

REALLY

LIVE!

A man in a white long-sleeved shirt is seen from behind, standing on a sandy beach with his arms raised in a gesture of praise or joy. The background shows a clear blue sky and a turquoise ocean. The text 'REALLY LIVE!' is overlaid on the image, with 'REALLY' in a smaller font above 'LIVE!'. The 'LIVE!' text is large and semi-transparent, allowing the man's shirt and the background to be visible through it.

WHEN GETTING BY ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH

Dr. Randy Carlson

When Getting By Isn't Good Enough

Really Live— When Getting By Isn't Good Enough

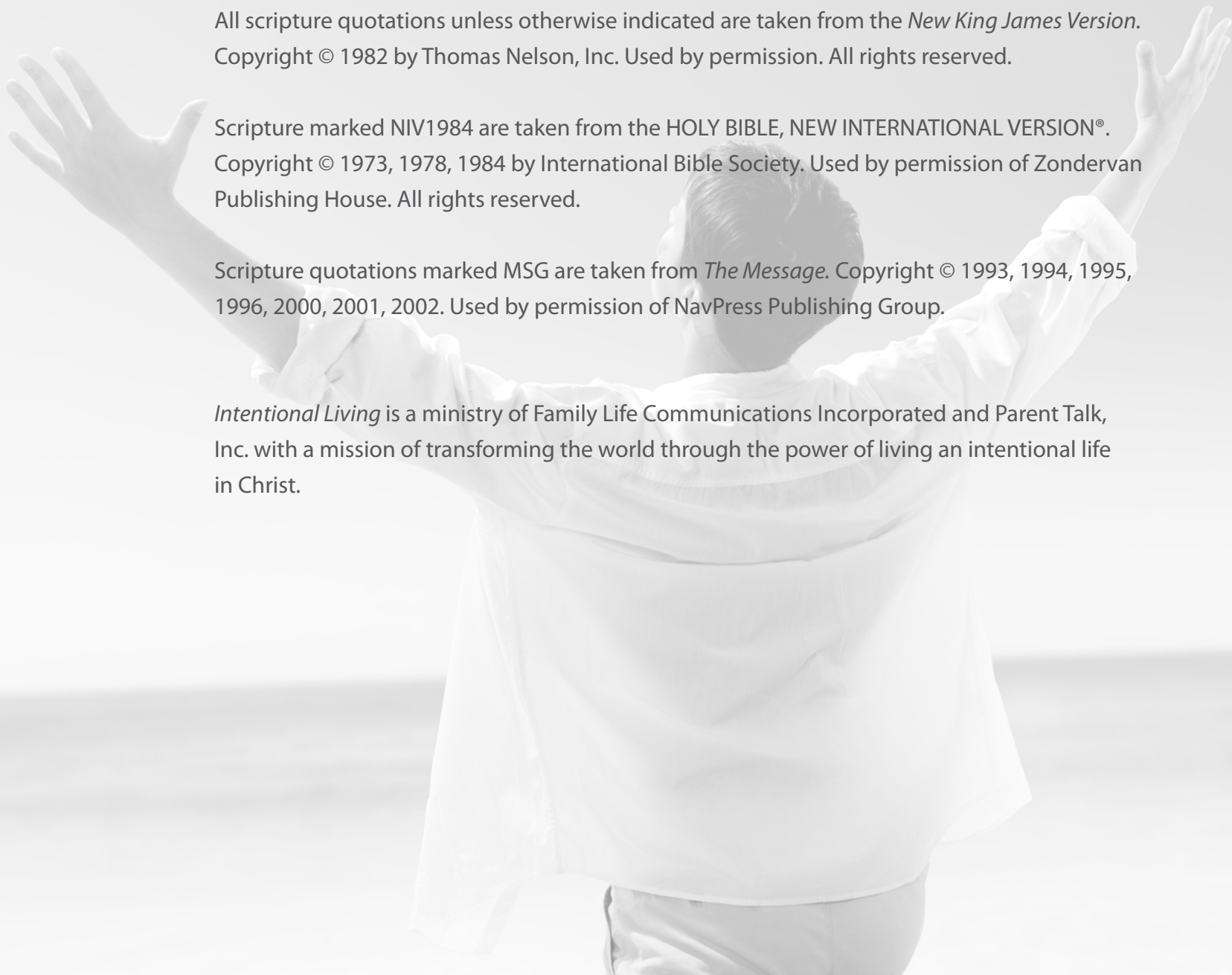
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Intentional Living is a ministry of Family Life Communications Incorporated and Parent Talk, Inc. with a mission of transforming the world through the power of living an intentional life in Christ.



