

All Things Together

How Apprenticeship to Jesus
Is the Way of Flourishing
in a Fragmented World



"Heath Hardesty is a pastor whose emerging voice needs to be heard."

—JOHN MARK COMER

New York Times
Bestselling
Author

Foreword by
JON TYSON

Heath Hardesty

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Foreword by Jon Tyson



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To Marla Joy,
with great love.

Foreword

A Call to an Integrated Life

I've spent most my life watching people try to follow Jesus while being pulled apart by the forces of our culture. We're a fragmented people living fragmented lives. Our souls are splintered by the ceaseless barrage of information, the relentless ping of notifications, the endless scroll that promises everything and delivers nothing. We've become tourists in our own lives, skimming across the surface of reality without ever diving deep enough to touch bottom. We know more than any previous generation, yet we seem to understand less about what makes for a well-lived life.

That's why Heath's book is such a gift.

He hasn't written another rant against technology or modern life. He has done something far more necessary: he's shown us what it looks like to apprentice ourselves to Jesus in the midst of all this distraction and fragmentation. Not Jesus as a concept or a program, but the living and present Jesus as the living center who holds all things together.

I've noticed over my years as a pastor that we're quite good at compartmentalizing our faith, categorizing it away, while we get on with "real life." We've become experts at knowing about Jesus while remaining novices at living with Jesus. What we need isn't more information, we're drowning in that, but genuine formation into Christ's likeness. We need to learn

again what it means to be shaped by the slow, patient, fruit-bearing work of the Spirit in the mess of everyday life.

APPRENTICESHIP TO JESUS

There's something wonderfully concrete about the word *apprenticeship*. It speaks of scars and sweat, of watching and doing, of daily showing up to learn from someone who knows the way. The first disciples weren't mainly known as Christians or believers, they were apprentices, people of the Way, learning to live as Jesus lived by doing what Jesus did. This is what Heath is calling us back to, not a program to complete, not simply new habits to stack, but a whole life to be lived. With all the talk about apprenticeship to Jesus these days, it's refreshing to read from someone who has actually been one in real life, turning wrenches, learning lessons in the trenches, and drawing those lessons deep into an integrated faith through lived experience.

All Things Together works on our imaginations and our practices, teaching us how to:

Live Present in a World of Distraction

I've watched countless people try to squeeze God into the margins of their rushed lives, wondering why their faith feels thin and bloodless. Hardesty reminds us that presence—real, unhurried attention to God and neighbor—isn't a luxury but the very soil in which the life of faith grows.

Live Formed in a World of Consumption

We've become consumers of spiritual content rather than people being shaped by the living Word. This book calls us back to the patient work of formation, not through quick fixes or three-step solutions, but through the daily practices that shape our loves and reorder our desires.

Live Together in a World of Isolation

The Western myth of the radical individual has infected our spirituality, leaving us trying to follow Jesus alone in a world designed for community. Hardesty recovers the essential truth that we become who we're meant to be only in the company of others who are walking along the same path of becoming whole.

Live on Mission in a World of Cynicism

In an age where words have become cheap and truth claims suspect, we need lives that embody the gospel we proclaim. Not as performance or propaganda, but a faithful presence that is the natural overflow of a life being reshaped by Jesus.

AN INVITATION TO WHOLENESS

But maybe what strikes me most about this book is its rootedness. I've seen too many Christians trying to piece together a

life of faith from fragments of podcasts, conferences, and social media posts. It doesn't work. We need a center that holds, a way of life that integrates all the scattered pieces of our existence under the lordship of Christ.

Heath isn't offering theories from the safety of abstraction, he's describing a path he's actually walked, complete with the bruises and revelations that come from both plumbing and pastoring, out of the depths of real life. This is what *All Things Together* offers: not a quick fix but a way home. Not inspiration but invitation. Not more spiritual consumption but a path of transformation.

