

# STAND

HOW TO THRIVE IN A CULTURE OF COMPROMISE



## STAND, PART 2: INTEGRITY

Every year, the church and the cooperate world gets rocked and reminded that a lack of personal integrity always impacts other people. There's no such thing as, "A person had an integrity issue, and the only person that was hurt was that person." When a person's integrity blows up, everyone around them gets shrapnel. We can see that in others, but we just can't see that in ourselves. We think, "No, this is my deal, my life, my secret, my thing. It's between me and God." But that's a lie.

**THE BIG IDEA:** If you don't make pre-decisions, you will make poor decisions.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever done something that was difficult, unpopular, or went against the grain of a cultural norm? Describe what happened.
2. How did your resolve impact you and the people around you?
3. Describe a situation in which you resolved to do something God-honoring, but discovered it was (or is) hard to live out the commitment.
4. Chris defined integrity as *Doing what you ought to even if it costs you*. Chris said, "A lack of personal integrity always impacts other people." Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not? Where have you seen this lived out?
5. [With your Bible or Bible App, read Daniel 1:8-20.](#)

*<sup>8</sup> But Daniel was determined not to defile himself by eating the food and wine given to them by the king. He asked the chief of staff for permission not to eat these unacceptable foods. <sup>9</sup> Now God had given the chief of staff both respect and affection for Daniel. <sup>10</sup> But he responded, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has ordered that you eat this food and wine. If you become pale and thin compared to the other youths your age, I am afraid the king will have me beheaded." <sup>11</sup> Daniel spoke with the attendant who had been appointed by the chief of staff to look after Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. <sup>12</sup> "Please test us for ten days on a diet of vegetables and water," Daniel said. <sup>13</sup> "At the end of the ten days, see how we look compared to the other young men who are eating the king's food. Then make your decision in light of what you see." <sup>14</sup> The attendant agreed to Daniel's suggestion and tested them for ten days. <sup>15</sup> At the end of the ten days, Daniel and his three friends looked healthier and better nourished than the young men who had been eating the food assigned by the king. <sup>16</sup> So after that, the attendant fed them only vegetables instead of the food and wine provided for the others. <sup>17</sup> God gave these four young men an unusual aptitude for understanding every aspect of literature and wisdom. And God gave Daniel the special ability to interpret the meanings of visions and dreams. <sup>18</sup> When the training period ordered by the king was completed, the chief of staff brought all the young men to King Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>19</sup> The king talked with them, and no one impressed him as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they entered the royal service. <sup>20</sup> Whenever the king consulted them in any matter requiring wisdom and balanced judgment, he found them ten times more capable than any of the magicians and enchanters in his entire kingdom.*

[Daniel 1:8-20 \(NLT\)](#)

6. When Daniel became prisoners of war, they were pressured to change many things as a part of their 'training' process. What concessions were they willing to make and where did they draw the line and say no? Why do you think they drew the line where they did?

7. Why were the food regulations of the Old Testament law so important to Daniel (verses 8-10)? Do you think he was making a big issue out of a minor problem? Explain.
8. Daniel and his friends had to determine which parts of Babylonian culture they could live with and which parts they should stand against. How do you make that determination in your own culture?
9. What is an example of an area where you have said, "I draw the line here and I will not cross it?" What has happened as you have made this stand and maintained your integrity?
10. Chris said, "If you compromise on little things, you will compromise on big things. Little compromises lead to big compromises." Speculate how would Daniel's life be different had he compromised his integrity here in chapter 1—the beginning of his story?
11. When have you ever chosen to pursue success or recognition at the expense of your integrity?
12. "The most direct path to success or maintaining success is often not the most ethical one." Do you agree or disagree?
13. Daniel could have chosen a shortcut to success, but it would have sabotaged God's future plans for him and his friends. How have you sabotaged God's blessing on your life by choosing to compromise?

## MOVING FORWARD

Every decision you make, and the subsequent outcome writes a chapter in the story of your life. For Daniel, the wisdom and courage he displayed to know and do what's right, even when it was hard, demonstrated his greatness far beyond any accomplishments he may have achieved. What are some of the areas Christians take a stand against in the secular environment that should be secondary issues, thus hindering our impact with others?

## CHANGING YOUR MIND

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Daniel 1:19-20