

South East Asian Theological Schools, Inc.

SEATS

Schools of Mission

Discipling Leaders • Building Nations

SOM-01 Foundations of our Faith

SOM-01-03 Jesus: Who Do Filipinos Think He Is?

This class will examine how Filipinos view Jesus Christ and how that view can be reconciled with the biblical presentation of who Jesus is. How can I bring a biblical understanding of Christ into my ministry?

I. Christology

-Christology is “a word about Christ” *“Isang pagsalita tungkol kay Kristo”*

John 8:12 – Jesus spoke to the Pharisees again. He said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have a life filled with light & will never live in the dark.”

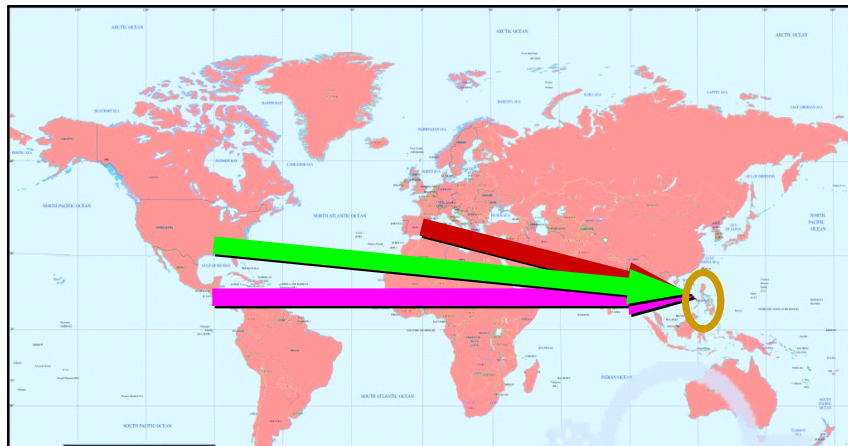
What kind of light do you see? *Anong klaseng ilaw nakikita mo?*

Christ Around The World

Different people see Christ in different ways.

How did you first learn about Jesus?

INFLUENCES ON THE FILIPINO VIEW OF CHRIST



1: The Spanish Christ

Focused their minds on the sad parts of Jesus' life.

Tragedy / *Malungkot na Sakuna*

Death / *Kamatayan (Takot sila)*

Wounds & Agony of Christ / *Mga sugat at paghingalo ni Kristo*

#1A: Christ as Corpse (*Patay*)

“This Christ ... does not rise again This Corpse Christ ... is not the Word which became incarnate in livable flesh This Spanish Christ who has never lived ... lies horizontal & stretched out like a plain, without soul & without hope.”

- Don Miguel de Unamuno

El Cristo Yacente de Santa Clara de Palencia

This view encouraged the Spaniards to preserve their life as it is & not to introduce any changes into it.

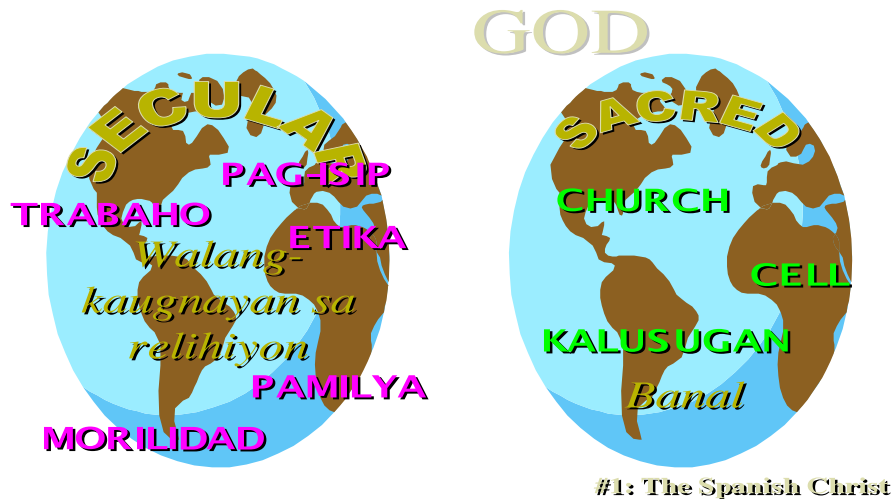
#1B: The Docetic Christ (*Parang Tao Lang*)

Fully God, but NOT human / *Diyos siya pero hindi siya Tao*

His life has little influence on our lives / *Walang impluwensiya ang buhay niya sa buhay natin*

Split-level Christianity

A sharp distinction between religious & secular life.