But a word of caution, don't read this book quickly. Let it read you. Let it expose the places where your life has come unseamed. Let it point you back to the One who takes the scattered fragments and turns them into a flourishing life.

Heath is a pastor and a friend, and in these pages, you will find he becomes a pastor and friend to you too. His vision isn't just that you will read some nice words about the Way, but that the words will lead you to the wonder of the Way Himself, the One in whom all things hold together in love.

Jon Tyson, pastor and author
New York City
Lent 2025

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PART ONE

Re-Imagining Apprenticeship

For you are great and do wondrous things;
you alone are God.

Teach me your way, O LORD,
that I may walk in your truth;
unite my heart to fear your name.

I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole
heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.

—Psalm 86v10–12

What is that which gleams through me, and strikes my heart
without hurting it; and I shudder and kindle? I shudder,
inasmuch as I am unlike it; I kindle, inasmuch as I am like
it.

—Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, Book XI

Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides
in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to
believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and who-
ever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.
By this is love perfected with us.

—1 John 4v15–17

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Blue Collars and Bright Splendors

On Becoming Un-Wonderblind

I am the fool of this story, and no rebel shall hurl me from
my throne.

—G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*

Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God,
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.

—Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh*

It is the fall. An uneven V of geese croon their way south through a bright September sky. A stubborn summer is finally giving up the ghost as cooler air whispers rumors of snows to come. You can almost smell the winter storms approaching if you have lived here long enough. Born here, I can sense the shifts in the sky and the changes of cadence in the birdsongs. But in this moment, I am not thinking of the goodness of a rooted life, one that intimately knows a place and cares to read its rhythms and decipher its signs. I am not delighting in the soft bite of the autumn air or the riot of colors spreading through the locust trees. I am not present to a world “charged

with the grandeur of God.”¹ No. I feel like a clenched fist. More Saruman than Wendell Berry.²

I don’t want to be here.

It is midmorning, and I am in a dingy alley between a collapsing foreclosed home and the old shop fronts of Main Street in the town where I have lived most of my life—Longmont, Colorado. Once known as a cow town on the Front Range, an agricultural community harvesting sugar beets and pumping out metric tons of their bleached sugar, it is now a tech-minded city following the silicon ways of Boulder, its sophisticated neighbor. Here, set against the ancient sentinels of the Rocky Mountains, the towering smokestack of the defunct Great Western Sugar Mill still haunts the skyline—an icon of change and abandoned ways. Its doors closed and its great machines were silenced the year I was born.

A few miles from that long-quiet smokestack, my hands are jammed into heavy leather gloves and my brown Carhartts are smeared dark from the morning’s labors. I am lethargic and irritable.³ Uncomfortable in my skin—cracking my knuckles and biting my lips. I don’t want to be here. I vowed

1 Allusions to poetry will abound. This is a line from the brilliant poet-priest Gerard Manley Hopkins. Nods to W. B. Yeats and T. S. Eliot are threaded throughout as well. Also, footnotes don’t have to be mind-numbing. I am of the opinion they can be side trails of wonder and extra slants of light for the journey.

2 Saruman is a villainous character in J. R. R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* series. He is a wizard who assists the Dark Lord, and is known for pillaging nature to craft dark machinery. He is described as having “a mind of metal and wheels; and he does not care for growing things, except as far as they serve him for the moment,” *The Two Towers*, 2nd ed. (Houghton Mifflin, 1966), 586–87. Wendell Berry, on the other hand, couldn’t be further in character from Saruman. He is a novelist, poet, farmer, cultural critic, and environmental activist.

3 Carhartts are a heavy-duty workwear made of durable duck canvas, often worn by construction workers, farmers, and those in the trades.

I never would be. So how did I get here?

This is not how my life was supposed to go.

I had zero desire to take up the blue-collared mantle of the family business. Nowhere in my dreams of any desired future were these scenes of turning wrenches or salvaging scrap. Yet here I am, broken pipes in hand and a creeping legion of discontent in my contracted heart. I never set out to work as a service plumber. But now I am spending my days in the dark spaces of homes across town, taking up company with the broken things.

I, I, I—so many *I*s. This is symptomatic of my problem, but I can't see it. Not yet.

For well over a year, we had been collecting old scrap from our service jobs—cracked copper pipes, battered chrome faucets, broken brass valves, tangles of aluminum, and old leaden waste pipes from turn-of-the-century homes. “One man's trash is another man's treasure” was one of the oft-spoken mottos of blue-collar redemption we lived by. Over time, angular bits and pieces of metal, the unseen guts of old homes, had ended up in our warehouse. The warehouse, just across the alley from the boarded-up home, was in the back of a worn-down 1940s vanilla-brick building that had once been the only bowling alley in town. Now gutted, a few faded bowling pins and lightning strikes remain painted on the structural cinder block walls inside—the concrete still harboring half a century of nicotine. No more glossy wooden lanes, gaudy trophies, or glowing pinball machines.

Sometimes it is hard to imagine how these discarded twistings and long-forgotten fragments were once artfully threaded throughout the walls of new homes, part of a clever network of metal-bound rivers that brought water on demand. These

dirty and discarded things were once gleaming channels of life, carrying clean water to draw a bath for a child, fill a pan for mom's vegetable soup, or water the petunias and dad's fussed-over heirloom tomato plants. Yet entropy has overtaken them, relentlessly going about its unraveling ways. These pipes were part of ingenious systems all now sadly disassembled, disordered, and distorted. The work of craftsmen now sinking into de-creation. Their integrity could not hold. It is the way of things—to unravel and dissolve, for beautiful order to slouch toward bedlam. Things fall apart. Cheery thoughts, I know. Hang in there.

Today, the master plumber has tasked me to drag out the salvage bins and sort the bits and pieces we have collected. Lead into this pile. Copper and brass over here and there. Slouching and grumbling, I feel rather dragon-like (no epic horde of gold, though—just these piles of bent metal). I should make it clear: This is not merely a sour mood on a rough Monday. This has become the concave posture of my soul. A collapse. It is the broke-down, ungrateful way I am inhabiting the world. *Incurvatus in se*.⁴ I have become a grumble.⁵ Combing through the tangled mess of metal, I busy my mind as I keep banging my knuckles about: *How did I get here, sifting through a graveyard of copper bones, pulled from the bodies of countless houses?* Some of the “bones” resurrect a memory of the home from which it came—a floor plan, a faucet fixed, a conversation with a homeowner about a book on the shelf or family picture on the wall, or a sudden recol-

4 A Latin theological term most likely coined by Saint Augustine meaning “being curved inward on oneself.”

5 In C. S. Lewis's *The Great Divorce*, he paints a portrait of the dehumanizing nature of ingratitude through a grumbler who becomes a grumble.

lection of where the crawl space and water shutoff valve were located.⁶

I throw a brass shower valve into a pile. Waste. So much waste—and my life feels part of it. To cope, I suppose (or maybe it is sheer pride), I grow philosophical and think: There's something sad about all this. This scrap is the stuff of human ingenuity. This smart technology—temperature-controlled living water at our fingertips within the comfort of our homes—has changed civilizations. Brilliant, really. Almost like magic.

Yet it goes mostly unnoticed and unappreciated, hidden behind the scenes, veiled behind drywall until a toilet backs up or the hot water goes cold. Hidden until we are inconvenienced or we smell our own mortality. We grow so accustomed to good things. Numb to wonders of innovation and savvy design. It's never enough. We take so much for granted. We are wonderblind.

This is my mind urgently searching while my hands are reluctantly working. I suppose I am desperately looking for some meaning, some hidden purpose, some revelatory thought to redeem these seemingly wasted motions, moments, and months. How can I salvage more than these pipes? How can I salvage the fragments of my hopes for how my life would go?

