the Jews to Babylon and that Jews such as Daniel would serve there under the king. Sin and the lack of repentance brought God’s judgment on Israel and put Daniel and his friends in a position they might have seen as unfair.

1. As leaders, how are we affected by the willful sin (or poor performance) of others in our organizations? In what ways are these issues in your organization affecting your work and what are your options for dealing with it?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A LEADER

Review Daniel 1:1-4.

The Babylonians had a system of ensuring a steady supply of wise and talented leaders for service.

2. The king was looking for several qualities in these Israelites. What are the top five characteristics you value in a leader (or desire in yourself)? How do these two lists compare?

It seems the king was looking for strength, excellent health, good looks, and the ability to learn. You may want to add trustworthiness, intelligence, experience and humility to the list of desirable traits.

TRAINING LEADERS

Review Daniel 1:5.

Whenever you join a new company, or even a new team in the same company, you have to learn the culture to be successful. There are phrases, procedures and cultural rules you need to learn so you can communicate and work effectively with the people around you. And if you want to share your faith, you need to build relationships with those people.

3. What are the elements of the culture in which you work? Consider the following areas:

- **Language:**

- **Leadership approach:**

- **Cultural nuances:**

Note that verse 19—“Then the king interviewed them ...”—highlights the testing aspect of training and development.

**FOR 60-MINUTE DISCUSSION,
CONTINUE STUDY BELOW**

[20 MINUTES]

PLAYING WELL WITH OTHERS

In today's culture, people change jobs almost as often as they change socks. Some leave in search of greener pastures, but many change because they were laid off, their company shut its doors, or they found themselves "merged" into another organization.

Mergers and acquisitions are a given in today's marketplace. Since 2000, the number of mergers and acquisitions ranged from a low of 8,640 in 2002 to a high of 14,109 in 2007. While the numbers may fluctuate from year to year, it's a part of doing business that continues to impact jobs. Many of the men and women involved in these changes suddenly find themselves out of work in the name of "efficiency," or working alongside the very people they previously saw as the competition.

This is where Daniel found himself—forced by the mismanagement of his nation's leaders (i.e., the sin that led to Jerusalem's conquest) to live with and work for a foreign nation. We live free, but it's not unusual to find ourselves working in a strange, new environment—or leading others who are new to our culture.

Source: Institute for Mergers, Acquisitions & Alliances.
imaa-institute.org. Accessed 18 May, 2017

FACILITATOR:

Use the modern business example provided, or a current example from the news or your own experience, to connect the themes of this lesson to the experiences we face at work today.

5. Think of a situation where you might be taking an easier wrong to resolve a problem.

- Describe the problem you face in this situation.

- Describe the easier wrong.

- Now list two or three alternative solutions—ideas that might require more resources upfront and provide smaller immediate ROI, but that will lead to larger returns in the future. Consider listing actions that will mitigate each risk.

The temptation to compromise our beliefs happens almost daily at work. We either see an opportunity or fear an outcome, so we are tempted.

6. What can we do to fight temptations of this kind? (Reference Hebrews 10:35-36 in the margin.)

“ So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. ”

- Hebrews 10:35-36

SCRIPTURE: THE ART OF COMPROMISE

Daniel 1:12-14

Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king’s service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility—young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king’s palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king’s table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king’s service.

Daniel knew that if he were to eat the food being offered it would turn his heart away from God. He didn't compromise his values, but he didn't fight back with his fists or go on a hunger strike, either. He found a solution.

7. How did his solution involve faith and wisdom? What can you learn from this?

Daniel trusted God to protect him. His faith in his beliefs and in God's commands supported his integrity. He also understood diet and nutrition, so he was confident that a healthy diet would produce desirable results.

BEARING FRUIT

Review Daniel 1:19-20.

The king talked with Daniel and his three friends and found them to be "ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom" in wisdom and understanding.

8. We are called to do our work with excellence—"work with all your heart" (Colossians 3:23). What does this passage from Daniel teach us about demonstrating excellence?

There's no promise of worldly success; quite the contrary. Jesus said, "In this world you will have trouble ..." (John 16:33). But we also know that those who serve faithfully and with excellence are typically recognized for their work.

“Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings; they will not serve before officials of low rank.”

– Proverbs 22:29

WORK APPLICATION

[10 MINUTES FOR 30-MINUTE DISCUSSION]
[15 MINUTES FOR 60-MINUTE DISCUSSION]

FACILITATOR:

- Encourage participants to choose one leadership principle from those discussed that they will practice this week.
- Ask them to share how they will put it into practice.

We might never be taken captive and made to work for a king with a radically different belief system. But we all face challenges and difficulties at work that test our skills, our faith and our obedience to God.

When we respond in the right ways, we can trust God to see us through, sometimes with what the world sees as success but always with the peace and joy that only God can offer in the midst of our trouble. Psalm 34:19-20 puts it this way: “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers us from them all.”

► **What one lesson can you take away from the discussion and apply to your work this week?**

The best way to grow is to apply what you learned through the discussion right away.

BOOSTING YOUR IQ—INTEGRITY QUOTIENT

Think about the focus areas in which you want to boost your integrity. How will you apply what you learned to help you boost your integrity in those areas?

NEXT STEPS

PUT IT TO WORK: Watch for opportunities to apply what you learned and boost your integrity at work. Write notes about your experiences.

READING: Read Daniel Chapter 2 and answer the questions based on your experiences.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Meet for at least 15 minutes with your accountability partner to discuss how you're living out the actions you identified.

Share your biggest insight from this session on social media and tag it #myworkmatters

FACILITATOR:

Remember to invite participants who are interested to facilitate one session.

FACILITATOR:

- Let everyone know you'll send an email reminder of the activities.
- Invite them to contact you if they have questions.
- Ask them to let you know if they will not be able to attend a session.
- Close in prayer.