

WELCOME to our 9 week Webinar Course hosted by



BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

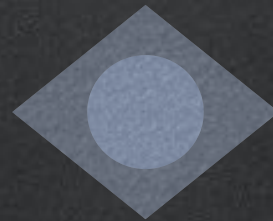
Reading Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Chapter(s)</u>	<u>Chapter Titles</u>
7/12/23	13-49	1-3	Eternity...No Unwanted Child...Rural America
7/19/23	50-73	4-5	Running into Jane...Running into God
7/26/23	74-105	6-7	Academic Awakening...Which Path to Take?
8/2/23	109-140	8-9	Early USC Years...King & Queen of Campus
8/9/23	141-158	10	Formation at Home
8/16/23	159-188	11-12	Birth of a Movement...Doing Work Ourselves
8/23/23	191-208	13	Ideas for Time & Eternity - part 1
8/30/23	209-227	14	Ideas for Time & Eternity - part 2
9/6/23	228-254	15-16	Thank You!...Healing Light

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Part One

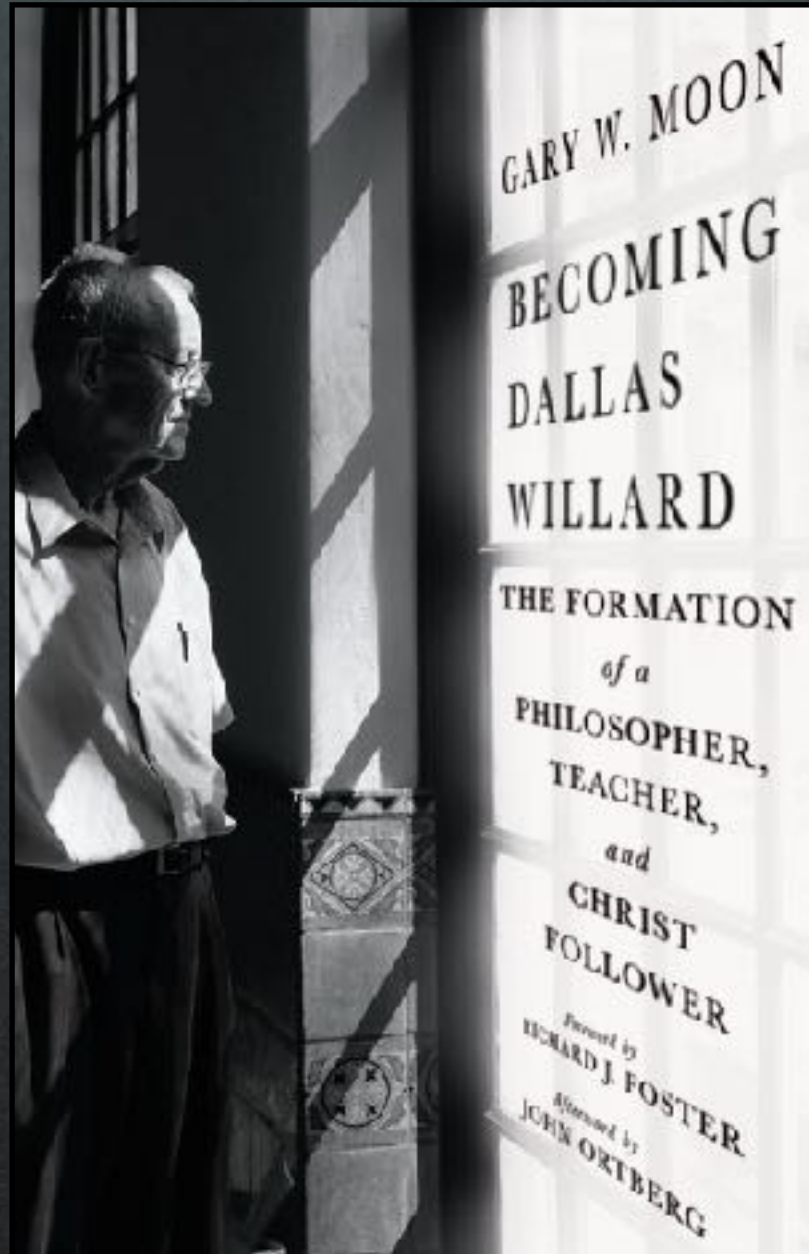
FIRST THIRTY YEARS



BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Chapter 1-3

Session 1 - "The Childhood Years"





Dallas Willard writes in *The Divine Conspiracy*,

"Looking to the lives and personalities of great disciples has always been an especially potent factor in my own life. Generally, to keep company with genuine students and co-laborers of Jesus, living or 'fully living', will help us come to the place of effective intention and decision for ourselves."

(297)

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Foreword by Richard J. Foster

If we are fortunate, once in our lifetime a human supernova presence streaks across our mental and emotional horizons and the intensity of this light changes us forever. Dallas Willard was such a supernova for me.

How did this unique blending of brilliance and goodness happen?

Every society, every culture, every age needs models of a life well lived. The deepest, most fundamental reason for studying the life of another person is so we can learn to live our lives more fully, more truly, more authentically.

This is why *Becoming Dallas Willard* is a genuinely important book. (p. 1)



“And they shall live with His face in view, and that they belong to Him will show on their faces. Darkness will no longer be. They will have no need of lamps or sunlight because God the Lord will be radiant in their midst. And they will reign through the ages of ages.”

Revelation 22:4-5, paraphrase

Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Preface by Gary W. Moon

Dallas Willard's life deserves serious study because he became a man who experienced authentic transformation of life and character. It only took a few minutes of watching his life to know that,

“he lives in a different time zone from the rest of us.”

John Ortberg, “A Man from a Different Time Zone”

Christianity Today, May 8, 2013



Becoming Dallas Willard, p. 6

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Preface by Gary W. Moon

The man many people knew during the last decades of his life was a markedly different person from the man who lived through the first decades of the journey. Dallas Willard was a man who taught about transformation from the things he learned and put into practice throughout the ups and downs of life. When asked how we find God, he often said,

“God’s address is at-the-end-of-your-rope.com”

That is the man I would like to introduce to you in the pages of this book: the man who became Dallas Willard.



BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Ch. 1 - “Keep Eternity Before the Eyes of the Children”

In the middle of this depressed decade, Dallas Albert Willard was born to Albert & Maymie Willard on September 4, 1935.

They lived on a farm in Greasy Creek, Missouri (“Mizzoura”). It continued to be tough work farming the land. Later in life, Dallas remembered how rocky the land was on the farms in southern Missouri, “My land’s so poor, so hard and ‘yeller’,” Hank Williams sang in “Everything’s Okay”. Dallas recalled the next line:

“You have to sit on a sack of fertilizer to raise an umbreller.” (22)



On February 12, 1938, when Dallas Willard was 2 1/2 years old, his mother Maymie Willard, passed away. Before she passed, she said to her husband,

“Keep Eternity Before the Eyes of the Children”

Dallas lost his mother before any permanent images of her could be painted across his young mind.

Very late in his life he still fondly remember the curved benches in the church where she held him as a child.

“The old curved seats of the First Baptist Church in Buffalo often reminded me of her.”

“BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD” - CH. 1

Because Dallas could not recall the face of the love of his early life, it is moving that the greatest theme of his writing would become the reality of experiential friendship with an always-present and loving God. As we shall see, people Dallas loved kept exiting his life. He became drawn to a good and loving God who lived in the heavens—the enveloping atmosphere of the here and now—who is always with His children and embraces them in love and never lets go.

Eternal living, he would later discover in the words of Jesus, means entering into a transforming friendship with the Trinity, a community of love that will never go away. (23)

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Ch. 2 - "There are No Unwanted Children"

"So many of us were unwanted children by our parents...My dear mother was grief-stricken because she was sick when she conceived me and she was chaffed in her spirit about it. And I never got to know her because she died when I was two. But my sister and others talk about how she would pray and ask forgiveness for not wanting me. And there's a lot of rough stuff in life we have to get over... [But] you are wanted. There are no unwanted children. There's a place for every one of them in God's economy." (25)



Reflecting back at nearly 5 years old on his new home at his stepmother's farm - "Myrtle's Farm", only a 1/4 mile walk to the one-room school in Wood Hills, Dallas said,

"I remember...running through the corn naked...And I have lots of memories of Myrtle...She cooked and she sewed. She was very productive and creative. She taught me, for example, when I took a bath how to wash the ring out of the tub."