#2: The Latin American Christ

Not the Christ of the Gospels / *Hindi siya Kristo ng Mabuting Balita*

“the Lord of Miracles” / *Panginoon ng mga Himala*

“the Lord of the Sepulchre” / *Panginoon ng Nitso*

“the Lord of the Earthquakes” / *Panginoon ng Lindol*

“the Catholicism of the masses in Latin American countries has had very little effect on society & has been unrelated to the problems of life.”

#3: The “American” Christ

Recognition of Sin (defined in “American” terms) *Pagkilala ng Kasalanan (sa tingin ng mga ‘kano)*

Emphasis on Born Again/Personal Relationship *Pagpapahalaga sa ipanganak uli / pakikipagrelasyon pansarili*

BUT, the goal is presented as ‘going to heaven when you die’ & attaining eternal life
Pero, ang pinaka focus ay sa dulo ng buhay—kaunting emphasis sa buhay Kristyano

THE FILIPINO CHRIST

SANTO NIÑO (Holy Child)

TRUTH: Christmas really happened

PROBLEM: *Santo Niño* always remains a child / *Laging siyang Bata*. Helpless / *Kawawa*

SANTO ENTIERRO

TRUTH: Christ really died

PROBLEM: *Santo Entierro* always remains dead—He never comes to life again / *Lagi siyang patay – wala talagang buhay*. *Kawawa*. Christian Filipinos attach greater significance to the suffering & death of Christ over that of His life & teaching.

KRISTO SA SABUNGAN

Kristo sa Sabungan is the intermediary between bettors. They go about their job with their hands outstretched – reminiscent of the image of Jesus Christ on the cross – & so they have been aptly named as *Kristo*.

TRUTH: Christ really is an intermediary / *Tulay talaga si Jesus*

TRADITIONAL FILIPINO RELIGION

Filipinos did not just accept the Spanish view at face value. There were aspects of Filipino Traditional Religion that were open to the concepts the Spanish brought.

Filipinos of the day were afraid of death. They also believed that their ancestors had spiritual power when they died. These ideas were supported by the Spanish devotion to saints as powers that could help us from the afterlife.

Filipinos also willingly adopted the practice of the *flagelantes* and have been one of the few cultures to preserve this until today.

The Suffering Christ *ay naging pag-asa sa mga masa kapag namuhay sila sa ilalim ng mga Castila*.

HUMANITY OF CHRIST IGNORED

“Their exclusive interest in Christ’s meaning for death & immortality has lead them to ignore the One who by the lake-side told men how to live. Because ... Christ has not been associated with life & living problems, people in general have not come to face to face with the tremendous Leader who was conscious that He had come into the world to be the Lord of life. It has thus come about that the most impressive aspects of His teaching have never been made a rule of life nor the most impressive aspects of His conduct become an inspiration for living. His words, ‘Follow me,’ have been utterly meaningless.”

RESULT: His life & teachings have had little influence over His devotees.

Walang impluensya ang buhay at turo niya sa mga buhay ng kanyang mga alagad.

Split-Level Christianity:

believing two opposite things at the same time.

Halimbawa: Saying you are a Christian but not following the teachings of Christ in your life. *Sinisabi na Kristyano ka pero ang buhay mo ay walang ebidensya na Kristianyo ka*

SOLUTION:

removing the rebellious areas of your life

taking on the characteristics of Jesus' life

2 Types of Filipino Christianity:

Masa at Mayaman – stresses rituals.

