

## **The Integrated Life**

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The Life of a Disciple Series

John 1:1-18

I've been doing a series here at Vineyard on what I've called the Life of a Disciple. In all that I'm trying to do is communicate one simple truth and that is that being a Christian is infinitely more than simply making a decision or coming forth at a Billy Graham crusade. Being a Christian involves your life. It's a life of following Jesus. And I think this is what people who are outside the church are looking for – not just another quick fix, a one time decision. People are looking for a different life, an authentic change.

So it's more than us just playing church, coming to a weekend service pretending everything is OK, putting a nice veneer over rotting boards underneath. In prior weeks I've described a process by which we hope to assist people to become disciples and I'll describe that in a few minutes.

Today, what I want to talk about is one aspect of the disciplined life that I'm calling the Integrated Life. The Integrated Life is all about how do I live as a follower of Jesus when I'm not at church? Or, I like how some people refer to it: How do I live as a follower of Jesus in the "real world," because the church meeting, for a lot of folks, is some kind of parallel universe. We're, right now, in virtual reality somewhere in cyber space.

How do I follow Jesus in the real world of business meetings and deadlines and spilt milk at breakfast and missing kids' shoes and car repairs and pets that drive you crazy? When we're talking about our non-church lives ... how do we follow Jesus as a mother, as a worker, as a friend, as a writer? Let me share with you a few examples from history of people whose names you should become familiar with.

Some of the great heroes and heroines who weren't pastors or missionaries or theologians, but people whose lives brought the presence of Christ into their sphere of influence. First of all I think of Susanna Wesley. She grew up in an enormous family. Her father was once asked how many children he had. He said, "I don't know, about 2 dozen, maybe a quarter of 100." The last guess was the right one. Suzanne Wesley was the 25<sup>th</sup> child of a brilliant Puritan theologian.

She was born in 1669. When she was a child she was home schooled and her father taught her Logic and French and Greek and Latin, Anatomy. Being a woman she was not, in those days allowed to go to college. She entered the vocation that was available to her and that was motherhood, with great passion. Susanna Wesley had 19 of her own children in 20 years. 9 of them didn't survive infancy, so it's not the case that she had 19 kids as is popularly thought running around the house.

But she did raise 10 children and essentially what she did was set up a little, private boarding school for her kids. On their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, she taught each

of the children the alphabet and once they learned the alphabet, they immediately began to read from the 1<sup>st</sup> page of the Bible. The way each of the kids learned to read was beginning with Genesis chapter 1. From there she taught them history and grammar and mathematics and geography. She taught them from 9 to 12 and then they had lunch. Then from 2 – 5. She kept up this schedule for 20 years.

She's like the ultimate home school mom. All the while, she kept up her sewing and clothes making. She was an incredibly patient woman. One day her husband walked in and she was repeating a lesson to one of the children. Her husband said, I've heard you say the same thing now, I've counted it, 20 times. I'm amazed at your patience with the kids. You told that child the same information 20 times until he got it. She said, well if I had stopped at 19 I would have wasted all of my time, wouldn't I?

She had a rather stubborn and somewhat harsh husband, lived a life in the midst of lots of trials including the burning down of their home two times by accidental fires. She raised children that changed the whole face of England. Two of her sons were John Wesley, the father of the Methodist Church and Charles Wesley, who with John, not only planted hundreds of churches, but also wrote literally over 1000 Christian hymns.

She understood that the integrated Christian life almost better than almost anyone ever has. Very late in life, in one of her journals she prayed this prayer: "Help me Lord to remember that my faith is not to be confined to the church or my prayer closet or exercised in only prayer and meditation, but that everywhere I am in your presence. May my every word and action have a moral content. May all the happenings of my life prove useful and beneficial to me. May all things instruct me and afford me an opportunity of exercising some virtue and daily learning and growing into Your likeness."

