A TRINFINITY MINI BOOK

Faith at Work

Integrity, leadership, and serving God on Monday morning

Andrew Dominguez

TRINFINITY
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About this book

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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.

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

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

Colossians 3:23-24 (NASB)

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.

Michael Zigarelli of Regent University surveyed more than 300 committed Christians in management. He reported that 83 percent strongly agreed with the statement, At work, God is my ultimate boss. The managers he studied put customer needs first, worked hard to avoid overselling what their product could do, and treated the budget as God's money rather than their own.

2 Integrity begins at home

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 in the NASB 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 will guide them, But the crookedness of the treacherous will destroy them.

Proverbs 11:3 (NASB)

The Bible gives us pictures of people with integrity. God described Job that way (Job 2:3, NASB). David prayed, Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity (Psalm 26:1, NASB). 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 for justice to roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever flowing stream (Amos 5:24, NASB). 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 that whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and that even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve (Mark 10:43-45, NASB).

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 said he had no religious background and was not looking for that result, but after the book came out, so many people pointed him to Jesus that he began reading the New Testament.

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 (NASB), which tells us to regard one another as more important than ourselves.

Good leaders also ask for advice. Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed (Proverbs 15:22, NASB). And they encourage the people around them. Therefore encourage one another and build up one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11, NASB).

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, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him (Luke 17:3, NASB).

He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.

Proverbs 28:13 (NASB)

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 it with his lips, but he lays up deceit in his heart. When he speaks graciously, do not believe him (Proverbs 26:24-25, NASB). A thirty minute interview is a weak measure of character.

Zigarelli recommended a few practical steps. 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.

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

Colossians 3:23-24 (NASB)

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