Intellectuals – stresses a return to real Christianity

Problem: Distinction between being educated & being pious

“the educated tend to equate piety with Quiapo ritualism, & the pious tend to associate Christian doctrine with unintelligible pronouncements.”

The Christ who is Jesus:

Some Filipino writers focussed on the humanity of Jesus.

Halimbawa: Dr. Jose Rizal admired Christ as the man “For me, Christ-man is greater than Christ-God.”

The Face-Saving Christ: (Fr. Ruben Villote)
created in the likeness of the Filipino
does not like controversy & avoids conflict

PROBLEM:

The Christ of the Gospels did not smooth over problems

He confronted people to reject their own sinful lives & embrace the Kingdom of God

Solutions to Traditional Filipino Views of Christ

Looking at Jesus in a more complete, biblical way.

#1. Jesus is not only a baby nor is He just a dead body. He also lived a life of sinless perfection on earth so that He might save us from our sins. Jesus can relate to our everyday lives because He was tempted in every way we are but is without sin.

#2. Jesus is more than a wonderful man who sacrificed Himself for us. He is also fully God & as such needs to be worshipped as God.

#3. Jesus is not only the awesome God who is far greater than anything we can ever dream to be. He is also fully human & as such His life needs to be examined for ways in which He can relate to us as human beings.

#4. Jesus commands us to Follow Him. We need to examine His Word—the Bible—and do all we can to follow Him. This means that we must give up our hard-hearted focus on ourselves & seek to do His will. We do this by putting off the old man, changing our minds, & putting on new man. The result is a changed life that truly reflects the way God wants us to live. (Eph 4:17-32).

Resource on Christ in the Philippines

Douglas J. Elwood & Patricia Ling Magdamo, *Christ in Philippine Context*, Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1971.

II. BCPI Statement of Faith on Jesus Christ.

BCP Statement of Faith

We believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, & teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, & personal visible return to earth.

Ang Pananampalataya ng BCP

Naniniwala tayo kay HesuKristo, bugtong na Anak ng Diyos, pinaglihi ng Espiritu Santo. Naniniwala ako sa kanyang pagsilang mula sa birhen, buhay na walang kasalanan, mga milagro, at mga katuruan. Naniniwala tayo na pinagbayaran niya ang kasalanan ng sanlibutan sa pamamagitan ng kanyang kamatayan, pagkabuhay niyang muli, pag-akyat sa langit, pamamagitan palagian sa kanyang mga tao, at pagbabalik sa Kalupaan.

#1: God's only begotten Son / Ang bugtong na Anak ng Diyos

John 1:14 – The Word became human & lived among us. We saw his glory. It was the glory that the Father shares with his only Son, a glory full of kindness & truth.

Mt 3:17 – Then a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love—my Son with whom I am pleased.”

Lk 3:22 – and the Holy Spirit came down to [Jesus] in the form of a dove. A voice from heaven said, “You are my Son, whom I love. I am pleased with you.”

Jn 1:34 – [John said,] I have seen this & have declared that this is the Son of God.”

#2a: Conceived by Holy Spirit / Pinaglihi ng Espiritu Santo

Lk 1:35 – The angel answered her, The Holy Spirit will come to you, & the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy child developing inside you will be called the Son of God.

#2b: Born of a Virgin / Pagsilang mula sa birhen

Isa 7:14 – So the Lord himself will give you this sign: A virgin will become pregnant & give birth to a son, & she will name him Immanuel [God Is With Us].

#3: Sinless life / Buhay na walang kasalanan

He 7:26 – We need a chief priest who is holy, innocent, pure, set apart from sinners, & who has the highest position in heaven.

He 9:14 – The blood of Christ, who had no defect, does even more. Through the eternal Spirit he offered himself to God & cleansed our consciences from the useless things we had done. Now we can serve the living God.

1Pe 1:19 – Rather, the payment that freed you was the precious blood of Christ, the lamb with no defects or imperfections.

1Pe 2:22 – Christ never committed any sin. He never spoke deceitfully.