I can feel the resentment in my jaw and teeth. And in the buzzing frustration of it all, there is a profound disconnect between my thoughts and my body. I am a man in pieces. Riven. Cracked about. Hands and feet, eyes and heart and

6 I find it strange the things our memory holds on to. Even to this day, I remember in exacting detail countless floor plans and home layouts from service calls.

mind all jumbled and going in different directions as I go about the motions.

In this moment I am unable to feel in my body the importance of my job. There is zero sense of the sacred. No awareness of the glory all around. The comic irony is that I am the one who is wonderblind—unable to see the value of the blue collar I am wearing. Unable to hear the beauty in a dove's call descending from the metal rain gutter above. I am numb to any goodness of the moment. Not an ounce of mirth in my bones.

And then comes the fire.

Finished with my bleak sorting assignment, I watch the master plumber drag into the alleyway what looks like a small cauldron attached to a blowtorch and a propane tank. On his instruction, we begin throwing the scavenged lead pipes into the heavy cauldron. He turns the noisy burner on. Golden fire flashes. Meditatively, we watch the burning. Without talking, we take in the flame's brilliant dance. Fire has a way of snaring the imagination of little boys and grown men alike.

Slowly, the tangle of dirty metal melts in the thick iron bowl. It merges. It pools. It smooths. My nose wrinkles at the sour smoke, and my eyes squint at the blaring flame—this is certainly not an OSHA-approved activity.⁷ But no surprise here, as this master is old school. He plays by different rules from a previous age. Not politically correct in the slightest, he talks about the “old ways.” He has plumbing hacks that won't be found in any recent manual. He has stories to tell and retell. He has scars on his hands from slipped wrenches and blowtorched pipes, his marked skin authenticating years of

⁷ OSHA stands for Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

experience. His hands hold scars that say, “I know a better way.”

As the heat continues, the wrecked pipes dissolve into a dreary pool, a brown and gray simmering stew. Fire boiling a dull metal-mud under an autumn sky—it all feels a bit primeval. Elemental. Like an ancient recipe for some enchantment. Lines from *Macbeth* come to mind: “Double, double toil and trouble; / Fire burn and caldron bubble. / Fillet of a fenny snake, / In the caldron boil and bake.”⁸ That, I suppose, is what happens when a literature major becomes a plumber’s grumbling apprentice.

Then something happens.

A silver shine flashes out from the bleak bowl. I blink, lean in, and look again. A strange, bright flicker strikes my eyes. The master plumber, unhurried and silent, watching the heat do its severe work, stoops and picks up a heavy iron ladle. He gently dips it into that molten stew, skimming the crusted top and removing the dull dross⁹ —the solid impurities freed by the cleansing heat, the waste that was resident in those pipes for untold years. And as he pulls the dross off the top, light is released from beneath the dark crust.

In the crucible sits a radiant looking glass, a brilliant mirror somehow born out of the wreckage of old homes and untold stories. The transformation is staggering. Angular, waste-laden pipes have become an alluring pool of liquid silver, shining with some inner numinous glow. Like Lewis Carroll’s wonder-struck Alice, I feel as though I could pass right

8 William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, act IV, scene 1, lines 10–13.

9 Dross is a solid waste product taken off molten metal during smelting. It is unwanted material, and the word is often used to speak of anything that is of low value or quality.

through the looking glass into some technicolor realm, so clear and full of light as it is. Here in this alley between the broken-down home and the defunct Bowl-O-Rama, some heavenly alchemy has broken in. An alchemy of grace transmuting the mundane moment into something golden.

Is this what hope feels like?

A BRIGHT AND UNEXPECTED IMAGE

That luminous moment was nearly twenty years ago, but what I saw shimmers just as brightly in my imagination today. This is not just a memory. It actively lives within me, for it was not merely something seen, but a reshaping of *how I saw*—a reshaping of my imagination and my way of being.

What could I have seen in a radiant puddle of melted pipes that would be so formative, that would have me tell you of a Monday morning's dreary labors in a filthy alley in Longmont all these years later?

It was not just that some old pipes became a reflective metal pool. That's not it. I understood the chemistry of it. Crucibles do this kind of thing, of course. It was more *personal* somehow, more *intimate*. It was not a science lesson.

It was a soul enchantment, a slant of some deeper magic that had shone through my heart's darkly shaded woods.

As the master plumber stooped to do his strange work, and the dark dross was scooped up and tossed off, there, in the brilliant mirror of that humble crucible, there, in what had been a dismal pool of wreckage, was now a bright and unexpected image. A startling image that would help me see beneath the skin of that moment. An image that would help

me see what was happening under the surface of that dingy alley on that cold Monday morning. An image that would help me see what was beginning to gleam underneath the darkened crust of my life.

There, looking up at me from that fire-made mirror, was the clear reflection of the master's image—my father's face. And he was smiling at me.

In that renewed wreckage, I saw my father's delight.

And *that* did it. That fall day my imagination was reshaped in a way I did not and could not comprehend. I could only apprehend the smallest taste, some glimmer of its great importance. Something had happened within me at the sight of that bright and unexpected image of my father's delight back-dropped by the sky above.

I suppose that is the case with most soul-reorienting moments—they work like lightning and thunder. The revelation is a swift strike of light, but the meaning comes murmuring across the sky and time at its own unhurried pace. Finally, we hear the voice of what we have seen.

I was mesmerized by the transformation of the forsaken and the forgotten, captivated by the revelation of that mirror and the smiling face it reflected. Awakened by order overcoming entropy. Enchanted by a deep personal goodness, by an abiding delight at the heart of all things. These ideas marked me deeply—would form me—yet it took years to really comprehend their meaning. And being far slower on the uptake than I would like, it has taken me even more time to integrate them, articulate them, and attempt to write about them here in this book. A book that has only a bit to do with plumbing but everything to do with how apprenticeship to Jesus leads to flourishing in a fragmented world.

ABOUT APPRENTICESHIP

This talk of plumbing has much to do with the way of Jesus and the essence of apprenticeship. That bright and unexpected reflection of my father's smiling image spoke of a deep structure of reality, of some foundational principle of the universe. It held flickers of how we humans change. How dragon scales are shed and the beastly and dehumanized take on soft human hearts and skin. How a shadow-person may thicken, may obtain muscle and blood and become more real, more whole, more *truly human*.

The wonder of that bright and unexpected image in a dingy alleyway had much to teach me about the simplicity and complexity of apprenticeship to Jesus—about transformation born of the Master graciously drawing a grumbly soul and bumbling apprentice into the widening goodness and beauty of His life and work.

In that reflection, I saw the universal paradigm of apprenticeship that undergirds all the trades across the world and courses like blood throughout the storyline of Scripture. After all, what is apprenticeship, really? It is important to know that what I am referring to as apprenticeship does not first show up in the Gospels with a blue-collar Messiah, nor in the post-exile rabbinic schools of Israel, nor the schools of ancient Greek philosophy, or even much earlier in the trades—rather, it is baked into the deepest design of the universe.

What I mean by apprenticeship is simply the way human beings—image bearers of God—change. But I am getting ahead of myself. For now, we simply need to know that a paradigm for both apprenticeship in general *and* for apprenticeship to Jesus can be expressed as:

Union → Abiding & Obeying → Imaging

This is the framework or paradigm of apprenticeship at the heart of this book—and at the heart of the Way of Jesus.¹⁰ It speaks of the origin (union), the essence (abiding and obeying), and the aim (imaging) of following Jesus. It is a universal, timeless, and time-full paradigm found in all cultures, from the most rural village to the most humming neon city. The truth within this paradigm flows through the arteries of Scripture, Genesis to Revelation, if one has the ears to hear its lub-dubbing pulse.

In the following chapters we will turn through the pages of Scripture and trace the presence of the apprenticeship paradigm along the arc of the biblical drama to see how the origin, essence, and aim of apprenticeship are brilliantly woven in storied form. Then, in part two, we will turn our attention to some vital practices by which apprenticeship to Jesus takes on flesh in our lives. Paradigm then practices. Imagination then inhabitation.

My days as a plumber's apprentice have long passed. I have traded my blowtorch and wrenches for my books and my study, my leather gloves for counseling sessions and team meetings. Crawl spaces for a pulpit, service calls for hospital visits, weddings, and funerals. I am a pastor now in Silicon Valley of all places—the Oz-like wonderland of Apple, Google, Netflix, Meta, and Tesla. My collar has gone from blue to black, yet my hands still hold the skills and bear the

10 Think of a paradigm as “a simple model of a complex reality.” I owe this wording to one of my seminary professors, Guy Gray. A paradigm is something like a handheld map that helps you navigate a vast terrain—though small and not exhaustive, it is incredibly formative in someone lost becoming someone found.

scars from those years of cutting and soldering copper. I can see their ivory lines on my skin as I type.

This move from plumbing to the aches and glad things of pastoring brings me to an often-lost truth in what I will simply call *American Christianity*: that every follower of Jesus is an apprentice. An apprentice graciously called into the family trade, called to observe the Master ply His loving skill, called to abide with Him in familial love, called to trustingly obey what He says, called to intimately know the crucible of transformation that is the way of being formed into His image—called to be a person of love and joy like our good and happy God. Called to integration, to holiness, to be whole, and to revel in the growing harmony of the once-shattered bits and pieces of our humanity. Yet the common absence of apprenticeship Christianity in American churches is a calamity.

Apprenticeship reduced to an option or to spiritual extra credit is a gutting of the gospel. A disintegration of the essence of the Way of Jesus, and a dismantling of the identity of the church. And sadly, it is so terribly common that a call to apprenticeship is often viewed with side-eyed suspicion—like it is some slippery slope into a works-based salvation that denies Jesus as Savior. It has happened countless times over the years—a call to obedience leads to reflexive concerns in the form of, “I thought we were a ‘grace’ people?” or, “Won’t this lead to some new legalism?” It’s a bit like saying, “Marriage? A call to covenant faithfulness? Won’t that just lead to adultery and heartbreak?” What a diabolically backward cultural moment.

Apprenticeship to Jesus is not some kind of extra credit for spiritual overachievers added to a standard-level Christianity. It is not an optional way to supersize the basic Christian meal

that is dished out in well-branded drive-through-esque services and efficiency-driven programs. *Apprenticeship is the essence of the Christian life.* It is the meat, the *carne*, the *incarnational* substance, the muscle-clad and nerve-entwined body of it all. And the universal essence of apprenticeship is *union* with the Master, which leads to *abiding* with and *obeying* the Master, which then leads to *imaging* the Master. Again:

Union → Abiding & Obeying → Imaging

There is no “Christian” if there is no union with Christ by His Spirit living within us. There is no “Christianity” apart from abiding with Jesus and obeying Him. There is no kingdom of heaven here on earth in which Christians aren’t growing, degree by grace-born degree, to image (be like) the King of love and joy.

To be a follower of Jesus is to be an *apprentice* of Jesus. Christianity without apprenticeship to Jesus is a mirage. It’s a hollow word. An absurdity. A waterless ocean. It is through apprenticeship to Jesus, a life of *with-ness* with God, that we become like Him, that we become truly human as we practice the way of Jesus in increasing reliance upon His grace. In other words, apprenticeship to Jesus is the way of flourishing—the glorious vocation of being human in which we are made whole and holy. I’ll say it again: Apprenticeship to Jesus, at its most basic, is union with Jesus that leads to a life of abiding with and obeying Jesus, which brings about our imaging of Jesus. To be saved is to be saved not only from something but *unto* something. Even more, *unto someone*. When a person undergoes what we call a conversion to the Christian faith, it is an intervening act of God, grace breaking into the gloom

and stone of the inward-turned human heart, the bringing about of light and life. It is to be born into a brand-new way of perceiving and inhabiting the world. A whole-life way of being.

