

“God in Business”
Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

Scribe’s Comments - These sessions were typed from the YouTube videos with good-faith effort but they are not verbatim. The **bold** disclose the scribe’s headers & highlights of Dallas Willard’s teachings.

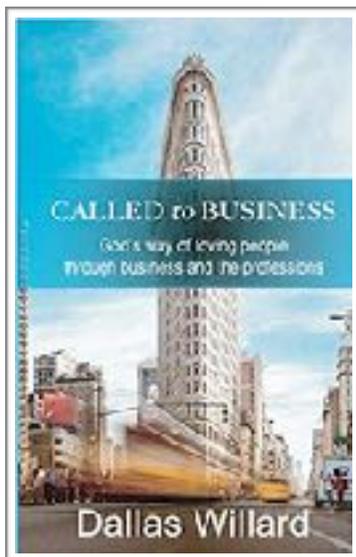


Table of Contents

<u>Session</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>Page</u>
Session 1	<i>“God in Business”</i>	[07:34]	2
Session 2	<i>“Theology & Spiritual Disciplines in the Workplace”</i>	[59:19]	4
Session 3	<i>“The Value of Work”</i>	[04:45]	13
Session 4	<i>“Business is Ministry”</i>	[06:01]	14

~ ~ ~

In Print...



Whether you are making ax handles or running a fortune 500 company, this 51 page booklet will give you a deeper understanding of how God is with you in the work that you do and help you embrace the idea that your work should bring about the highest possible good in its every aspect, and should be pursued with a conscious expectation of a constant energizing and direction from God.

<http://dwillard.org/books/individual/called-to-business>

“God in Business”

Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

Session 1 — *“Finding God in Business”* - September, 2011 [07:34]
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=YkdwsHbVj3g&feature=endscreen>

God works far beyond the Church. Thank God He’s out ahead of us all the time. That’s because He loves the world. Business is a primary arrangement on God’s part for people to love one another and serve one another.

* I ask my USC students, *“What is business for?”* Like parrots, *“Profit!”*
“Do you tell that to your clients?” *“Of course we don’t.”*
We say *“We care”*. They don’t mean, *“We care about making \$.”*

“Is God in business?” If God wasn’t in business, it would even be there. It has a natural tendency to reach out to the neighbor and the neighbor and the neighbor all around the world. It reaches out like most of God’s operations. They are running beyond the conscious motives of the people who are doing it.

The big question in our current economic distress - *What is God doing here?* What does God have to do with technology? With liquid metal? Oil in the ground.

Business is a primary moving force of the love of God in human history. It doesn’t wait until Christians get a bright idea. It’s just there. That’s the Kingdom of God at work. We have to recognize that God is always out front of the church. He is working in many ways.

- Technology is a primary manifestation of God.
- The issue of money - Money ain’t what it use to be. Now you can ship billions of dollars to the other side of the world by pushing of a button. Is that money or is that something as big as the switch from barter to coins. All of these issues God is at work.

The intent is to enable us to love one another and cause the glory of God to shine.

I’m glad when Jesus was talking, He did not say it let your words shine before men but *“Let your light shine before men so that they would see your good works and say God is really wonderful.”* They won’t comment about me or you but go to God because of what they see of His action in our life.

Business is one vocation. We need to think about the lawyers, accountants, doctors. How do medical professionals work with business professionals? This is an unsolved problem. Partly because they don’t know how to get together to work together for what is good. They tend to push what they want.

“God in Business”
Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

We have to think of all the professionals as servants of God. There is nothing I like to teach more at USC than “Professions” and how profession work. Students are hungry to see more than career advancement. Normally their business schools and law schools don’t give them anything more. That is a radical change in the last 75 years. Now the schools are embarrassed to talk about the common good. Many of them will try to disallow any talk of that. I’ve seen technical writings in professional fields, *“All that is required is for everyone to compete at their highest level. That will result is the best service of the profession to the public.”* Not hardly. It doesn’t work that way. That’s nothing but self advancement and it does not have the blessing of God and humanity on it.

Journalism is one of the most important vocations, hardly a profession.

Business is in many ways the driving force because it actually feeds people. It takes care of people. You cant say that about many of the other professions. Of course, the ministry is one of the primary professions.

~ ~ ~ End of Session @ 07:34 ~ ~ ~

"God in Business"

Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

Session 2 — *"Theology & Spiritual Disciplines in the Workplace"* [59:19]
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&feature=endscreen&v=uBh8Kz9uqG8>

[1:40] **Colossians 3:17** - *"Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ giving thanks to God the Father through Him."*

* The song, "Having Jesus, take everything else."

