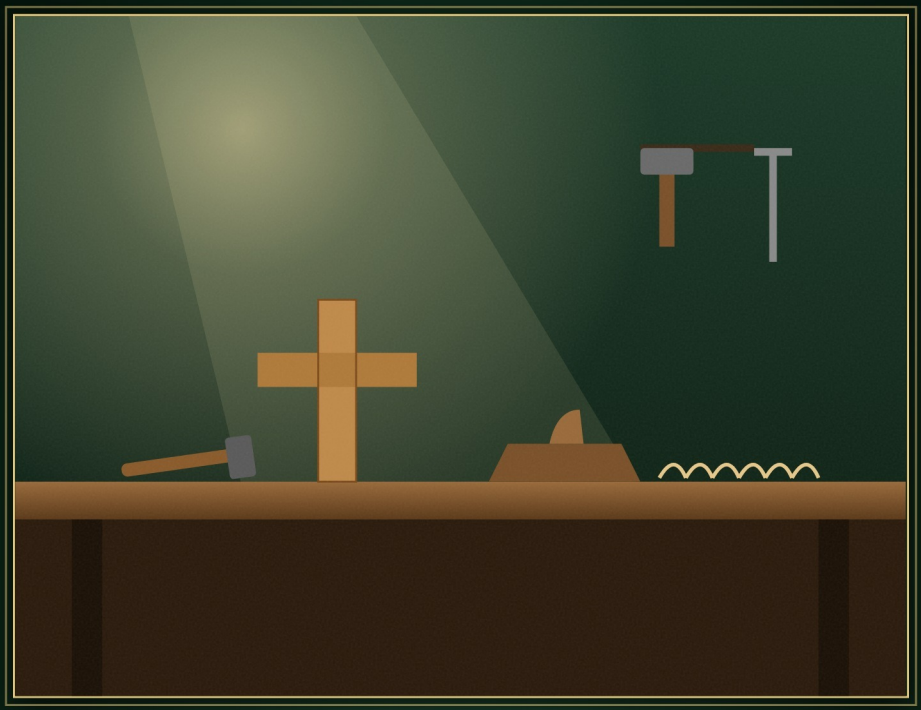
A SHORT BIBLE STUDY

Faith at Work

Living It Out · Book 5



Integrity, leadership, and serving God on Monday morning

Andrew Dominguez

Trinfinity Enterprises

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A Note on the Bible Translation Used in This Book

My preferred Bible for personal study, teaching, and research is the Steadfast Literal Bible (SLB). I chose it because it is a word-for-word translation in today's language, built on the ancient Scripture sources: the Hebrew and Aramaic of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New Testament. I prepared the SLB myself, and the Scripture in this book is taken from it.

Where a literal phrase would mislead an English reader, the SLB gives the writer's meaning in plain words. Words added for sense are set in bold italics so you can see what is in the original and what is not.

The complete Steadfast Literal Bible is free to read, search, download, and print at trinfinityenterprises.com/slb. If you want to check a verse in its full setting or read the translation's preface and principles, that is the place to go.

Above all, my desire is not to promote one translation over another, but to faithfully teach the Word of God, encourage careful examination of the Scriptures, and help readers grow in their knowledge, understanding, and relationship with the Lord.

May every page of this book direct attention not to the translation itself, but to the truth of God's Word and the One whom it reveals.

Introduction

Most of us spend more waking hours at work than anywhere else. If my faith only shows up on Sunday, it is missing from most of my life. The One we worship on Sunday should not be ignored on Monday.

I started in utility field work in 1987 and have spent about 40 years in infrastructure work. Faith gets tested when schedules are tight and cutting a corner would be the easy way out. Faith only matters if it holds up on a Tuesday afternoon when nobody from church is watching. I wrote this book for working believers who want to honor Christ in the middle of real deadlines.

This book looks at what Scripture says about doing our work for the Lord, about integrity in business, about leading people well, about hard conversations and difficult decisions, and about hiring and keeping people of good character.

1 Working for the Lord

> *And everything, whatever you do, work from **the** soul, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from **the** Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.*
> **Colossians 3:23-24 (SLB)**

Every job is a place to serve Christ. That changes how I show up, how I treat customers, and how I handle the resources in my care. They are not really mine. They belong to God, and I am a steward of them.

Here is how I would put it: at work, God is my ultimate boss. A Christian manager who believes that puts customer needs first, works hard not to oversell what the product can do, and treats the budget as God's money rather than his own.

I started in the field in 1987, and a lot of that early work was routine and unseen. Colossians 3:23 says to work at it with all your heart, as for the Lord. Whether I was in the field or, years later, leading programs, the standard stayed the same. Working for the Lord turns ordinary work into worship.

2 Integrity begins in the heart

When business scandals make the news, people call for new laws. Laws have their place, but they cannot create integrity. Chuck Colson argued that scandals like Enron were not only bad business decisions. They were evidence of moral collapse.

The Hebrew word often translated integrity carries the idea of completeness, wholeness, and moral uprightness. A person of integrity is the same person in every room. He is not complicated or conniving. His life holds together.

> *The integrity of **the** upright guides them, and the crookedness of **the** treacherous destroys them.*
> **Proverbs 11:3 (SLB)**

The Bible gives us pictures of people with integrity. God described Job that way (Job 2:3, SLB). David prayed, "Judge me, LORD, for I, I have walked in my integrity" (Psalm 26:1, SLB). David was not sinless.

But when he was confronted with his sin, he wanted to be made whole before God again.

The prophets condemned those who trampled the poor and took bribes, and Amos called out, "let justice roll like the waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing wadi" (Amos 5:24, SLB). Integrity in business starts with integrity in my own heart and home.

3 Leading with humility and resolve

Jesus turned the world's idea of leadership upside down. He said, "whoever desires to become great among you will be your servant," and that "even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:43-45, SLB).

In his book Good to Great, Jim Collins found that the leaders who took companies from good to great were not celebrity personalities. They combined deep personal humility with fierce resolve. Collins was not writing a Christian book, but what he found sounds a lot like what Jesus taught His disciples.

Collins described a habit he called the window and the mirror. When things go well, look out the window and give credit to others. When things go wrong, look in the mirror. That is a practical way to live out Philippians 2:3 (SLB), which says, "in humility considering one another as surpassing yourselves."

Good leaders also ask for advice. "Plans go wrong when there is no counsel, and in a multitude of counselors it is established" (Proverbs 15:22, SLB). And they encourage the people around them:

"encourage one another and build up one another" (1 Thessalonians 5:11, SLB).

I started in the field and worked my way up to running technical training programs. A title never earned anyone's respect. When a plan fails, a leader has to own the mistake, listen to the people doing the work, and still make the hard call. Serving as a lay pastor taught me the same balance of humility and backbone.

4 Correcting with fairness

When an employee is not performing, the first place to look is my own leadership. Are the expectations clear? Have I given the training, instruction, and support needed? If not, the right first step is to apologize and fix that problem. Only then can I fairly hold someone accountable.

When correction is needed, start privately. Explain the problem and the change that is needed, and keep a note of what was said. If the problem continues, put it in writing. Jesus said, "if your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him" (Luke 17:3, SLB).

> *He who covers his transgressions will not prosper, and he who confesses and forsakes **them** will be shown mercy.*
>
> **Proverbs 28:13 (SLB)**

The two key words in that proverb are "confesses" and "forsakes." An apology without a change is not

repentance. Ask the person to name what went wrong and say clearly what they will do differently.

Some offenses, like dishonesty or theft, may leave no choice but to end someone's employment, even when the person is truly sorry. Letting dishonesty stand will eat away at an organization. And always follow the employment laws where you work.

5 Hiring people of character

Most hiring processes measure skills and experience. Few measure character. Yet honesty, trustworthiness, patience, self-control, and humility matter as much as any skill on a resume. If they matter, they belong in the job description and the hiring process.

Scripture warns that first impressions can mislead. "He who hates disguises himself with his lips, and in his inner being he sets deceit. When he makes his voice gracious, do not trust in him" (Proverbs 26:24-25, SLB). A thirty-minute interview is a weak measure of character.

Here are a few practical steps I recommend. Check references, then ask each reference for the name of someone else who knows the candidate well, and keep going a few levels deep. And consider rewarding current employees who refer good people, because people tend to recommend those they are proud to work beside.

Faith at Work

✦ ✦ ✦

If my faith only shows up on Sunday, it is missing from most of my life. This book looks at working for the Lord, integrity in business, leading with humility and resolve, correcting people fairly, and hiring people of good character.

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Colossians 3:23-24 (SLB)

Book 5 of 10 in the collection Living It Out

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