1Jn 3:5 – You know that Christ appeared in order to take away our sins. He isn't sinful.

#4: Miracles / Mga Milagro

Mt 11:20-23 – Then Jesus denounced the cities where he had worked most of his miracles because they had not changed the way they thought & acted.... Chorazin [&] Bethsaida! If the miracles worked in you had been worked in Tyre & Sidon, they would have

changed And you, Capernaum If the miracles that had been worked in you had been worked in Sodom, it would still be there today.

Mk 6:2 – When the day of worship came, he began to teach in the synagogue. He amazed many who heard him. They asked, “Where did this man get these ideas? Who gave him this kind of wisdom & the ability to do such great miracles?”

Ac 10:38 – You know that God anointed Jesus from Nazareth with the Holy Spirit & with power. Jesus went everywhere & did good things, such as healing everyone who was under the devil’s power. Jesus did these things because God was with him.

#5: Teachings / Mga Katuruan

Mt 7:28 – When Jesus finished this speech, the crowds were amazed at his teachings.

Mk 4:2 – He used stories as illustrations to teach them many things. While he was teaching them,

Jn 7:16 – Jesus responded to them, “What I teach doesn’t come from me but from the one who sent me.”

2 Jn 1:9 – Everyone who doesn’t continue to teach what Christ taught doesn’t have God. The person who continues to teach what Christ taught has both the Father & the Son.

#6: Substitutionary atoning death / Pinagbayaran niya ang kasalanan ng sanlibutan sa pamamagitan ng kanyang kamatayan

Is 53:5 – He was wounded for our rebellious acts. He was crushed for our sins. He was punished so that we could have peace, & we received healing from his wounds.

Ro 5:6-9 – Christ died for ungodly people.... Christ died for us while we were still sinners. This demonstrates God’s love for us. Since Christ’s blood has now given us God’s approval, we are even more certain that Christ will save us from God’s anger.

#7: Bodily resurrection / Pagkabuhay niyang muli

1Co 15:3-4 - Christ died to take away our sins as the Scriptures predicted. He was placed in a tomb. He was brought back to life on the third day as the Scriptures predicted.

#8: Ascension into heaven / Pag-akyat sa Langit

Lk 24:51 – While he was blessing them, he left them & was taken to heaven.

1Pe 3:22 – Christ has gone to heaven where he has the highest position that God gives. Angels, rulers, & powers have been placed under his authority.

#9: Perpetual intercession for His people / Pamamagitan palagian sa kanyang mga tao

1Ti 2:5 – There is one God. There is also one mediator between God & humans – a human, Christ Jesus.

#10: Personal visible return to earth *Pagbabalik sa Kalupaan*

Lk 21:27 – Then people will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power & great glory.

III. Jesus & My Church

Who is Jesus? *Sino ba si Jesus?*

So what is it about Jesus that we need to understand in order to be effective disciples of his? How does “Follow Me” differ for us than it does for “followers” of the Black Nazarene or *Sto. Niño*?

What does Jesus really mean when he commands us to “follow” him?

What is the focus of those who “follow” the various images (idols) of Christ in the Philippines?

What are examples of Split-Level Christianity in our society today?

How can my church become more of a follower of Jesus?

1. Christianity is not a doctrine but a person to whom I entrust myself without reserve.¹
2. We must affirm ... that Jesus is the only way to salvation.²

There are three habits that we can do in our cells in order to maintain Jesus as the center of our movement. These three were suggested in *The Forgotten Ways Handbook: A Practical Guide for Developing Missional Churches*.³

1. Keep Jesus at the heart of it all.
2. Get over dualism.
3. Make the Gospels the primary text.

We will try to work with these ideas and apply and adapt them to our own situation.

Habit #1: Keep Jesus at the Heart of It All

Hirsch and Altclass suggest three (3) “Practices” that we can do to help us not only understand Jesus in a more complete way, but to also present him in that way to others.

1 Michael Frost & Alan Hirsch, *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st-century Church* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), p. 113.