* The name of Jesus is like "Power of Attorney" is to act on his behalf with His resources. That's how you can spend your time with Him and He will be personally present to guide you.

v. 22 - *Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.*

Romans 5:17 - *"For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, much more those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!"*

"Reigning" - to have supreme supervision of what's going on.
Have things at your disposal. Have things going your way.

- This is under the abundance of **grace**. You can't do that on your own. The problems for human beings is they want to reign without God. They want to reign without grace. It's a no-go from the start. We are made to live under grace. **Grace is God acting in your life to accomplish what you can't accomplish on your own.**

Yes, it is unmerited favor but if unmerited favor is all you know, you don't know much about grace. No you are ready to reign. Forgiveness of sins will be a part of this grace. You are no longer under the dominion of the dead hand of the past. Leaves you free from the burden of guilt and failure.

I. Theology

[7:00]

When you're thinking about **Whole Life Discipleship**, your problem is going to be what you take salvation to be. **The greatest barrier to whole life discipleship is a theory of salvation that does not include it** [discipleship]. If you have a theory of salvation that does not include discipleship, much less whole life discipleship, you may just decide to enjoy the ride to Heaven and not worry about anything else. We have a lot of people who have been preached a gospel who say, *"Thank you Jesus. I'll see you in Heaven later. I must get on with my life."*

“God in Business”
Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

The only issue is not will you make it in, but will you enjoy it if you do. It's hard to imagine that you would if you didn't enjoy the company of Jesus now.

Our relationship to God requires an understanding that goes deep into life.

We are going to take our theology into the workplace. [9:00]

The only question is, “Which theology are we going to take?”

1. **Atheist** has a theology - an understanding of God. The atheist is God.

2. **Deist** - *“There is a God but He doesn't have anything to do with us.”*

You see many practical Deists. If you observe their lives, they do not assume that God is living interactively with them in their lives. A lot of Christian teaching has fed into that.

3. **Devout Disciple** - Constantly paying attention to Him and what He is doing because they are His apprentice. A disciple is someone who is apprenticed to Jesus to learn how to live in the Kingdom of God like He does. All of the tasks I face at work, I undertake with Jesus at my elbow. God is present in my life through Jesus the Son. He is my teacher. He is the one I am learning from constantly as I go through life.

How we think about God is the most important thing in our lives. All the troubles that human beings get into come from thinking wrongly about the nature of God, His spiritual nature.

*Moses - **Exodus 3** - If I am going down to Egypt, I am going to have to tell them who you are. *“I Am That I Am”*. God is saying something extremely important about God and God only. He is the only being that is totally independent of everything else. My being is predicated on my being. Nothing else is in the universe like that.

*God as Spirit - **John 4** - That means that God is not in a place, rather He is in every place. There is no place where He is not. You don't have to worship on the Mountain or in Jerusalem.

God's nature is love infinitely empowered.

This being is always set on doing what is good and that is the character of love. You love something and you will what is good for it.

* *I love chocolate cake.* You don't love chocolate cake. You want to eat it. That's not love. At least from the cake's point of view.

“God in Business”
Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

Love is ‘will to good.’ This infinitely powerful love is present wherever we are. God at work where we are in nature, history, social processes, economy, work. The realities all around us are places where God is at work. It is really important to think this if you are going to take Him into workplace. The first thing to do is to recognize He is already there. It is so important to have the right idea of God.

“Think magnificently of God.” William Law

“Our creedal statements are of little consequence. An intelligent and vigorous search and it is exposed for what it is. Only after an ordeal of painful self probing, we are likely to discover what we believe about God.”
AW Tozer

What you see people doing is a real indication of what they think of God. Enable us to think magnificently of God so we can bring Him wherever we are and our expectation that He will act with us.

Waiting on the Lord is a fundamental principle of human life. If we don’t do it, we have to carry the burden.

“They that wait, will renew their strength and mount up with wings of eagles.”

I need that where I work. I have to train myself to expect His action with me wherever I am. Even in very discouraging times or when it seems like I’m faced with an impossibility. To wait upon the Lord means not taking things into my own hands. That’s where disciplines are going to come in.

We need the right idea of God if we are going to take our theology into the work place.

II. Anthropology

[18:20]

(Def.) Who we are, what we are to do and what are our resources.