Her son John Wesley's original meetings in forming the Methodist church were in Susanna's house. She served as a sort of mother but also a guide spiritually for those who gathered. As she grew old and prepared to die, Susanna Wesley prayed that God allow her even in this last act of hers on earth, in my death, to honor You.

It's recorded that her kids were gathered around her bedside, her sons and daughters and her last words were, "Children, as soon as I am released from this body, please sing a psalm of praise to God." Now that's what you call a Christian. Perhaps we need another name for ourselves, don't we?

Let me tell you about another woman who you've probably heard of. Her name was Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* which was by far the most influential book written in America in the entire 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In fact, when President Lincoln first met Harriet Beecher Stowe, he leaned over to her (he was very tall and she was very small) and he said very kindly to her, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made us fight this great war."

Her own life was marked with a great deal of personal tragedy. Two of her brothers committed suicide. One of her sisters grew up to deny her Christian faith. Another brother, Henry Ward Beecher, was America's most famous preacher in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was involved in a scandal in

which he was charged with adultery. It was literally, in that day, bigger than the Clinton affair. It became the subject of gossip for years.

Harriet, herself, lost an infant and had to bury her baby son alone while her husband was away. Her oldest boy drowned during his first year of college. Lots of personal tragedy and yet in the midst of all this, Harriet felt called to write a novel about slavery in response to Congress' passage of the Fugitive Slave Act in 1850.

The Fugitive Slave Act required Northerners to return slaves that ran to the North for freedom. Effectively there was no place in America where a slave could go and become a free man any longer. Everywhere a slave man or woman was still considered property.

Well, after witnessing the recapture of a slave in Boston and the leading of this man down the streets in chains, this little woman, wife of a college professor, decided to use her writing gift to write a novel about slavery. Her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, literally was the spark that lit the powder keg that exploded into the Civil War and ultimately resulted in the freeing of millions of African Americans.

People in the North never had to face the issue of slavery. They didn't own slaves and they didn't think they had to do much about the fact that others did own slaves. But down South, a thousand miles away, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* pricked the conscious of a nation.

I could have told you stories of George Washington Carver, an ex-slave who was converted at age 10 and who through sheer persistence became the savior of the agricultural south by inventing hundreds of uses for peanuts and sweet potatoes. Or William Wilberforce – he was a politician, small, ugly, and he had terrible digestive problems. William was an unlikely candidate for single-handedly being responsible for ending slavery in the UK. It took him nearly 50 years of continuous labor to do so as a member of the British Parliament.

The Integrated Life ... following Christ in the midst of deadlines and home building projects and throw up and hospital visits and dating and school and shared custody with an ex-spouse.

Let me give you three pictures of what I'm talking about by the Integrated Life. We looked at a couple of heroines of the faith. By the way, I don't know how you hear stories of great Christians. Some people are positively discouraged. Why bother? I would really want to encourage you. When you hear a story of somebody who's doing something really well, that you use it, not so much to beat yourself about what a loser you are ... but rather to encourage you that it is possible in this world, with all of our trials and all of our difficulties and illness, to follow Jesus in some way or other.

I'm positively inspired and encouraged when I hear about a person who is in the same situation as me, who has a great prayer life. I think, wow, you mean you can oversee all the demands of a 5,000+ attender church and still have a rich life with God? As a side bar here, don't ever hear about the great examples of Christian faith and use those things to whip yourself into a good depression.

Let me give you a few pictures of what I'm talking about the Integrated Life and we'll start looking at scripture. Here are three quick snapshots.

Number 1- Years ago I had an image of folks of the church who were having morning devotions, really connecting with Christ in their homes through the disciplines of prayer and Bible reading and journaling and then they would jump into their cars. Jesus would follow them out to the street and they'd wave at Christ and say, well I'm off to work now. See you tonight when I get home.

The integrated life is Christ getting in the car with you on your way to work or on your way to the store or on your way to the gym. And then He walks into your office with you and into the grocery with you and into the video store with you. We don't leave Christ standing at the curb with a cup of coffee in His hands waving good-bye.

Number 2- Here's the second image that I've often used here. The Christian life is more like chocolate stirred up in a glass of chocolate milk than it is like a grapefruit. I've been carrying on a fascinating e-mail correspondence with a young woman who used to be an attender here. She's doing her medical residency in another part of the country.

She e-mailed me a couple of months ago and said she was dating this Jewish guy and she didn't know what to do because he didn't seem very responsive to the claims of Christ. She wrote me and asked me, Pastor, what should I do? I wrote her back and said, Well, you really have three options. 1) You can pretend after you read this that you never e-mailed me and just go on doing what you're doing. 2) You could say, Lord, I'm making a mistake here because this relationship could get serious and I could find myself falling in love and ultimately marrying this guy. Since the Bible is so clear about me as a follower of Christ not marrying someone outside the faith, because God wants us to build our homes and families with the same spiritual foundation, you might want to say to your boyfriend, I made a mistake here. I care about you but for now, I feel we've gone too far and I need to back off and just be your friend. Share with him the reason.

Or third, give God time, pray and ask Him to break through my boyfriend's heart in a major way in the next month or two. But if I don't see a major turn around, I'm going to go with option #2.

A day later I get an e-mail from her boyfriend. Apparently this woman chose option 2 or 3 and she communicated that the reason she was doing it was her pastor. So her Jewish boyfriend writes to me and says, very sweetly, "Hey, I'm a physician in New York. My girlfriend just told me that she didn't think she could go out with me because I'm not a Christian. I'm just curious regarding what your definition of Christianity was since my understanding would be that I don't think your God would cause people to break off relationships just because someone wasn't a Christian. Wouldn't he want to be more inviting? So what do you think?"

I wrote him back and said, "What a great question. Let me tell you what my assumption was for when I wrote to your girlfriend.

Number 1- I assume that you guys might have the potential of falling in love. I told him she didn't say that, but I just always assume that's going to happen if people date long enough. This dating relationship could potentially end up in marriage.

Number 2 – I assume she was a genuine follower of Christ and by that we meant that she viewed the Christian life like a glass of chocolate milk where the chocolate was stirred up in every molecule of the milk – not like a grapefruit, a section for her work life and a section for her dating life and a section for her intellectual life and one where she had her Christian section. So I said to him, you know followers of Christ think that Jesus is suppose to affect every single molecule of their life.

When they're going to spend money, they say I wonder where Christ wants me to spend my money, and I wonder how much Christ wants me to give. When they're gonna raise their kids, I wonder how Jesus wants me to discipline my kids? And how Jesus wants me to practice my sexuality and what kind of movies Jesus wants me to attend? I said, you can imagine the disaster, Bill, if a follower of Jesus is asking Jesus questions all the time and she's married to somebody who thinks Jesus' thoughts about life are pretty irrelevant to the nitty gritty of life.

So then I said, "Hey by the way, I'm also a Jewish guy from New York and if you're ever interested in dialoging any more about Christianity or how a Jew could possibly become a Christian pastor, why don't you write back?"

Two days later I get another e-mail. He said, "You know, thanks for writing. Your e-mail made sense to me in a strange kind of spiritual way. I think I'm beginning to understand what you mean by being a Christian."

We've e-mailed back forth since then and also met face to face once. Being a follower of Christ is having a life that is not like a grapefruit and that's what so many churchgoers live like. They live this grapefruit kind of existence. They have their Christian section and then they have their school section and their dating section and their leisure section and their sexuality section. It's chocolate milk – not grapefruits.

Here's the third picture- Robert Munger, many years ago wrote a little booklet that was absolutely profound, called *My Heart, Christ's Home*. He describes the human heart as being like a house and when you invite Jesus to come live in you, you give Him access to all the rooms in the house. You give Him access to your study where you think and read and plan and daydream. You give Him access to your bedroom where you sleep and make love and you give Him access to the living room where you relax. And on and on.