2 Frost, p. 114.

3 Alan Hirsch with Darryn Altclass, *The Forgotten Ways Handbook: A Practical Guide for Developing Missional Churches* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press 2009), pp. 42ff.

Practice One: Seek a Fresh Perspective on Jesus

We have just seen how Jesus is very well known in the Philippines. In fact, for the past 350 years, different people have brought their experiences of Jesus and presented them to Filipinos. What we have also seen is that sometimes these experiences and views are limited or incomplete. The question is this: What can we do, as MMBC cellgroup leaders, to present Jesus to people who know him so well? How can we imitate his mission to the world as we ourselves try to do the same thing?

- We need to learn to understand Jesus from how he presents himself, as recorded in the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, & John).
- Focus a series of Cell-group lessons on the Jesus of the Gospels.
- Watch movies on the life of Jesus; then reflect on them together. Discuss their strengths and weaknesses and their relationship to the Jesus of the Gospels.
- Suggestions: Read *The Jesus I Never Knew* by Philip Yancey in order to better understand Jesus from his Jewish roots.
- Read and reread the Gospels (see below for more tips in this area).

Practice Two: Shape Life and Spirituality on Jesus

In developing a model for discipleship, life, and spirituality we should look at the example of Jesus. We need to be always asking ourselves these two questions: “What did Jesus’ spirituality look like and consist of?” and “How does my spirituality compare to Jesus?” Here are some suggested actions. Can you think of others?

- As a group, research the spirituality of Jesus, and gather your findings under a few headings. Then evaluate your own personal and collective spirituality, using Jesus’ example as a template. Brainstorm for new ideas on how to improve in areas that need improvement.
- Jesus was known as a radical (friend of sinners etc.) How does your group compare? What are they known for? Ask people around you what they see in your group to find out. Then, discuss and implement ways to improve how you are perceived.
- Evaluate everything you do as a group in light of the question: “Would Jesus be doing the same things if he were here in my place?” Make a chart (see below) listing “Yes” or “No.” Can some from the “No” column be redeemed? Should some things be stopped? Are there some new things that could be done. What would Jesus do that you haven’t even considered?
- Do something concrete when you gather to remind yourselves that you are meeting in the name of Jesus.

Ginagawa ng Cell Ko	Dahilan	WWJD?			Change to What?
		Yes	No	Verse?	

Practice Three: Shape Missional Engagement on Jesus

Jesus came to earth for a purpose. That purpose was to proclaim Good News of salvation and freedom in him. We should look at how Jesus interacted with people – how he engaged with the world – so that we too can have an impact for him in sharing the Good News. Some suggested actions are as follows. Can you think of more?

- Study how Jesus interacted with people. How did he ask questions? How did he listen and talk? What can we learn from Jesus?
- One of the themes of John is that Jesus came to do his Father's will – to accomplish the Father's mission. As a group, study John 5:17-20 in order to understand what following the Father meant for Jesus. Explore how your group can develop this same attitude.

Jesus replied to them, "My Father is working right now, and so am I." His reply made the Jews more intent on killing him. Not only did he break the laws about the day of worship, but also he made himself equal to God when he said repeatedly that God was his Father. Jesus said to the Jews, "I can guarantee this truth: The Son cannot do anything on his own. He can do only what he sees the Father doing. Indeed, the Son does exactly what the Father does. The Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing. The Father will show him even greater

Sinabi sa kanila ni Jesus: Ang aking Ama ay gumagawa hanggang ngayon at ako ay gumagawa. Dahil dito ay lalo ngang pinagtangkaan ng mga Judio na patayin siya. Ito ay sapagkat hindi lamang niya nilabag ang sabbat kundi tinawag pa niyang sariling Ama ang Diyos na ipinapantay ang kaniyang sarili sa Diyos. Tumugon nga si Jesus at sinabi sa kanila: Totoong-totoong sinasabi ko sa inyo, hindi makagagawa ng anuman ang Anak sa kaniyang sarili malibang makita niya ang ginagawa ng Ama. Anumang mga bagay na ginagawa ng Ama ay siya ring ginagawa ng Anak. Mahal ng Ama ang Anak at ipinapakita niya sa kaniya ang lahat ng mga bagay na kaniyang ginagawa. Higit na

things to do than these things so that you will be amazed.

dakilang mga gawa kaysa sa mga ito ang ipapakita niya sa kaniya upang kayo ay mamangha.