"I went to school before I turned 5 because I didn't want to be away from them. My brothers and my sister were my world. Along with all the cousins. Seeing them together and laughing and playing made me think it's a pretty good world." (27)



C-A-T and a new found Love of Learning

“Fran taught me how to spell my first word. She said to me,” he recalled with a glimmer in his eye, “‘Say it in your mind several times’, and I realized after a while that I could spell C-A-T.”

“I learned to love words. It was almost magical. The discovery of learning was really huge. It opened up everything. It said there are all these places you don’t know, but you can go into them in your mind.”

(28)

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Dallas relayed the C-A-T story in “*The Divine Conspiracy*” Lecture Series, Session 5. *“You can learn how to spell C-A-T. Being able to bless those who curse you is just like that. If you don’t do the things that will bring you there, it won’t happen. You can not learn how to spell CAT by grace. Grace will not force you to become the kind of person who ‘easily & routinely’ blesses those who curse them.”*

Moving...Again

At age 5, Dallas moved in with his oldest brother J.I. and Bertha, an 18 year old, newlywed wife of a few weeks.

"I was so young that Dallas and I had to raise each other."

But she readily took him into her heart. Over time she began to look out for Fran and Duane as well. For the rest of their lives, whenever the Willard children would speak of going "home", the reference was to J.I. & Bertha's house. (29)



Growing Up Poor

Becky Willard Heatley, Dallas' daughter, remembers a fact from her dad's childhood: "Onion sandwiches were sometimes all they had in the house for lunch. They would cut a big slice of onion and put it between two slices of bread with mayonnaise. I asked if that made their eyes water."

"Oh yeah', he said, "But we just wiped the tears away and took another bite."

"We use old cars for chicken coops. I was raised in real poverty. We didn't know we were poor because everyone was."



Being poor made an indelible impression on Dallas. Frugality, one of the disciplines of abstinence he taught, came easily for him.

On the Old Schoolyard

“There use to be a time when during recess or lunch, the teacher went out with all the children, and they said, ‘*Now we’re going to play softball, so we have to chose up sides.*’ ...The rule was everybody played. No one was left out. And some of us were not such good players. But everybody had to be chosen.

Normally they’d start with some big strong girl or boy who could do almost anything and then they would choose their side. When they got down to the end, there was some one left over, some little kid, someone too awkward, the teacher would say,

‘Now who’s going to take this one?’

And finally one of the would say, ‘*Well, all right, you can play backup to Joe out in the outfield.*’ So you’d wind up sometimes with 5 or 6 people out in the outfield. Everyone played. You see that’s the way we possess the Kingdom of God. We’re choosing up sides, and Jesus chose me and you.”

“Blessed are those picked last in softball” he would later teach. (31)

Stealing Hubcaps, Shooting Cats...and Jesus

Dallas was unhappy to move back in January, 1944 to live with his Dad & Myrtle after his older brother J.I. was drafted into the army. Eager to escape the house, it was during these years, Dallas and his playmates indulged in stealing hubcaps and shooting out streetlights with an air rifle, occasionally popping a stray cat. (32)

One day something happened to nine-year-old Dallas:

“It was something that no one spoke to me about. But I became convinced because my family was in church every time the door was open and I was instructed well in Sunday school. I became convinced that Jesus Christ was the greatest person that ever lived, and I wanted to be on His side. I wanted to go forward one Sunday evening, but my pastor wasn’t there and I loved my pastor. I spent the most miserable week of my life. It was worse than being in love. In fact it was a form, I think, of that. But with great relief, the next Sunday evening—and for some reason I didn’t discuss this with anyone—I went forward to give my heart to Jesus.” (33)

“BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD” - CH. 2

Dallas' young life is a story of loss and rejection, but also of sacrificial love and kinship. The loss of his mother and rejection from his step-mother left Dallas with a fear that he was not good enough, that he would not be wanted.