You know, it's the unintegrated life that is such an utter turn-off to the world. It's the guy with the Christian bumper sticker who cuts you off in traffic or the person with the fish on his lapel who cuts corners in businesses. It's the classmate who witnesses about Christ but skips class every other day. And of course this compartmentalization of life is not just a problem for Christians. I remember a friend telling me that in his class at Harvard there were two guys who were editors of the school newspaper. They argued passionately for women's rights but harass a poor maid who cleaned their rooms. We want the Integrated Life. Let's ask the Lord's presence.

You know, I am passionately concerned about this business of the Integrated Life. In fact, one of the central objects of all of the ministry that I believe God has called me to is to equip you to live well in the world. Part of my

passion for this that I didn't happen upon being employed in a church until a little bit later in life. I didn't follow the traditional route of Bible College or Seminary. I was brought to Christ my freshman year of college in a secular university – Case Western Reserve, up in Cleveland. Then I came to Columbus for Law School so I needed to learn how to live as a follower of Christ through seven years of undergraduate and graduate work. Then through a couple of years working as an attorney for the State and then seven years of teaching undergraduate and graduate classes in business law and international business transactions at Ohio State.

So I needed to learn for me, how to follow Christ, not only from Sunday morning to Sunday morning, but Monday through Saturday when I wasn't attending a church service. Much of the ministry at Vineyard is simply about helping you to live from Monday to Saturday.

Now one of the ways that followers of Christ can begin to pop some boxes in their thinking about the Integrated Life is to begin to see that the God who we worship is not only the God of Redemption. In other words, He's not only the God who wishes to save us for heaven, the One who we interact with in church buildings and prayer sessions and small groups and Bible studies, God is not only the God of redemption, but He is also the God of creation. He is everywhere present. So as the apostle Paul said to the philosophers in Athens, in Him we live and move and have our being. There are glimpses of God everywhere.

God is not some abstract, invisible principle. He reveals Himself in all of the roles that we have to assume. For example, from the beginning of the Bible, God reveals Himself as a worker. He's not a cosmic, contemplator or like the Greek gods – involved in being some heavenly slacker. God's working – right from the beginning of the bible. He's working in creating the world. Then we see Him working – He's a Gardener, He plants the Garden of Eden and cultivates it and then He creates people to work the garden.

Is that just kind of lying around heaven? The Bible says in Psalm 121 that God neither slumbers nor sleeps. Jesus says, "My Father is working still and I'm working." One theologian said, the God of the Bible is preeminently a worker. There are so many images of God in the Bible working. You see Him as a musician composing and performing music. He's a metal worker. He's a potter. He's a garment maker, a gardener, a farmer, a shepherd, a tent-maker, a builder, a soldier, a warrior, and a judge. Jesus was a carpenter, a teacher, a student, a physician. Any of you workers, God is not just interested in expert religious people. He shares our passion to work.

So when you gotta work you can remind yourself you're not doing something disconnected from the model of my God. Let me just press this point a little bit more. In a specific way God reveals Himself as a builder. Are any one of you in the trades? You're a carpenter, a plumber, a stucco mason. Maybe you're an electrician or a roofer, a building contractor, an architect, an interior designer, a painter or you're involved in home repair projects.

Not only does the Bible portray God as a worker, but specifically it portrays Him as a builder. He's a hands on builder. Isaiah 48:13, if you're taking

notes, “My own hand laid the foundation of the earth.” The work of God in creation is described in terms of foundations and beams being laid, measurements being determined, lines being stretched, bases being sunk, cornerstones being laid.

We find these references to God, metaphorically using calipers and tape measures and buckets and scales. In the New Testament all of these images are spiritualized so that we, the church, become God’s building. Our lives become our building projects where we get to determine through our life choices, what kind of life we’re going to construct. A life built on sand that’s going to be blown away when difficulty hits or a life built on rock – the words and instructions of Jesus.