When Getting By Isn't Good Enough

Every person dies, but not every person *really* lives.

When Getting By Isn't Good Enough

INTRODUCTION

I was impressed with how my dad recovered from the first half of life and made the second half something extraordinary.

It wasn't that the first half of my parents' lives had been wasted, because it too was filled with lots of interesting, godly, productive things. It just lacked focus and intentionality.

That changed when my parents were 50-something. It was then that they made a huge intentional decision that took all of us on a journey that would change the course of our family forever.

If you're over 40 and wondering if the lost years will hold you back, be encouraged by my parents. *The last 30 years of my parents' lives were far more productive, joy-filled and intentional than the first 50 years had ever been.*

Years later when it became apparent that my dad was approaching the last months of his life, I asked him what he would have done differently with the first half of his life if he could go back and start all over.

Without missing a beat he said, "Son, I wouldn't change a thing about how I've lived."

He wasn't one to allow regrets of the past to keep him from present and future opportunities. But, I could also tell that he wasn't satisfied with his answer. So, I backed off and waited.



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Sure enough, a few minutes later he looked up from across the living room with a more reserved and reflective expression.

He added, *“Randy, actually if I could live my life all over again, I wouldn't spin my wheels so much,”* and I knew just what he meant!

As I said, my parents started their intentional journey when they were in their 50's and that one decision sustained them for the rest of their lives. They loved God and wanted to do something that would leave a legacy, and that's exactly what they did.

My parents, along with my brother and his wife, started a ranch for deserving boys and girls from inner city homes. Thousands of little children have since responded to the Gospel and thousands of lives have been changed. Children have been helped, but so were my parents, by living a life that outlived them.

As you read *Really Live* consider how you should take that first step on your own journey today. Let God do something extraordinary with the days you have left on this planet. How you choose to really live will be as unique as you are. I can't write your story, but God is ready to.

In the pages ahead I will challenge you to consider **three things** that will give your life more purpose and more meaning today, and more hope and success tomorrow.

Let's *Really Live*—starting now!

Randy Carlson



Was there ever a time you stopped believing you could make it in life?

That's probably not a fair question, because it suggests I may be prejudging you and that's not the case. I only ask the question because more and more as I talk to people, I get the feeling they are so much more willing to give up, to throw in the towel and not pursue what they know God has for them.

That kind of attitude is so far removed from how God wants any of us to feel. In fact, Paul said in Philippians 3:14, *I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenly in Christ Jesus* (NIV1984).

There is what I call a "great divide" between accomplishment and mediocrity in life—a line for each of us that represents a point where we have to make a decision, and then take action. Though we have goals in life, maybe we don't press to make them reality, because we believe things are good enough. And because we have a relationship with the Lord, if we wait long enough, things will come to us. The truth is we are often letting the world go by.

That's not what God intended. He has so much more for you and me. I believe your life should be based on the principle found in Ephesians 5:10: *Figure out what will please Christ, and then do it* (MSG). That principle not only involves information or direction, but it involves action.



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Jesus shows us that pattern in Luke 5:14 where, after He had healed the leper, He told him, "...go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, as a testimony to them, just as Moses commanded." Jesus healed the man, but afterwards it was time for the man to *do something*. There was an action Jesus wanted the man to take.

Figure out what will please Christ, *and then do it.*

We see the same principle in Luke 10:25-28, where the Bible says a lawyer tempted Jesus by asking, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Again, Jesus' response was one that required some kind of action on the lawyer's part. He responded, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" The lawyer knew what the law of Moses said, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" To this Jesus said, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."

That's the same message God has for you and me today. A big part of our lives—the separating point between just getting by and really living in the success we're looking for spiritually—comes down to taking action. Have you ever reached a certain place in life, where you were right there, right at the edge, and then you didn't act? I have to admit, I have. Instead of pressing in, we back up. We don't take the final step that will catapult us right into the success God has for us.



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Over the last 25 years, I've done a lot of talking. My wife, Donna, would tell you I probably speak five words for every one of hers. That's partly the result of being a counselor, teacher and communicator, but I'm also a talker.