- When thinking about Jesus and his engagement and what that means for your group, think about the following questions:
 - Whom did Jesus spend time with? Whom do we spend time with?
 - Whom did Jesus eat with? Whom do we eat with? Whom do we invite to our table?

Practice Four: Shape Leadership on Jesus

Every believer is a leader of leaders. This goal shows the value we place on leadership in our churches.

- Leadership development follows disciple-making. Without a good foundation, our leaders will not be Christ-like. Develop a program that goes beyond bible study into disciple-making.
- Study Jesus' model of leadership, as outlined in the Gospels. Try to think of ways to imitate him as you lead your groups.
- Develop a list of leadership habits and qualities evident in Jesus, to use as a template in shaping leaders in your group. Use this to evaluate yourselves periodically.

Habit #2: Get Over Dualism (No More Split-Level Christianity!)

We have seen that focussing on the deity of Christ without really looking at his humanity, creates a society that feels Christ is too good for them. They understand the nature of sin in the world and realise their daily struggles with in. However, they see themselves as mostly failures in living any kind of victorious life. When they look at the perfect life that Jesus lived they cannot relate. “Of course Jesus could live a victorious life,” they say. “After all, he was God!” Looking at Jesus as mostly God (who probably really only appears to be human) creates an understanding in our minds of one who can do the impossible – live perfectly. Something we can never hope to achieve.

This often causes us to live two lives – one life on Sundays where we worship and spend time with fellow believers doing “Christian” things. The other life is during the week where we don't do anything that remotely resembles victory over sin.

Sometimes, however, we really try to make a difference in our lives. We see the sin in the world and how it affects us and how we seem to be powerless against it. So we decide to separate ourselves from the world. We change the kinds of music we listen too (“Christian music”); we change the kinds of books we read (“Christian books”); we change our business associates (“Christian businessmen”); we even change our work by resigning our “secular” jobs and becoming “full-time Christian workers.” We set up a parallel universe where we strive to live lives of perfection until Christ returns. Our notion of evangelism is to find ways to bring people into this same parallel universe because that's how a Christian lives. Our

discipleship is really defined by what we say, how we dress, what we do, and who our friends are.

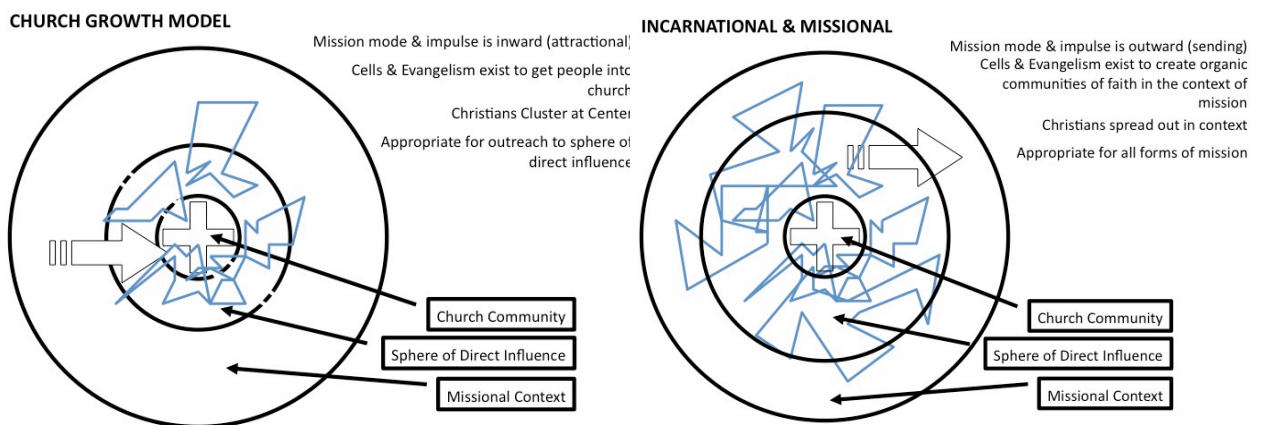
These are the issues that the people of God have faced since the beginning. And it is into this kind of world that Jesus came 2000 years ago. What is clear from reading the Bible is that Jesus was really a man. Of course he was God, but he was also a real man. The Gospels work from the basic assumption that Jesus was a man. What they need to prove was that he was God. That's why there aren't a lot of verses talking of his humanity.