PIECES OF THE PROBLEM

Now, there is a problem before us. And it is widening and multiplying, like a crawling crack on a dropped iPhone screen.

We don't see how the pieces and facets of our lives fit into a storied whole.

Our imaginations are fractured and distorted. Our hearts and our narratives are splintered. We are awash in glittering fragments. We pit good things against each other, believing we must choose one over the other. We drift in a sea of cultural debris rising and falling on the tides of our busy days. A jumble of amputated verses, dislocated Bible stories, theological soundbites, tattered threads of traditions, a cargo load of preferences, and maybe a few ancient spiritual practices float about in the prismatic oil slicks of the wreckage. All these bits and pieces knock about, resulting in piecemeal, de-storied, and distorted views of apprenticeship to Jesus, rendering apprenticeship something like a side quest for the more adventure-seeking Christian, but rarely seen as essential to human flourishing.

What we need is a re-storied understanding of the *origin*, the *essence*, and the *aim* of apprenticeship to Jesus, to see how it all fits together in a *with-God life*.¹¹ We need to re-imagine

¹¹ A marvelous and favorite phrase of Dallas Willard's that I will put to much use.

apprenticeship and to re-inhabit the world in a more holistic way. We need to discover how the cracked and alienated pieces fit, and that it is Jesus who holds all things together.

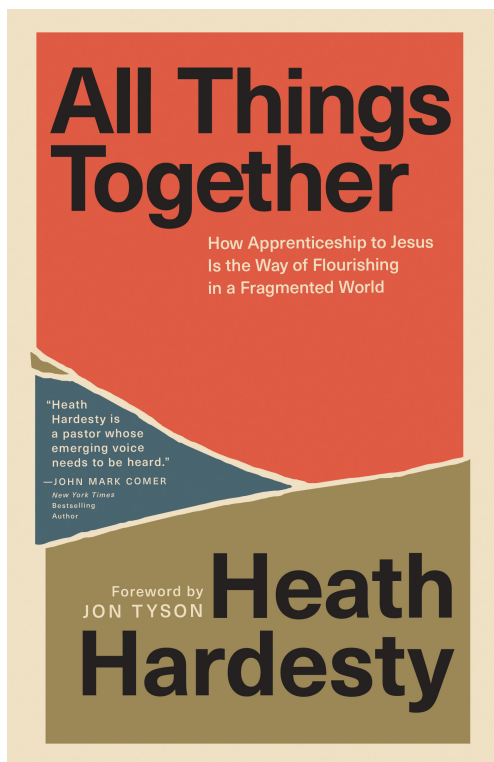
In a dis-integrated and dehumanized world, most people lack a coherent and integrative narrative about what it means to be human, and more specifically about apprenticeship to Jesus and how it leads to flourishing.

So, please forgive me for any presumption, for my wild-eyed purpose with the pages ahead is aimed at the very reshaping of our imaginations so that we might live in greater accord with reality. That's all, really—simply reshaping the way we view the world. No big deal, right? I figure it is best to own the audacity of it now. To fish or cut bait, as the saying goes. To go on wildly adventuring toward wholeness, or to close this book and move on to something more *manageable*.

Franz Kafka once said that “a book must be the axe for the frozen sea inside us.”¹² I'm no Kafka (which I'm rather glad for). But more than a good cracking of cold seas is needed when it comes to following the way of Jesus. What is even better than an axe to our icy hearts is the warming light of heaven melting the long-frozen waters of the soul. May some warming light come streaming your way if you are in need of it. I am.

So, shall we?

12 Franz Kafka, *Letters to Friends, Family, and Editors*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (Schocken, 1977), 16.



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