We are limited will, intellect & energy. We have just enough to relate us to the great source of all will, intellect & energy. We are meant to function under larger powers.

The human being has a vast horizon but it cannot realize that and move into it except in subjection to God.

Genesis 1:26, *“Created in God’s likeness”* - means created to have dominion. Dominion and reigning are power that comes to us under God.

“God in Business”

Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

“Let us make mankind in our likeness. Let them have dominion over the created world.”

God made humans beings to have governance for His good over His creation.

Psalm 8 - *“What is man that you take thought of him and care for him?”*

We are meant to rule in companionship with God. (v. 6)

When we break the companionship, we don’t have the power to carry out the calling that still falls on people to rule. *“Made to rule over the work of Your hands.”*

Fit into creation so that all of it is ruled over by human beings.

Think of the history of technology or oil with powers put in by God that we are to unlock to help our lives and others around us.

Problem - What we are supposed to be able to do is not yet something we can do.

Hebrew 2:5, *“He did not subject to angels the world to come.”* [23:30]

Quotes Psalm 8. We are called to rule & reign.

When we go to work to our vocation or occupation, what are we doing?

We are exercising our kingdom under His Kingdom. Everyone has a kingdom. Your kingdom is the range of your effective will, what you have say over. How far it extends depends on how far it has developed.

* The range of your effective will has been expanded through credit cards

Main source of power is still our relationship with God.

Human work is intended to be an extension of God’s loving creativity.

Made to work in community with a division of labor interdependent to cooperate with others to fulfill the God appointed dominion that they have been given.

~ Professions and the Common Good

Professions - Areas of occupation that require a special degree of preparation. Always communal that fall under the guidance of others in the profession.

Profession is a manifestation of God’s purpose for humans to have dominion.

Medicine, Law & Ministry - The three great classic professions.

The idea of “Your Kingdom & my kingdom is built into “Our” Kingdom.

That’s why the Lord taught us to pray “Our Father”

My calling & vocation is carried out in community meant to function under God. When the connection is broken, we lose our way and professions can go wrong.

“God in Business”
Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

* Technology - Developed by humans following the call of God to reign and to rule. When the connection to God is broken, we are devoted to blowing others up.

What happened?

[28:20]

The creativity and dominion that God appointed to us has not developed with the character of the people who are exercising that dominion. Because they can not depend upon God, that connection is broken, they start depending upon themselves and working with one another to accomplish things that are generally harmful, sometimes terribly so. When you look around the world, you might think, “Where is God?”

He has left that kind of space to us because of His purposes for us in making us as free human beings with responsibility for the kind of persons that we become.

* Jacob’s Ladder - Jesus invokes the picture as He restores the connection. [30:00]

God is still here. He didn’t leave. He hides Himself from us because He is so big and if He didn’t hide Himself, we could not hide from Him. Our project as fallen beings from human beings is to hide from God and live on our own.

Genesis 28, *“Surely the Lord is in the place and I did not know it.”*

If you want to know God, He is available.

Jesus explains His use of parables unless they should hear and be converted.

Doesn’t he want them to be converted? Surely he does. but they don’t want to be converted. What they want is what God makes provision for. God presents the truth in such a way that if you don’t want it, you won’t get it.

Be careful how you hear. *“To him that has more shall be given. To him that have not, shall be taken away even what he has.”*

To understand the gentle approach of God to us in Salvation is...

“God in Business”
Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

III. Soteriology

[32:06]

When we come to think about soteriology we must understand it is an approach of God that gives us the opportunity to live in the Kingdom with Jesus now. That is the basic gospel. *“Repent, the Kingdom of Heaven is available to you now.”*

Philippians 4 - *“The Lord is near. Let your gentleness be known to all men because the Lord is at hand.”*

Practically the same language as Mt. 4:17

Being saved is a matter of hearing the good news that Jesus is available with His kingdom. It is now possible for anyone to come to him, to trust him and to learn his redemptive presence in all that we do.

Faith in Christ means confidence that He is the one who is totally in charge. He is the maestro of the universe. As you see the gospels opening up, you see him coming in gentle forms - little baby, son of a carpenter, a carpenter.

It is hard to discern why didn't Jesus come in a big Huey helicopter and blow people away. Because it does not accomplish the purpose of God for human beings.

We are meant to freely accept him. Grace is required but that doesn't eliminate freedom. What we want and what we choose is the matter that we have to pay attention to.