In the midst of all the childhood pain, however, Dallas met a God he came to believe was the most joyous being in the universe, and nothing bad should ever be spoken or thought of Him.

Perhaps the painful relationship with his own father motivated him to realize that we should never *“let anyone tell you anything bad about God.”*

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Ch. 3 - “Coming of Age in Rural America”

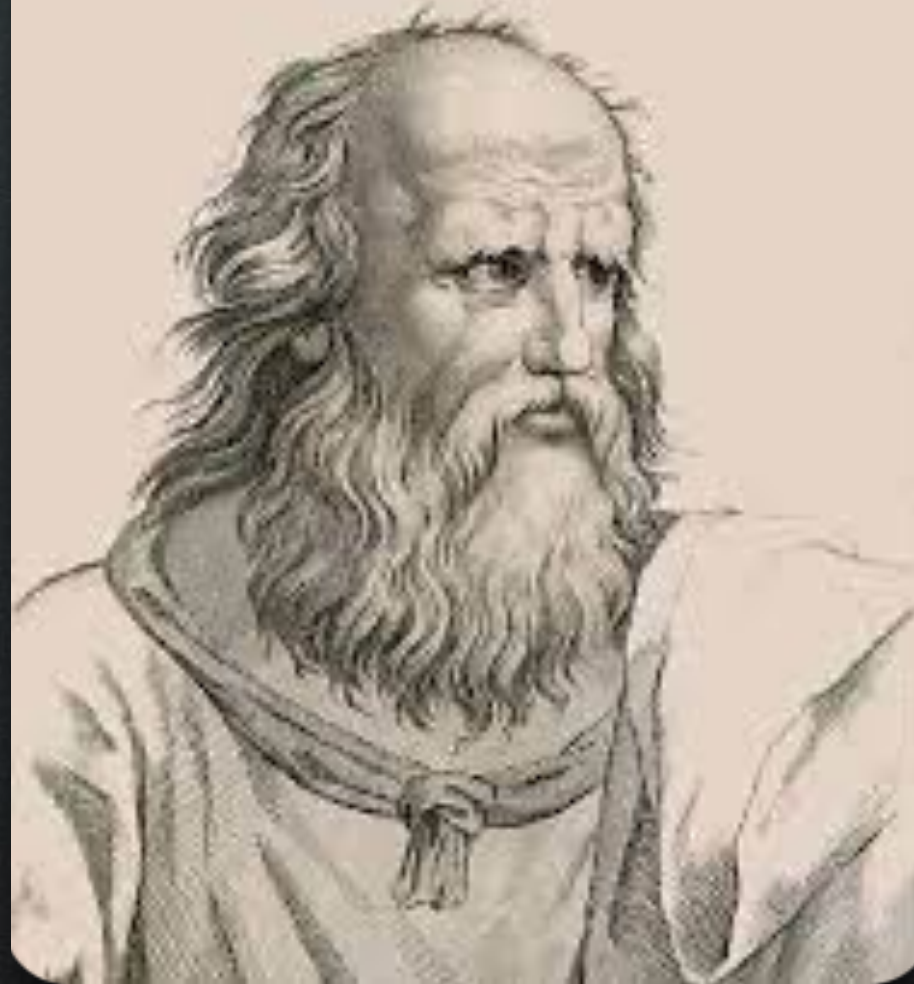
When thinking of his grandmother Rhoda, only a 3rd Grade education but a seminarian’s grasp of the Bible and a monk’s love for solitude. *“For so many years”, he thought, “I had hope only because she did.”* (37)

At Thomasville High School, a significant new influence came into his life — the woman he would later call “my first great teacher” — Mabel F. Woodside. (37-38)

Dallas’ high school grade reports gave no hint of his intellectual abilities including a “D” in speech for one quarter. Farm life may have had a significant impact on his underachieving.

- He was a voracious reader.
- He was 9th Grade and 12th grade class president.

Plato
The Republic



Dallas Willard's favorite book at age 17

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD
Ch. 3 - “Coming of Age in Rural America”

The REA - Rural Electricity Association (p. 41)

“Living the Divine Conspiracy”
Renovare International Conference, 1999

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5A46Gjq4uD8>

[Time Mark — 0:56:30 - 58:50]

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD
Ch. 3 - "Coming of Age in Rural America"

"\$#!&#"

"My goodness, what comes out of people's mouths! Do you remember what use to come out of your mouth? I remember the awful words I said when I was young. Where did that come from? It came from my heart."

Unfortunately, the "curriculum for Christlikeness" given him in those days consisted of things like *"Don't use drugs and don't get pregnant and don't get in jail."*

"If that's all a young convert gets," Dallas reasoned, "They're going to have some redecisioning to make down the road. That was my case."

Church, Revivals, and Protracted Meetings

As Dallas was coming of age during his high school years, it seems that he was still battling fear of rejection and abandonment.

“Rejection, no matter how old one is, is a sword thrust to the soul that has literally killed many.”

But for Dallas an important foundation was being formed.

“I came to realize that this confidence came from a series of revival meetings...the moving of God on my mind and heart. As I grew into the Christian ministry, I learned to wait on ‘the Word of God’ to come to me.”

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD
Ch. 3 - “Coming of Age in Rural America”

Self declared “The Wizard of Oz”

“For much of my younger life, I just assumed I was going to have to lead a hidden life. I just assumed that I was going to have to hide myself from people.”

(47)



“BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD” - CH. 3

Being from Missouri (literally middle-America), can be good for a person’s ability to identify and communicate with the masses — peer to peer. It worked well for Mark Twain, Walt Disney and Dallas Willard.

Dallas greatly benefitted from growing up in a revivalist tradition. He learned that simply managing sins does not lead to the abundant life that Jesus promised. Grace needs both a past tense and a present tense. Grace abounded in the life of Dallas...the grace of God at work in the lives to those closest to him — Brother J.I., Grandpa Joe, Grandma Rhoda, Mrs. Woodside, Sister-in-law Bertha - *“the beauty and joy of life came to me from you, and what it meant to be an admirer and follower of Jesus.”* (47)

“BECOMING YOU”

- Where did God meet me in the pain and disappointment of my childhood?
- Who was my first great teacher?
- How would I describe my early spiritual formation?
- How much did I (do I) have to overcome to “Honor your Mother and Father”?
- Is there part of my life hidden behind a curtain?
- Who has God used in my childhood to love me and thereby reveal His grace to me?



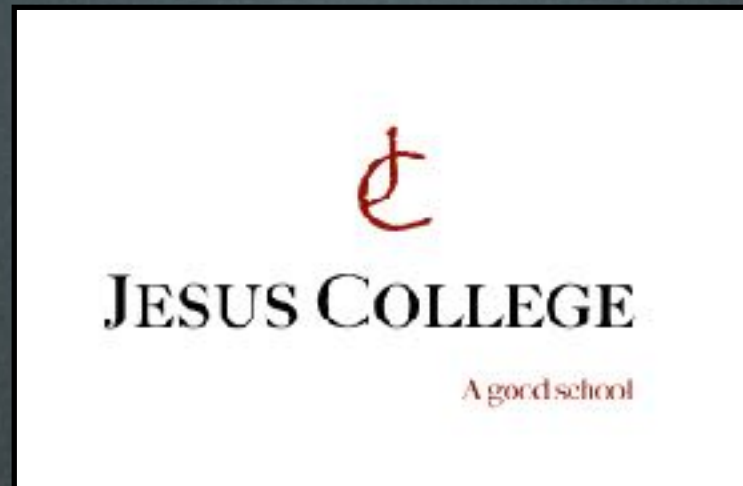
BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Next Session #2

Chapters 4 “Running into Jane”

Chapter 5 “Running into God”

Pages 50-73



Apprentice to Master Love — //Nouns
“A Student of the Superior Benefactor”

Apprentice to Master Love — //Verbs
“Training to be proficient in willing the good”

The Mission of Jesus College - To Empower Apprentices to Master Love by knowing Jesus as the One, great truth and live a good life found in such truth.

The Vision of Jesus College - To equip Trainers (Ministry, Business Leaders, Parents) to mentor Leaders (Senior Apprentices) to disciple Apprentices to Master love.

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