What I've experienced in talking with over 35,000 people on my *Intentional Living* radio program has both encouraged and discouraged me. I've been encouraged by those whose lives have been transformed through living intentionally—energizing their faith and turning it into action—and discouraged whenever I see others continue to live mediocre lives.

It makes no sense for so many to remain satisfied with an illusion of what it means to really live when God's love stands ready to provide all the peace, freedom and meaning a person will ever need .

I've witnessed far too many people exchange the real jewel for the fake that fades.

I'm most alive when I'm experiencing my purpose for being here—to help someone find their meaning in life by allowing God's love to become a goal, and a goal to become a plan, and a plan to become an action. That encourages me.

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Little Purpose—Little Peace—Little Freedom

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Today you've decided that "getting by" is no longer good enough. When you act upon what you're about to learn, you won't become one of these statistics:

- 78 % of Christ followers say, "I'm not dependent upon God."
- 52 % claim there is more to their faith than they are experiencing today.
- Only 3 % of Christians admit to surrendering control of their life to God completely.
- 97 % of believers say, "I'm going to retain control of my life."
- 31 % of Americans feel held back by something in their past, leaving only 70 % who feel that they can move forward in their lives.¹

Today you start an *Intentional Living* journey with Christ that will change your life forever.

I'm passionate about this topic, because I too, need to really live. I'm reminded by those I love that my life, too, is often out of balance. While in pursuit of even worthwhile goals and plans it's possible to be alive, but not to really be living.

When I first thought about writing this book, I came up with a long list of all sorts of really important things you could do that would please God, make your lives a lot better and maybe even impress others. Then I realized I needed to heed my dad's admonition—

"Don't spin your wheels, son!"


¹ <http://www.barna.org/faith-spirituality/524-self-described-christians-dominate-america-but-wrestle-with-four-aspects-of-spiritual-depth>

| Life keeps bringing me back to the basics.

It reminds me that there are only three things that really matter all that much, and they turn out to be the three essential habits of those who have learned the secret of how to *Really Live* as followers of Christ.

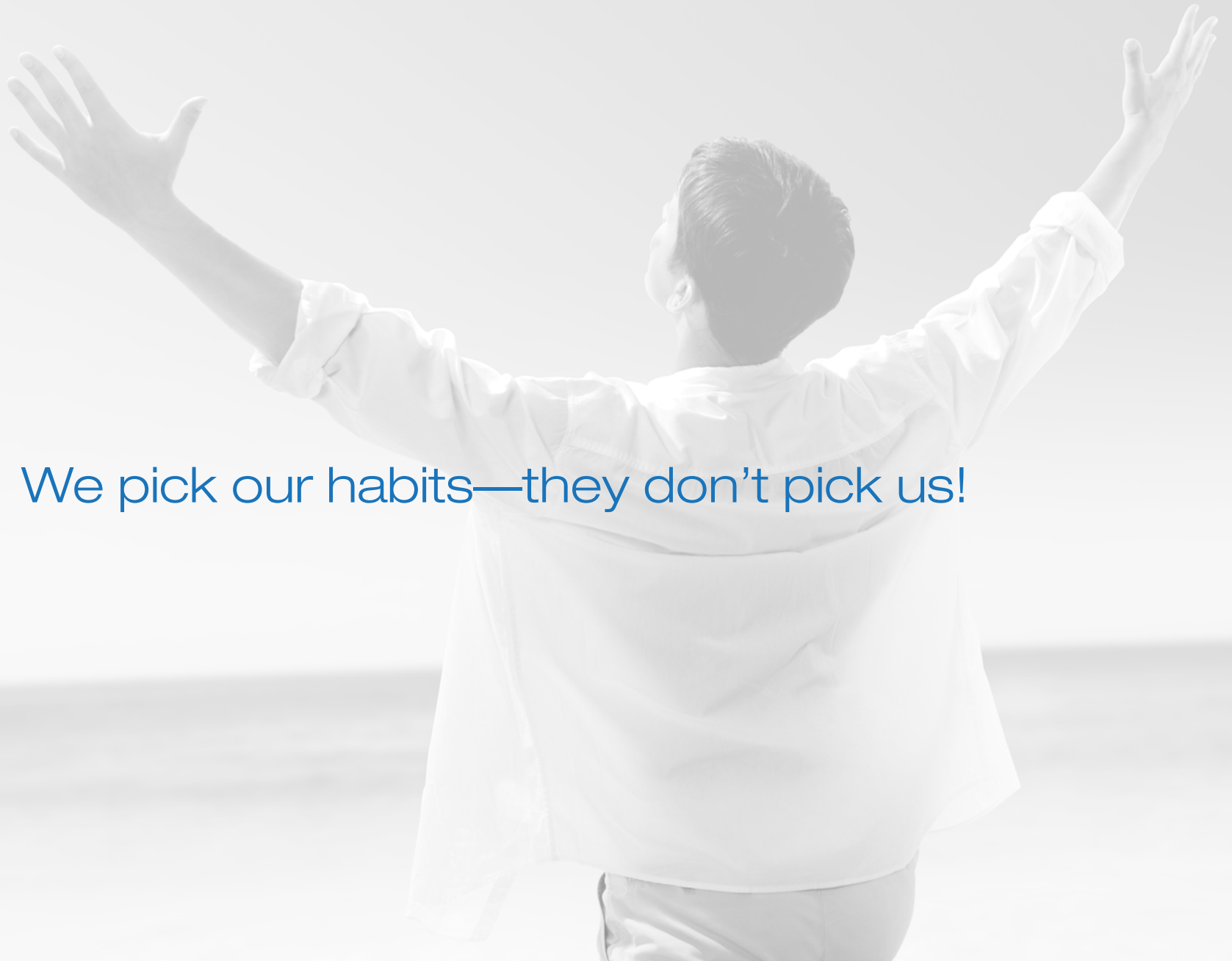
A personal relationship with Christ is at the top of any life list, and I'll talk more about that in a moment. But, even with Christ in your heart it's possible to waste your days. It's possible to have a clear destination and within the next 24-hours get lost in a fog. That's not God's intention for your life.