We become a disciples of Jesus by hearing the gospel of life now in the K of G through faith in Jesus Christ. Be a disciple is a natural response to that message.

The Master of life has come to town to give life and take him in.

The natural response, “I want to be his disciple. I want to be his apprentice.”

Are we preaching a gospel that has a natural tendency to produce disciples?

I'm going to say that again because that is really the heart of the matter.

Or do we simply preach a gospel that generates consumers of religious goods & services?

A gospel of mere forgiveness does not produce disciples. We are now wedded to a gospel that does not produce disciples in any regular connection. That's how we get a culture of Christians who are not disciples.

If we are going to deal seriously with this issue of taking theology and spiritual disciplines into the workplace, we have to recognize where the problem is. What we get by grace through the gospel does not extend to the

“God in Business”

Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

workplace. There is no conceptual connection between being saved as that is commonly understood and taking our workplace for Christ.

You can go to Heaven and not do that. I don't know of anyone who is prepared to say if you don't do this, you can't go to Heaven.

Do I have to be a disciple to go to Heaven when I die?

#8 - As Jesus' disciple I am learning from Him how to lead my life in the Kingdom of God as He would lead my life if He were I. [37:45]

If we are going to make disciples, we need to have a definition of one.

Spiritual formation is the process that happens to those that are in the status of a disciple. As a disciple I am being transformed in dimensions of my personality with the goal of loving God with all my heart, mind, soul & strength and my neighbor as myself. We are not talking about perfection. We are talking about faithful dependence on Christ in our whole life.

Whole life discipleship comes from the recognition that Jesus is the one in charge of everything. I can trust Him and learn from Him. Learning how to learn from Jesus how to do everything how He would do them if He were me.

1. How to do the things Jesus said to do.

* The 10 Commandments

Trying to become the kind of people who would routinely and easily do them.

* "Let your Yes be Yes and your No be No."

- Who would want to do anything else?

2. Running our ordinary affairs of life with Jesus.

3. Learning how to live and act in the power of God.

We can't act like Jesus would if we are not relying on the power of God.

That involves prayer and a whole different way to do things.

I am becoming the kind of person who does what Jesus said, who faces the multitudes of tasks that are not in the Bible but learning from His companionship that helps me make decisions and learn wisdom and learn that I can act in reliance in the power of God acting with me.

~ #9 - Problems caused by full time Christian service and the view that ordinary [42:50] occupations are not full time Christian service. One of the greatest problems.

Luther's "Priesthood of all believers" brings insight here.

In the ordinary duties of ordinary people they are priests.

Set aside there are two different categories.

“God in Business”
Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

The idea today - preachers & teachers are in charge of salvation. They are more important and uniquely placed by God. The ones in charge of that have a special place before God

~ #10 Disciplines are for Disciples [47:25]

Humans can determine very largely the people they will become.
God has placed discipline in ordinary human life to allow people to achieve things that would otherwise would simply go by them.

* Lifting weights, become a musician, speak another language

Basic equipment of what we have under God to gain dominion under grace. Grace will not impose but it is available to those who open themselves to it.

Human beings are given disciplines by God as part of the good news.

If we don't teach them, we are depriving them of who they can be before God.

Activities in my power to do what I can not do by direct effort.

~ #11 Facing the temptations - The trials coming at us in the workplace.

That will depend on how we discipline ourselves. We can stand and do what we intend under God to do no matter what the forces against us are.

There is not a single thing that Jesus teaches us to do that we can not do if we will discipline ourselves under grace.

~ #12 Go make disciples, surround them in Trinitarian reality, and teach them to do everything He said, that is what He presupposed.

There will be a path of discipline and teaching that makes us the kind of person that does what Jesus taught us to do.

~ #13 The great mistake is to think He teaches us rules and practices. That always fails. He

teaches us rules to guide us into character.

Not people who don't steal because of a rule but because they don't want to steal.

~ **Particular Practices** [51:30]

~ #14 **Disciplines of Abstinence** - Solitude, Silence, Fasting, Frugality, Chastity, Secrecy, Sacrifice, etc.

* Freeway Driving Discipline - Look for ways to love other drivers

Let them in. God loves them and I love them.

Practice things that will enable you to love people on the freeway.

“God in Business”

Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

Some Christians become demons behind the wheel.
The experience of power is not adjusted to their character.

You’ve heard, “Power corrupts”. I don’t think power corrupts.
Power makes corruption apparent. What you deal with is character.

~ #15 **Disciplines of Engagement** - