



ENTER God's presence

Psalm 26:1-8

¹ Vindicate me, LORD,
for I have led a blameless life;
I have trusted in the LORD
and have not faltered.
² Test me, LORD, and try me,
examine my heart and my mind;
³ for I have always been mindful of your unfailing love
and have lived in reliance on your faithfulness.
⁴ I do not sit with the deceitful,
nor do I associate with hypocrites.
⁵ I abhor the assembly of evildoers
and refuse to sit with the wicked.
⁶ I wash my hands in innocence,
and go about your altar, LORD,
⁷ proclaiming aloud your praise
and telling of all your wonderful deeds.
⁸ LORD, I love the house where you live,
the place where your glory dwells.

- **Pray:** Heavenly Father, we acknowledge that we do not always live blamelessly and yet we do want to live according to your ways. We do place our trust in you and ask that now, as we come to you to learn more of what you have revealed to us in your word, that you would help us to know and to follow you in all things. May your will be done on earth, and in us, as it is in heaven. Amen



SHARE life together

1. What are your highs and lows for this past week?
2. What does the word integrity mean to you?
3. What is one area of your life at the moment where it is hard for you to see or trust that God is at work?
4. Share a time when your faith and your actions were in alignment and you saw or sensed God at work through you or around you.

Week beginning:
Monday 4th November 2024

Worship series:
The Best Life
#3 – A Life Of Integrity



VERSE for the week

“Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to God, just as he had done before.”

Key Verses: Daniel 6:10

Full Text: Daniel 6



REMEMBER this week

**Integrity doesn't
happen overnight.
The best life is one
of consistent
obedience to the
Living God.**

Integrity seems in short supply these days. Recently we have witnessed the crazy world of American politics unfolding on our television news and the culmination of another American Presidential election. Closer to home we have had various state elections and by-elections with promises being thrown around like they are going out of style on issues like youth crime, clean energy, wage increases for various sectors of the workforce, and promises to make more affordable housing. I don't think many Australians believe any of these promises will amount to much. Our own Prime Minister has also been in hot water with some people who are critical and suspicious about flight upgrades he received while flying internationally.

It used to be that we valued people who demonstrated integrity and had the strength of their convictions. We might not have always agreed with them, but we admired their 'gumption'. These days, someone who is prepared to dig their heels in and who has the audacity to firmly hold an opinion or position, other than the popular opinion of their society is usually shamed into conformity.

How can we live lives of integrity in that kind of context? How can we consistently follow Jesus in a world that seems determined to have us turn our backs on him. Start by reading, **Daniel chapter 6** [HERE](#) or in your own Bible.

5. **Try to summarise Daniel chapter 6 in your own words.**
6. **What verse/concept/teaching in this reading caught your attention and what was challenging/confronting/comforting about it for you?**
7. **Which characters in the story act with integrity? Put yourself in their situation. How do you think you would have responded?**
8. **What was the ultimate result of Daniel's integrity in this situation?**



Often people have a problem with church because they have encountered communities of faith that have seemed to be filled with more hypocrisy than integrity. They speak about God's love and mercy but only ever act with moral superiority or judgement. They talk about caring for the poor or marginalised and yet seem to be only interested in building bigger worship spaces for their own people or building their own 'market share' in the kingdom of heaven, rather than seeking the kingdom first. We should not be surprised that the world doesn't have a lot of time for hypocrites, Jesus didn't either.

9. **In many ways, our situation in 21st Century Australia, is more like Daniel's situation than at any other time since European settlement. We live differently and hold different customs and values than many of the people around us. What elements of your Christian faith put you at odds with the 'social norms' of modern day Australia? How easy/hard do you find it to prioritise your Christian faith and to live it with integrity in this setting?**

Many people in Australia, like the satraps and officials in the story of Daniel, are misinformed about Christian faith and see it as dangerous or as a threat to their way of life. Many Christians have adapted or changed their practices to 'fit in' more with the ideas and worldviews of the culture around them. Yet Daniel kept praying, 'as he had done before' even though it put his very life at risk. Romans 12:2 tells us, "do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will."

10. **Daniel's integrity and commitment to doing the will of God and not to be conformed by the patterns and pressures of the world around him led him into dangerous territory, but also provided opportunity for God to do something incredible. How might living with conviction and Christian integrity be important today as a means for God to do incredible things through us?**



LIVE purposefully

MAKE IT REAL:

There are many ways we can look at or define integrity. We have talked a lot about acting with integrity in the face of opposition as a means of bearing witness to the difference that our faith in Jesus makes in our hearts and lives, and that is important. However, integrity also involves the way we behave when we think no one is looking. Our thought to remember this week says, 'Integrity doesn't happen overnight, the best life is one of consistent obedience to the will of the Living God.' Consistently choosing obedience to God and his will puts us in the middle of God's redemptive work of restoring all creation to himself. It puts us right where we will see God at work in and around us most clearly. We might end up spending the night in a metaphorical 'lion's den', but we don't need to fear the lions.

11. **What are some of the 'lions' that you are concerned about in your life at the moment?**
12. **What stories can you share of times when you have seen God overcome the 'lions' in your life? Why might it be important to be free to share those stories with others?**
13. **Is there a part of your life where integrity is in short supply at the moment? If you feel comfortable share that with someone in your life group and invite them to be an accountability partner for you about this. If there is no one in your group who you feel comfortable sharing this with, Pray and ask Jesus to help transform this area of your life.**

Plan your weekly devotions or [download the Church Central app](#) for the daily [LifeWay Devotions](#)



PRAY intentionally

- **Praise the Father**, for His covenant love and faithfulness to His people.
- **Thank Jesus** for his life of living each moment in obedience to the will of God the Father, and the grace and forgiveness that he has made available to us by his obedience, even to death on a cross.
- **Ask the Holy Spirit** to give you courage to live each day with integrity and to bear witness to the life transforming love and grace of God, even in the face of opposition.
- Pray for LifeWay, as we enter into a time of transition with Pastor Mark Schultz accepting the call to serve the wider LCA as Assistant to the Bishop for international Mission.
- Pray that God would prepare us all for what he has in store for us next and give us the courage and integrity to go where he calls us to go.
- For those who have been hurt by their experience of hypocritical Christianity. That they may encounter the true love and grace of their Heavenly Father.



BLESS one another

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross on their forehead or on the palm of their hand as you say...

[Name], May you daily live with integrity and obedience to God. Amen.