People expected Jesus to join them in their “Christian world” and condemn all those who had not “repented.” Jesus, however, did something odd. He managed to live in the world in a way that was unique. He lived a perfect life of holiness and submission to God that did not feel condemning to “sinners.” Here are some suggested practices if we want to imitate him in his mission to the world.

Practice One: All-of-Life Alignment

Rather than seeing parts of our lives as being devoted to God and others as not, we need to make sure our entire lives are aligned under God. How can we do this?

- Evaluate the things you do as a group from the perspective of split-level christianity. Are you doing things in a balanced way? Do your events and activities reflect not only the deity of Jesus but also his humanity? Do you see certain things, times, or people as being more holy than others?
- What are the “idols” in your life or ministry? Do you focus your efforts toward the right things? Eg. Money and Consumerism can be a very powerful influence in our lives that detracts from our dependence upon God. Here are some ways to fight this:
 - What do you think of the concept of “the Lord’s tithe and my offerings”? How about the idea that we give God back 10% and he leaves us 90% to live our lives? Do these concepts truly reflect the fact that each part of our life needs to be aligned to God?
- Consider your career. Do you consider your job to be a part of Jesus' mission to the world? Do you desire to quit your job so you can devote your time to ministry? How can you instead turn your career or job into a ministry itself? How could you better spend your time while at work to truly reflect on your part in Jesus' mission?



Practice Two: Hallow the Everyday (Make Normal Things Sacred)

Rather than think about things as being 'sacred' or 'secular,' begin thinking of things as 'holy' and 'not-yet-holy.' It is our job to make those things that God has created but humans have degraded into holy things once again. This is a redefinition of how we think of 'holiness.' Rather than thinking about holiness as being defined by things we don't do (eg. The 10 Commandments) we think about ways to do all things in life in a holy way. Somehow Jesus was able to do this. He did all things in life but in a holy way – his goal was to make them holy.

- In your life and in your cell, seek to direct everything towards God. This needs to be intentional – if we just live life and hope God does something to change then we have no hope.
- Listen to Michael Jackson's *Man in the Mirror* and reflect upon the words. How can his idea help us to make our lives and the people and things we interact with holy as well?
- What are the activities of your day? How can you strive to make your day holy, when thinking about these activities?

Activity	Dualistic Approach	Holistic Approach
Laundry	I need to finish this laundry quickly so I can go to church.	I will do the best job of this laundry I can, because I know God wants to be glorified in “whatever I do.”
Career	I need to resign my job so that I can do “full-time ministry” because, after all, “being a Pastor is the highest calling.”	I can minister for God in my work and that ministry is just as valuable as someone involved in “full-time ministry.”
Studies	Maybe God arranged for me to have no school so that I could “get back into ministry.”	I can glorify God whether I am in school or not – I don’t need to quit so that I can minister for him.

- Answer these questions: How can I make my life holy? How can my work be made holy? How can washing clothes be made holy? How can driving be made holy? How can my time with my wife, husband, or kids be made holy? How can meeting for lunch be holy?
- Begin to define holiness by what you do for God, rather than by what you don't do for him.

