

WISE COUNSEL FOR TROUBLED TIMES
STUDY ELEVEN

Modeling Integrity

Daniel 6:1–27

Integrity is a subject that can hardly be addressed enough, since we are in an eroding culture where integrity is so rarely witnessed or even mentioned. How valuable for us to understand what it involves.

—Charles R. Swindoll

IN every human soul God has placed a spiritual muscle called integrity. Like a heart to a body, our integrity is central to our spiritual life. Just as our bodies cease functioning when our heart stops pumping, our spiritual life sputters when our integrity fails. Unlike a heart, however, integrity doesn't operate automatically. We have the choice whether to flex our integrity muscles and do what's right even when no one is looking, speak the truth regardless of the cost, and live purely when everyone else is compromising.

Integrity, or its absence, affects every minute of our lives—when we're alone or socializing, working or playing. When we forsake integrity, this vital spiritual muscle deteriorates. Strong integrity guards us against moral flabbiness. With strengthened integrity we achieve the purpose for which God made us. God fashioned us to be moral as He is moral that we may represent Him and do as He does no matter the arena of life.

Integrity's vast importance makes it supremely worthy of our attention. In this study, we'll learn from Daniel, who modeled integrity in the most challenging circumstances—when surrounded by enemies intent on his demise.



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Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

Modeling Integrity

Daniel 6:1–27



PREPARE YOUR HEART

Living with integrity requires not only insight but also courage and faith. Take a few moments to still yourself before God. Request His blessing on your study and ask Him to provide you with what you need to live with integrity.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Let's review the book of Daniel before examining chapter 6. Look over the chart below, and note how chapter 6 fits within the book's structure. Also, read an introduction to Daniel. Introductions give flyover context. Chuck provides his introduction to Daniel at Insight.org.

DANIEL

	Biographical Section Daniel Interprets Others' Dreams	Prophetical Section Angel Interprets Daniel's Dreams		
	MAIN EMPHASIS: DANIEL THE PROPHET Introduction and setting (1) Nebuchadnezzar's apocalyptic dream (2) Historical narratives (political and personal) (3–6)	MAIN EMPHASIS: THE PROPHECIES OF DANIEL Daniel's foundational vision (7) Prophetic visions (near and far) (8–12)		
	CHAPTERS 1–6	CHAPTERS 7–12		
	POLITICAL POWERS Babylonian Rule Nebuchadnezzar Belshazzar	... IN DANIEL'S DAY Medo-Persian Rule Darius Cyrus	... AND AFTERWARD Grecian Rule Alexander the Great Four generals	Roman Rule Last of the Gentile powers
Theme	God's sovereignty over kingdoms and His unfolding plan for the future			
Key Verses	2:20–22, 44; 4:34–37			
Christ in Daniel	The stone that will crush earth's kingdoms (2:34–35, 44); Son of Man (7:13–14); the coming Messiah who will be crucified (9:25–26)			

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As you read Daniel 6, consider how it contributes to the main theme: God’s sovereignty over the nations and our involvement in that unfolding plan.



Observation: Integrity in Jeopardy

Read *Daniel 6:1–27* and observe words or phrases that contrast, repeat (for emphasis), or illustrate a cause-and-effect relationship.¹

Chart the key characters along with their actions and motivations.

Characters	Key Actions	Motivation



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How did Darius' administrators use Daniel's integrity against him?

The administrators and high officers could not find any dirt on Daniel. They looked for places where he had been fudging or where he had been taking a little money on the side. Perhaps Daniel had been giving himself special promotions or bonus checks. They found nothing wrong. I mean nothing. Daniel was clean as a hound's tooth which will frustrate anyone looking for dirt. —Chuck Swindoll

Look at Darius' description of Daniel in [6:19–23](#) and note what the author of Daniel emphasized by this repetition.

Even after Daniel scanned the law and weighed its warnings, he chose to honor God. He went to his room, opened the window toward Jerusalem, knelt on his knees, and prayed. Daniel did not kowtow to Darius in fear. Daniel flexed the spiritual muscle of integrity by worshiping his sovereign God and prizing God over any benefit from the hand of a Persian king.