Whenever you’re involved in building something, you’ve got a model in God. We have models of God as lawyer and prosecutor and judge. If any of you are at all involved in the legal system, you’re attorneys or paralegal or judges or legal secretaries ... you work for the Attorney General’s office or in a corporate legal department or in a private law firm or you’re attending law school or you’ve got a case pending somewhere in one of the courts or you’ve been sued or are suing or you’ve ever been brought up on criminal charges.

All these things are not far from God. As if we leave Jesus at the curb and enter the world of Law. The entire scripture could be summarized as an extended judicial proceeding. Starting with a charge against men and women in the Garden of Eden way back in the early pages of the beginning of the Bible in Genesis and ending with a final judgement and a thorough sifting of the human race in the last pages of the book of Revelation at the end of the Bible.

Throughout the Bible God portrays himself as a judge and a lawyer and a defender of the weak and a prosecutor of the guilty. There’s so many legal terms used. Not only is there vast tracks of law scattered all through the Bible, but there’s so many legal terms. Words like “justification” and “redemption” and “down payment of the spirit” and “seal of the Holy Spirit” and “covenant” and “testament” and “heirs of Christ.”

God is in the world of law. He’s in the world of home life and family life and marriage and parenting. When you enter your home, do you go into a God-free zone? A place where say, well, I don’t know if God really understands this or that. Or the only time God is present in the home is when I have my devotions or watch religious TV or listen to worship music. Or is God through every molecule of home life?

The Bible portrays God, metaphorically, as giving birth. God became a baby born in a stable in Bethlehem – not only gives birth, but was he Himself was given birth to. We see God walking around as a child and living life as a single adult. Apparently, it is possible to not be incomplete, unfulfilled, half a person, have people say to you as a single person at family gatherings – at Easter – so, have you met someone?

You know that look in their eyes. They’re thinking, she seems normal, he seems normal ... I wonder what’s really wrong with him or her? Must be sending out a vibe. Apparently, it’s possible to live a perfectly healthy, adult life, to have no bad vibes going out and still remain single. Jesus was.

God portrays himself not only as single, but as husband and father and occasionally as mother. He understands family life. He apparently understands blended family because into the family of God He brings in Jew and Gentile. He understands adopting children because He himself adopts children into His family. He understands the death of one of His children and the loss of a son. He understands rebellion and disobedience of children.

He practices hospitality and He portrays Himself as making meals and cleaning house. Do you get it? Do you understand? One of the great Christian statesmen of all time, a man by the name of Abraham Kuyper, meant when he said, "There is no square inch of the universe where Jesus Christ doesn't proclaim 'This is Mine!'" Even in friendships. A friendship between two teenage girls – the kind of comradely that would be on a high school baseball team. A friend – a lifelong friend – stretching way back to childhood.

This fundamental part of our humanity – friendship – God models for us. The integrated life is seen most clearly in the incarnation of God the Son becoming a man. We read in John 1 that God became a human being. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." We immediately meet someone who communicates God and reveals God and conveys God. He's called the Word. We later find out that this Word – the one who reveals God, communicates God, shows us what God is like ... we later find out He's no one other than God the Son, the second person of the Trinity.

This Word, this One who communicates the reality of God and conveys God to us, this Word, is somehow distinct from God, He's with God and yet He is God. And in this first verse of John chapter 1, we have the beginning of the communication of the mystery of the Trinity. Three persons all of whom are God. Somehow, subsisting in the person of the Father, the person of the Son and the person of the Holy Spirit.

Here is a Jew. One committed to this radical monotheism of the oneness of God. A Jew named John, who's telling us that the Word, this one who is somehow distinct from God is Himself God. The people least likely – listen – the people least likely to believe in Trinity, the Jews, were the ones whom God spoke this mystery of His being the Trinity. It's like God choosing some lifelong Buckeye fan to lead the pep rally at the University of Michigan.