So, before launching into the three essential habits of really living, I first need to lay a foundation concerning the value of creating intentional habits. Success at anything isn't by accident, but by decision. When we allow God to reshape our habits they become a runway for us to take off with sustained spiritual and personal growth.



Success at
anything isn't
by accident,
but by
decision.

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We pick our habits—they don't pick us!

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I enjoy the first day of each new year.

January 1st is full of optimism, potential, new starts, and a time of reflection on the past 12 months. January 1st allows me to take a deep breath, shake off the past and start over. For one day, the old is gone and hopes for a better tomorrow are fresh.

I think it was January 1st of 2003 when I started a new habit, one that only takes up about 30 minutes of my new year, but brings me 365 days of peace. What I do every January 1st is...

I change the batteries in our home smoke detectors!

You may not consider new batteries in a smoke detector that important, but if a fire ever starts in our house—we are ready! That one simple habit has given me a lot of peace and my family a lot of protection. Throughout the year in some other home, when I imagine somebody looking up at the ceiling and wondering, *When did I last change those batteries?*, I'm smiling on the inside because I know with 100 % certainty that our home is protected. It's done! I don't have to think about it again for 365 days. That brings me comfort knowing I've placed my family's safety as the first thing on my to-do list for a new year.

The right habits will change your life.

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Just imagine what could happen in your life if you committed to do just ONE THING every day for the next 30 days. For example, here are habits some attendees at our *Intentional Living* conferences committed to on their journey:

1. I will not criticize my spouse in any way for the next 30 days.
2. I will not use a credit card for the next 30 days.
3. I will exercise daily (with my doctor's approval) for the next 30 days.
4. I will pray for my country daily for the next 30 days.
5. I will speak words of encouragement to five people daily for the next 30 days.

Think about it—we have a cause *big* enough to move a mountain, *life changing* enough to raise the dead and *personal* enough to wipe away the tears of a hurting person. I can get intentional about that!

Consider the power of your daily habits:

Take the first step on finding and experiencing God's best for your life.

- If you memorized one verse each day, within 30 years you will have memorized 35% of the Bible.
- If you saved \$5 per day for 30 years, you will have saved \$125,000 (based upon a reasonable rate of return).
- If you walked two miles each day, in 30 years you will have walked 21,900 miles and burned approximately 1,600,000 extra calories.
- If you dropped just 100 calories from your daily diet, after 30 years you will have dropped nearly 300 pounds.

Today you've decided to start a new journey—one that will lift you above spiritual, emotional and relational mediocrity. Today you take the first step on finding and experiencing God's best for your life.