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Interpretation: A Man Who Modeled Integrity

In his book *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs*, Chuck Swindoll wrote:

Interpretation is not the same as imposing your opinions on the Bible. You might have been taught something all your life that is incorrect, and you find yourself looking for proof in the Bible. That's not interpretation; that's trying to verify what someone has told you. Interpretation is drawing out what the text says and what it means.²

In Bible narratives, the authors emphasized two main points: the work of God through and for humans and the faith of an individual. Daniel 6 contains examples of both—Daniel's faith in God and God's protection of Daniel.

How did the author emphasize Daniel's spirituality and integrity?

Daniel had no scratch, no bite, and not even a drop of blood from his night with the lions. God protected Daniel from the lions just as God had guarded Daniel from his lion-like enemies who had tried to tear him apart (Psalm 7:1–2, 10). Then King Darius responded to Daniel's divine preservation by composing a remarkable decree (*Daniel 6:25–27*). What did the king's decree state, and what did the author of the book of Daniel emphasize about God by noting this decree?



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Daniel's integrity toward God and his miraculous deliverance from his enemies brought the king to his knees in worship. Darius paid homage empire-wide to the God of Daniel, Yahweh, whose dominion will never be destroyed and whose authority will never be thwarted.



Correlation: The Wisdom of Integrity

Rome's rule in the first century AD did not readily accept those who followed Christ. Emperors like Nero made a Christian's life especially difficult, sometimes dangerous. Nero enacted savage persecution of Christians—even crucifying them and setting them aflame. Nero's volatile and harsh rule makes Peter's statements in 1 Peter 2:13–25 all the more startling.

Peter wrote his first epistle while Nero reigned. In *1 Peter 2:13–25*, Peter addressed the subject of integrity, especially its uniquely Christian trait. Read this passage and summarize it.

How did Peter encourage his readers to live lives of integrity?

God is the God of lions. God is the God of impossible situations. Perhaps you are facing one. Perhaps it's as difficult as Daniel's. No matter how rough, take it from Daniel: God is at work. —Chuck Swindoll



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Application: The Rewards of Integrity

For your encouragement, Chuck lists six rewards of integrity. Consider them as they relate to you.

SIX REWARDS OF LIVING WITH INTEGRITY	
[branch]	<i>Integrity sustains the cultivation of exemplary character.</i>
[compass]	<i>Integrity gives the comfort of a clear conscience.</i>
[fire]	<i>Integrity fosters the delight of intimacy with God.</i>
[group]	<i>Integrity bestows the inheritance of a lingering legacy.</i>
[ear]	<i>Integrity provides the privilege of being a mentor.</i>
[roots]	<i>Integrity presents the reward of finishing well.</i>

Which of the rewards motivate you most to pursue a life marked by integrity? Why?

How does Daniel's integrity in Daniel 6 inspire you?



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What area of your life do you feel most tempted to shed integrity? What specific way do you need Jesus to strengthen you to uphold your integrity?

Daniel's integrity amid threats of death brought the greatest reward of all: *glory to God*. Through one man's obedience, God exalted Himself among the nation of Persia. Daniel became a sign pointing to the future coming of the Messiah, God the Son, whose obedience brought glory to God the Father and will make the many righteous.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, You are good and Your ways are righteous. All the peoples will celebrate Your justice. Integrity does not always have its reward in this life, but I know You always reward the life of integrity. Help me to do justly, speak truthfully, and live purely that I may bring honor to the all-glorious One, Jesus Christ. In His name, I pray, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. You can review introductory articles on Chuck's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study method at sts.insight.org.
2. Charles R. Swindoll, *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2016), 111.



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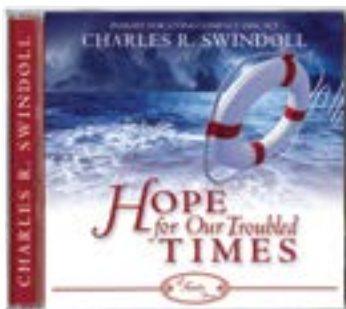
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Tools for Digging Deeper



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For the 2020 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Aaron Massey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of Pastoral Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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