Down in verse 14, what we see is this Word, this one who exists from the beginning, became flesh and dwelt among us. The integrated life, God becoming a real human being – not staying up in heaven or even hovering 8 feet above our heads. But God Almighty, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, taking on full humanity, working, eating, sleeping, living in this world – not just in church buildings or behind monastery walls. He dwelt; he lived among us in the real world.

Let me bring all of this home for you. I think one of the doorways in which a follower of Christ can really understand what it means to follow Jesus at work or with our family situations or as a friend is for Christians to recapture an old Christian word – the word "calling".

The problem with the word "calling" is that in Christian history there has been an unfortunate dualism that elevates spiritual occupations above secular



occupations. That's not only in the Catholic church where the word "calling" is restricted to being called to be a priest or being called to be a nun. Have you received the calling? But even in evangelical Christian circles people will talk about full-time Christian service. I'm called to full-time Christian service. If you're not a pastor or a missionary you're a part-time Christian.

In the early church this kind of dualism worked its way in where one of the early church leaders, a man by the name of Eusebius said that there are two ways of life- one of them is the perfect way of life and involves the calling to the priesthood and the other one is the permitted way of life – being involved in ordinary labor and ordinary family life. The perfect life / the permitted life.

This kind of thinking really permeates most of Christianity in the world. I remember as an 18-year-old sitting down with my pastor and asking him what God might have for my life? He said, Rich, I think what you need to do is quit college and go to Bible college so you can enter full-time Christian service. I struggled with that! The more I prayed and asked God, the more I sensed that wasn't what God had for me. I loved college; I loved learning about different things. I loved interacting with the professors, I loved being friends and talking with people from all different walks of life.

Then I felt like I was supposed to go to law school. I was one of those few people who actually loved law school – I really enjoyed it. I loved teaching at Ohio State and challenging students. Let me say a personal word to young adults. I am concerned as I see so many folks in our Joshua House ministry who have a deep commitment to Christ assuming that they are called to paid Christian ministry. Surely God does not intend that every serious minded passionate Christian work for a church and only the least committed most superficial Christian become college professors and public school teachers and bankers and politicians. Don't you think we need the bulk of our most devoted followers out there influencing the world and not in here. And, of course, the worst of all possibilities is I don't know what to do with my life so I'll become a youth pastor or a worship pastor. Pastoral work is not for the utterly confused and clueless. In fact, I love the counsel of Charles Spurgeon regarding a calling to pastoral work, "If God lets you do anything else with a clear conscious, do it." There is no higher life or lower life or sacred life or secular life. All of life is lived under the Lordship of Christ. Dualism has so infected people's thinking that the full-time homemaker feels like the only time she's really serving God is when she puts the kids down and hosts the kinship group for the church. An office manager feels like the only time where I'm really serving God is not when I'm not dealing with staff problems or planning budgets, but those rare opportunities when I get to share my faith.

Could the ordinary stuff of our life be actually considered spiritual by God? Remember God portrays himself as a worker, as a family person, as a friend.

The great reformer, Martin Luther, once said, Ordinary tasks are the work of God. "Works of monks and priests are not one lick different in the sight of God than being a farm laborer or woman going about her household tasks." Another time he said, "God and His angels smile when a man changes a diaper."

Moms, how about a little cheer for Martin Luther on that one! God and His angels smile when a man changes a diaper. God smiles not just when he sees a man pray, but when a man changes a diaper or cleans his wife's car or vacuums a rug or washes the dishes.

You say, Well, I don't know my calling. If I was confident that God wanted me in medicine or in teaching or as a homemaker or in Chicago or in India, then I guess I would feel like I could see God in the midst of my day, but I just don't know my calling. Os Guinness, in his book called *The Call* which I recommend to you who are struggling with callings, makes this wonderful point – that every Christian ought to know their call at least in a primary sense.