Practice Three: Redefine and Widen Your View of Worship

I'll bring You more than a song
 For a song in itself
 Is not what You have required
 You search much deeper within
 Through the ways things appear
 You're looking into my heart

I'm coming back to the heart of worship
 And it's all about You
 All about You, Jesus
 I'm sorry Lord for the thing I've made it
 When it's all about You
 It's all about You Jesus⁴

Matt Redman's now famous lyrics made many of us aware for the first time of the concept of worship apart from the singing that happens on Sunday mornings. In fact, we discovered, we can worship anytime while doing anything. If it is indeed true that there is no divide between “Sacred” and “Secular” then worship can occur in all areas of life. The trick is not just to find new places to worship in traditional ways, we also need to change the way we understand worship. “All of life belongs to God and true worship means bringing every sphere under him.”⁵

- Think of ways you can encourage one another to worship in ways apart from regular gatherings.
- Try thinking of worship as loving God. How can you “love God” through your daily activities?

Habit #3: Make the Gospels the Primary Text

The Bible contains four biographies of Jesus' life. It also contains a lot of more theological teachings about Jesus. Sometimes we focus more time on the theology and less on the stories of Jesus himself. Here are four practices that will help us do that.

Practice One: Recalibrate Around Jesus' Core Teaching

Jesus presented His message with everything that he did. He healed the sick, he taught the masses, he saw the unseen, he touched the untouchables. Our first practice sees us looking through Jesus' life so we can imitate what he did and said.

- Spend time studying the parables of Jesus. Apply what you have learned not only to your group but also to everyday life.
- Do a study on what Jesus saw – look through his eyes as recorded in scripture. Afterwards, do a prayer walk around your community and try to see what Jesus would have seen.
- Study the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-8) and interpret it for your life and your situation.

⁴ Matt Redman, "Heart of Worship," *Intimacy*, comps. Matt Redman, 1998, Compact Disc.

⁵ Hirsch & Altclass, p. 50.

Practice Two: Cycle Through the Gospels

This one is perhaps the easiest one to do of all – simply set up a schedule and read the Gospels as many times as you can in one year. Here is a sample schedule for reading them in one month.

Month-by-Month...In the Dust of His Feet			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Matthew 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 9 Matthew 26-28	<input type="checkbox"/> 17 Luke 10-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 25 John 10-12
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Matthew 5-7	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 Mark 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 Luke 13-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 26 John 13-15
<input type="checkbox"/> 3 Matthew 8-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 Mark 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 19 Luke 16-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 27 John 16-18
<input type="checkbox"/> 4 Matthew 11-13	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 Mark 9-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 Luke 19-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 28 John 19-21
<input type="checkbox"/> 5 Matthew 14-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 13 Mark 13-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 21 Luke 22-24	
<input type="checkbox"/> 6 Matthew 17-19	<input type="checkbox"/> 14 Luke 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 22 John 1-3	
<input type="checkbox"/> 7 Matthew 20-22	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 Luke 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 23 John 4-6	
<input type="checkbox"/> 8 Matthew 23-26	<input type="checkbox"/> 16 Luke 7-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 John 7-9	

- Read the Gospels at least 4 times in one year. It's best to do this with a partner and then discuss what you have experienced.
- Do a tour or prayer walk of your community. At each place, read a part of the Gospels. This will help relate the story of Jesus to your life and situation.

Practice Three: Keep Gospels Central to Your Learning

Deuteronomy 6:4 tells us that the teachings of the Law were to be a part of the lives of those who followed God. They were to teach them to their kids, talk about them always, tie them on our heads (all we think) and hands (all we do), and write them outside our houses where we live. We need to do the same with the stories of Jesus – to keep them as a part of our daily lives.

- Jesus is central to the plan of God and to the story of the Bible. “I am the way, the truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father but by me.” Keep Jesus at the heart of all you teach – each lesson must show people Jesus and give them hope.
- Spend time each year in your group studying the Gospels.
- Start a texting ministry by texting a verse from the Gospels to people each day/week/??
- Ask yourself the question: WWJD? (What would Jesus do?) The only way to answer is to study him in depth.