

THE WELL-INTEGRATED LIFE



HEAR

Read Romans 12:1-2

In the same way that Jesus integrated his deity and his humanity, we as believers are called to integrate every aspect of our lives. That means integrating our faith with our learning, our theory with our practice, our emotions with our minds, our work with our rest, and our bodies with our souls.

This is both complicated and also the heart of the gospel: the Holy Spirit can and will guide us into wholeness. For this discipleship cycle, we'll focus on integrating our faith with our learning and our theory with our practice.

Simply put: let's talk about how we can be consistent and rooted in Jesus no matter whether we're at church or school, at home or at the store, with family or with classmates, to offer all parts of ourselves to God.

- What are 2-3 places you feel most comfortable and able to "be yourself"?
- What are 1-2 places where you feel like you have to pretend or ignore important parts of who you are?
- Everyone changes their appearance, way of speaking, etc. from place to place, but our overall world view of seeing the world through Jesus' eyes should stay the same. Do you find yourself drastically changing your worldview from one place to another? Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."



RESPOND

Go and do

The passage right before this one (Romans 11) gives the why for offering our bodies as a living sacrifice: because of the Lord's mercy in bringing us into his family. This joy and primary identity doesn't erase our other identities as student, mentor, friend, church member, etc. Instead, it gives them meaning and helps us grow in each area as part of the whole.

- Where do you believe that God's mercy applies to you and your life, and where do you struggle with this beautiful truth?
- If our primary identity as part of God's family informs all our identities, how do we know when to lean into one identity more than others? How can we do this without being fake or dishonest?

Much of the work in this discipleship cycle is internal—focusing on where you are and who God is calling you to be. But there has to be a communal aspect so that we don't get too much in our heads. Look at the suggestions below and walk through each one.

- List 5 of your identities (not the primary one of Christian). Where are those more solo identities? (for example, do you do a lot of research alone as a student?) Where are these identities more communal (do you spend a lot of time with your family as a sibling, child, parent, etc.?)
- Pray and ask the Lord where he wants to grow you in following him as you grow in one of the identities you listed as part of your identity as his child. Perhaps he wants you to find someone at church to pray with you for your labmates. Maybe he wants you to tell your roommates/family about your work and why it's interesting to you. Perhaps he wants you to show you fellow Christians in your program so you can meet for coffee and prayer. There are many options!
- Rest in the knowledge that God's mercy is the basis for all the work we do. We don't have to earn his approval (we can't!). We don't have to harshly push ourselves to sacrifice our life to God (our work in the university is important to God!). We can trust that God loves us and is working in us with great love for us.



DEBRIEF

Reflect on what you learned

- How do you feel about your list of identities now? Do they feel more important? Less important?
- How do you feel about being vulnerable in integrating different areas of your life?
- What kind word does the Lord have for you in all this?