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Like the comfort that comes from changing batteries in a smoke detector on the same day each year, you can experience God's freedom, peace and purpose for your life as you intentionally develop godly habits. While you may prefer to call them spiritual disciplines or daily actions, it remains a decision you alone make on how you're going to live the next 24 hours.

If you really want to live above mediocrity and succeed on the journey, here are three habits to develop and keep for life:

1. Make it a daily habit to experience God's intentional love for you. *This habit will give you peace and freedom.*
2. Make it a daily habit to know and experience God's intentional purpose for you. *This habit will give your life meaning.*
3. Make it a daily habit to intentionally and passionately act on your purpose. *This habit will give you success.*

1. Make it a daily habit to experience God's intentional love for you. *This habit will give you peace and freedom.*

WE ALL NEED A LITTLE LOVE

At age 13, I accepted God's love for me. At 40-something, I *experienced* His love for me. I became a Christian when I accepted Him, and became a Christ follower when I experienced His love for me. It's possible to be loved and not to really love back.

God loves you and desires the very best for your life. He desires even more for you than you probably do for yourself. To really live is to connect the dots of God's love for you with your response of loving Him back.

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How do we do that?

Like me, maybe you've spent too much of life trying to please God just so He'll love you more. God desires for us to please Him, but He loves us even when we don't please Him.

I invite you to join me by removing your need to be perfect before enjoying God's love.

There isn't one thing you can do today, no matter how intentional, that will make God love you more than He already does right at this very minute. Unfortunately, [for some it takes a crisis to Really Live.](#)

Sometimes it takes a wake up call before we can really live.

Life is an effective teacher, and in May of 1994 life gave me no choice but to pay attention.

My dad died.

Losing a parent to death is a natural part of life and most of us will experience loss more than once in our lives. But the first time can be particularly difficult.

I intellectually knew my parents would die someday, but I assumed it would always be tomorrow—not today.

In May of 1994, my dad ran out of "todays" and I wasn't quite prepared. Even after sitting with him four weeks in the Intensive Care Unit, on a ventilator, I thought he'd somehow escape death one more time. I figured he'd made it through 27 surgeries, a heart attack, and multiple hospital visits; so this would be just one more of his bumpy, close calls.

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When my dad took his last breath, I was stunned. I shouldn't have been, but I was. I simply couldn't believe it. All of my intellectual studies and problem-solving skills didn't help me for a minute. I experienced, for the very first time in my life, a feeling of total helplessness.

A few days after my dad passed it all caught up with me. I was literally shaken awake in the middle of the night by emotions that had completely overtaken me. I'd never before experienced sobbing that can take your breath away.

A person is shown from the back, standing on a beach with their arms raised in a gesture of surrender or prayer. The person is wearing a light-colored tank top and dark pants. The background shows a calm sea and a clear sky.

The pain was more real than anything I'd ever experienced. It was all I could do to catch my breath.

It was all I could do to catch my breath. The loss was overwhelming. All of my stuffed emotions from weeks of watching my dad suffer tumbled out through intense emotions that overpowered me.

My well-developed emotional guard sprang a leak, and there was no talking myself out of my grief. I wasn't afraid of death. I knew intellectually God loved me, and I was certain of my dad's destination. It was the overwhelming emotions that scared me to death.

I learned then that a relationship with Christ is the first step towards really living. It's more than intellectual acceptance of Him that helps you to really live. Rather, it happens whenever you drop your guard and allow God access to your pain, plans and problems.

I learned to experience His love when I'm in pain, and I'm now learning to experience it in my joy, also.

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“Pity the man with sight, **but no vision.**” Helen Keller

A grayscale photograph of a woman with long, wavy hair, wearing a light-colored zip-up jacket. She is shown from the waist up, with her arms raised high and her hands open, palms facing up. She has a joyful expression, with her eyes closed and a slight smile. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape, possibly a beach or a field near water, with a bright horizon line.

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Take the First Step in Order to *Really Live*

- A. *Speak His name and invite Him to be present with you right now.*** Whenever I hear my own voice calling to Him I begin to feel His presence that very moment. Make it a daily habit to speak His name, invite His presence and sit quietly before Him.

What happened the last time you called God's name out loud?

- B. *Move toward Him daily.*** This is done by reading His Word—the Bible, experiencing Christ-centered prayer and meditation, and through individual worship.

1. Intentionally follow a daily Bible reading program. Intentional Living has a 365-day chronological Bible available, arranged in daily readings to help you on your journey.
2. Maintain a daily prayer journal that includes praises, requests and answered prayers.
3. Worship Him daily. I've discovered whenever I'm alone and repeating the words to a worship song that I feel closer to Him.

What difference has reading the Bible, prayer and worship made in your life?



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Each time you embrace His love and choose to intentionally stay close to Him, you'll again begin to feel His intentional love for you.

2. Make it a daily habit to know and experience God's intentional *purpose* for you. *This habit will give your life meaning.*

I was into my 30s when I started to figure out my place in God's plan. As a Christ follower from my teens, I had been taught that the overarching purpose of my life was to know God; enjoy His presence and to share His love with a hurting world. That was clear to me. What wasn't clear was what I should do about it. I'm embarrassed to admit it, but I remember feeling a bit envious of those who seemed to have their lives all sorted out.

During those years, I recall spending time with a friend who was deep into his medical school education. He appeared so very certain of his calling and his profession. He knew why he was working so hard, where it would take him, and why he was doing it. He was intentionally pursuing his calling in life and that seemed to give him a lot of passion.

Meanwhile at 30, I hadn't yet finished my bachelor's degree; I had a wife and two children and was busy in my ministry work, but not settled. I was unclear about what my goals should be for the rest of my life and what I should be doing next.

Then it started to click.

I began to understand that if I wanted to really live it would happen at the intersection of God's intentional love for me, the gifts and talents He gave me and my willingness to be obedient to do something about both.

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I figured God loved me, had given me a few gifts and talents. It was up to me to stop thinking, planning and looking around at others and to start **acting** by faith and take a step.

I started my journey by first talking with God, then with Donna and a few trusted friends. I needed to know what they saw in me that God could use for His Kingdom purposes. I came up with my short list. I share my list simply to illustrate that God has given each of us a list – this list is mine.

1. Communication
2. Leadership
3. Teaching and Counseling
4. Creativity

I would have been useless as a plumber, dentist, accountant or pilot. But when God connects the dots of His love and purpose for your life, with your passionate, daily action of obedience, you will *Really Live!*

I figured if God wanted me to exercise one or more of these gifts for Him, He'd provide. So I started to trust Him by faith, took my first step, and God did indeed provide.

At 33, I went back to college and over the next number of years finished a B.A. in Business, an M.A. in Counseling and Guidance, and a Doctorate in Education with an emphasis in Counseling Psychology.

In the years since, God has allowed me to write, speak, counsel, create, teach and lead.



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I've made a lot of mistakes in my life, but one thing I've experienced personally and I invite you to experience also on your journey is this:

Real life is found at the intersection of God's intentional love and purpose for your life, and your obedient response.

I would encourage you from this moment forward to spend most of your time strengthening the gifts God has given you. While He can use you far beyond your own limited gifts and talents, it's been my experience that He chooses mostly to use us in areas of the gifts and talents He's put in us. Why else would He give us gifts and talents in the first place?

Complacency and good intentions can be the enemy to progress. Don't allow either to hold you down any longer. Spend time in prayer and with those you love until you can answer the questions below. The time you invest will be well worth it.

The point of my story isn't to encourage going back to college or to start writing books. It's to encourage you to allow God to start writing His story through your life.

In order to really live, you must stop at the intersection of God's love for you, your love for Christ, His purpose for you and how you respond to the gifts He's given you.

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Allow God to
start writing His
story through
your life.

What do you consider to be your purpose for being on the planet today?

List four things at which you are most gifted:

1.

2.

3.

4.

List three places where your purpose and your gifts intersect:

1.

2.

3.



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Which ONE THING from the previous list will you commit to intentionally focus on for the next 30 days? How could your life be different in one year? Where will your life be in one year if you stay on the same path?



“It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless our walking is our preaching.” St. Francis Assisi

3. Make it a daily habit to intentionally and passionately act on your purpose. *This habit will give you success.*

Living intentionally is for our benefit and for God's glory—not the other way around.

If we get the glory from how we live, and not God, then we're doing things backward.

I suppose in part, that is why my favorite character from the *Old Testament* is a guy named Nehemiah. He is a poster child for what it meant to *Really Live* during his generation.

He was a man of intentional action—but God got the glory.

Even though Nehemiah walked on this planet 2,500 years ago, the humanness of his story and his life of faith meeting up with action is an example of what it means to *Really Live*.

His entire nation had been held in captivity for years; his homeland lay in rubble, destroyed, and he was held captive in service to a godless, Persian king.

Nehemiah's life moved from captivity to total freedom in almost every way you can imagine. Over a period of about three months Nehemiah moved the nation from a problem to a solution, by taking action in five ways.

The five actions Nehemiah took back then are the same steps you can take today on your journey.



When Getting By Isn't Good Enough

1. He Acted by Asking Better Questions (Luke 2:46)²

Whenever you ask the right questions of the right people at the right time, you're more likely to get an answer that can really help you. Mostly we focus on answers to questions others ask, when we should spend more time thinking about questions we need to answer in order to *Really Live*. Questions like:

1. What can I do to be a better parent?
2. How can I start to save now for the future?
3. What are the gifts I see in my children that I need to encourage?

What's one question that, if answered, could help you most on your journey?

2. He Acted by Feeling Deeply (He sat down and wept.)

Whenever you stay connected to how you're feeling and what God is trying to say through those feelings, amazing things can follow. You may not consider yourself to be a "feeling" person, but you are. Ignoring this part of your life experience will limit you on your journey towards really living. Here are three questions to help you start feeling more deeply:

What moves the heart of God?

² Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions (Luke 2:46 NKJV).



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What moves *your* heart?

What was the last thing you cried about?

What was the last thing you should have cried about, but didn't?

3. He Acted by Responding Decisively (He asked for permission from the king to rebuild the walls of his broken homeland.)

Whenever you make a decision and follow through, your confidence grows.

What decision have you been putting off too long?

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4. He Acted by Creating Bolder Plans (He refused to limit God.)

Make some big plans that will help you to really live. Maybe your plans involve acting on something you've put off for a long time. Make your plans and start telling yourself, "If it's God's will, I will..."

Your plans might include:

1. Developing a new ministry at your church.
2. Repairing a relationship.
3. Going back to school.
4. Exercising daily.
5. Saving for the future.
6. Giving more.
7. Starting a business.

What ONE THING could you do in the next 30 days that would make the biggest difference on your journey in order to *Really Live*?

5. He Acted Intentionally (He rebuilt the wall in 52 days.)

Whenever you follow through, your faith in God grows.

What ONE THING will you actually commit to do in the next 30 days in order to live the way Christ has called you to live?



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A woman with curly hair, wearing a white t-shirt and white pants, stands with her arms raised in a joyful expression, laughing or shouting with her mouth open. She is positioned in the center of the frame against a bright, hazy background that appears to be a beach or a large open space. The overall tone is positive and celebratory.

Conclusion

A woman in a white tank top and dark pants is running on a beach. Her arms are raised in a celebratory gesture, and she has a joyful expression. The background is a soft, hazy view of the ocean and sky.

When Getting By Isn't Good Enough

When I was a child, I often blamed myself whenever things didn't turn out well. I remember even feeling responsible when our English sheep dog, Stony, was injured on a neighbor's fence, even though it wasn't my fault. My sensitive, but childish stream of self-doubting led to questions like: *Did I let her out? Was I supposed to lock the door? Was I supposed to be watching her? Could I have kept her from getting hurt?*

Unhealthy people-pleasing can still be a battle for me at times even today. For example, whenever I read a critical letter or email from a listener, my very first response is to blame myself for letting someone down. Even when the complaint is illogical or totally off the wall, I can allow it to turn me inward.

I shared this weakness, because I know, like me, you have things that can also blindside you whenever you try to break free and really live. For you it could be fear, anxiety, disability, or stress. There are about as many excuses that serve as roadblocks preventing people from really living as there are people.

All of the excuses in the world come from one of three places:

1. Unintentional Living
2. Good Intentioned Living
3. Complacent Living

Unintentional Living will result in chaos, frustration and missed opportunities from bouncing from one thing to another in search of how to *Really Live*.

When Getting By Isn't Good Enough

Good Intentioned Living will result in procrastination, regrets, and guilt from lack of intentional action.

Complacent Living will result in all of the above, plus a life lived in mediocrity.

Intentional Living comes down to ONE THING:

Live today the way God intends for you to become in Christ tomorrow.

You can hope, wish and pray your heart out about personal growth, spiritual maturity, financial freedom, physical strength or landing a good job, but little good will happen without actually taking action to do what the Bible teaches. That's how life works—*Be doers of the word, and not hearers only* (James 1:22).

God has given us everything we need to really live a good life in Him, but what we do with it totally depends on how intentional we are with our lives every day.

- **Salvation is a gift from God**—but we have to intentionally accept it!⁷
- **Marriage is a gift from God**—but we have to intentionally work to keep it strong!⁸
- **Children are a gift from God**—but we have to intentionally raise them to become responsible adults.⁹
- **Good health is a gift from God**—but we have to intentionally care for our bodies!¹⁰
- **Finances are a gift from God**—but we have to manage them according to God's design!¹¹
- **Work is a gift from God**—but we have to work hard to keep our jobs!¹²

⁷ Romans 6:23, ⁸ Ephesians 5:22-25 ⁹ Psalm 127:3 ¹⁰ Psalm 73:26 ¹¹ Matthew 25:14-30 ¹² Colossians 3:23

When Getting By Isn't Good Enough

Every day I wear a wristband I had made for myself with the words “ONE THING” boldly printed on it. It serves as a daily reminder to me that life is short, the day is busy and how I choose to spend it matters for tomorrow.

I developed a daily habit while putting the band on every morning. I spend the 10 seconds or so it takes to get the band up over my hand and wrist intentionally thanking God for His love, asking Him to bless my day, and making a promise to Him and myself to do ONE THING for that day that will help me to *Really Live!*

I have a confession. Wearing the wristband also reminds me of my own personal struggle to *Really Live*. You see, I'm on this journey with you—mine is a struggle with life balance.



You see, I'm on this journey with you—mine is a struggle with life balance.

Like my dad, I can get caught up in projects and neglect important things, which Donna rightfully reminded me of just this morning.

So, I conclude with one final invitation:

When Getting By Isn't Good Enough



Join me.



When Getting By Isn't Good Enough

The intentional living journey isn't about perfection, it's about experiencing God. Start today and simplify your life by developing these three habits:

1. Make it a habit daily to know and experience God's intentional **love** for you personally.
This habit will give you peace and freedom.
2. Make it a habit daily to know and experience God's intentional **purpose** for you.
This habit will give your life meaning.
3. Make it a habit to intentionally and passionately **act daily**, on your purpose.
This habit will give you success.

So let me ask one final question:

What are you going to do to *Really Live*?

When Getting By Isn't Good Enough

Appendix A:

10 Ways God Shows His Intentional Love For You:

Our Intentional God

1. God Made You For a Purpose

For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this? (Esther 4:14)

2. God Loves You

And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." (1 Peter 4:8)

3. God Values You

Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? (Matthew 6:26)

4. God Chose You

You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. (John 15:16)

5. God Redeemed You

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us, for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree". (Galatians 3:13)



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6. God is Preparing a Place for You

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. (John 14:3)

7. God Will Provide for You

And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." (Genesis 22:8)

8. God Will Renew You Daily

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

9. God Knows You Personally

And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God." (Luke 16:15)

10. God Will Reward You

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)



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Appendix B

Seven Reasons Good Intentions Aren't Good Enough

1. *Good intentions aren't decisions; they're only illusions of a decision.*
2. *A good intention relieves us of guilt but accomplishes nothing.*
3. *A good intention is all about the future but it's disconnected from this moment in time.*
4. *A good intention doesn't require any immediate action. I'm off the hook for now at least.*
5. *Good intentions aren't accountable to anyone.*
6. *Good intentions promise much, require little, and accomplish nothing.*
7. *A good intention is the doorway to procrastination.*



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Dr. Randy & Donna Carlson

Randy and Donna are personally committed to helping people live intentionally. In his latest book release, *The Power of One Thing*, Randy teaches that the only way to truly live a balanced, intentional life is to submit to Christ. He hosts the call-in radio program, *Intentional Living*, where he provides encouragement and wisdom on the five essential areas of life: Faith, Family, Health, Finances and Work.

Dr. Randy is also President of Family Life Communications Incorporated, including the ministries of *Intentional Living* and Family Life Radio. With a doctorate of education in counseling psychology, he has over 27 years of counseling experience.

He and his wife, Donna have three grown children and two grandchildren and reside in Tucson, Arizona.