We are called to Someone before we are called to something or to somewhere. You can know your calling today. I'll tell you what your calling is – you're calling is to follow Jesus Christ, to serve Him. Before God calls you to be a web site designer or to live in Westerville or to be a mommy, God calls you first to Himself. You're calling is to live from a center that you find in Christ. This is the starting point of satisfaction. Not as the secular world thinks – finding the perfect job or the perfect company to work for or the perfect city to live in, but finding God in the midst of the place you are and the thing you're doing.

How do I do that? More and more you begin to say to God, God, what are you up to here? Here I am in the Laundromat, I'm called first of all to You, before I'm called to wash the clothes, I'm called to You. What are You up to here? What are You up to in this car repair place? What are you up to in this grocery store? What are You up to in this office, in this difficult relationship? God what are you up to? If every square inch of the universe belongs to Jesus Christ, what are You up to God?

I'm called to You, so I welcome Your presence, I invite You here in my class. I need your help on this test. We need to understand that the real world is woven through with frustration that we never escape or get beyond. There is a "not yet" of fulfillment. A not yet of disappointment, a not yet of frustration. The kingdom is not fully here and everything around us is broken because of the fall of men and women.

Somebody says, well I just don't feel perfectly fulfilled on my job. I say join the rest of human race stretching back to Adam and Eve being thrown out of the Garden of Eden and stretching forward to the return of Christ. Work is cursed. This wonderful thing created by God everywhere – at all times. Since God cursed the ground in the Garden and said that thorns would come up from it, there are going to be relational thorns that come up from the ground and financial thorns for you and working condition thorns and boredom thorns and management thorns and personality conflict thorns.

You don't escape the thorns by getting involved in a spiritual vocation like pastoring. It doesn't matter what church you go to work for, there are gonna be thorns there. No matter what Christian school you send your kids to. People are so disappointed when they go on missions trips sometimes. Gee, I didn't expect there to be problems when I'm on a short-term mission trip. I thought this universe had escaped the fall. I thought there were pockets in the Garden of Eden where there were no relational problems and everyone perfectly related to

each other. Parents are always looking for that for their little Christian children. It doesn't exist in this not yet -universe we live in before the return of Jesus.

So in the midst of this real world, with a real world creator who really models for us all the various tasks of life – the trials and the triumphs, the joys and the sorrows, the ups and the downs ... where a real world Savior who comes to live among us. How do I really become a follower of Jesus out there?

How do I live a more integrated life?

First of all, I would say, recognize that God's will for you is an integrated life. He wants His presence and His will stirred up like chocolate in chocolate milk. Unfortunately, too many Christians play the church game and do a really rotten job at work —show up late, barely study for tests. Following Jesus is a full-time job. Therefore, He wants you to do an excellent job at whatever you find yourself doing, whether it's clerical work, or brain surgery or child care, work for Christ. You're always following Jesus, called to serve Him, living for Him. Reject all dualism in your thinking, you know secular/sacred, full-time Christian service/part-time Christian service, higher/lower callings. You're not higher if you become a pastor and lower if you work in the secular world.

Remember, God and the angels smile when a man changes a diaper. There are no unspiritual activities if done out of love for God or love for someone else.

Finally, request God's presence wherever you are – wherever you find yourself – in the car, in your home, nursing your baby, on your computer, in the mall, in the grocery store, standing in line at the supermarket – invite God's presence there! Get in the habit of welcoming the Lord, asking God, What are You doing here? Give me eyes for You. For in Him we live and move and have our being.

Let's pray.

**I. Examples of God's People**

**II. The God Who Models**

- A. Life in the Real World
  - 1. The Model Leader
  - 2. The Model Builder
  - 3. The Model Lawyer
  - 4. The Model Family
  - 5. The Model Friend
- B. Life in the Flesh (John 1:1-18)

**III. The God Who Calls**

- A. The Problem of Dualism
- B. The Problem of Ignorance
- C. The Problem of Frustration
- D. The Potential of Connecting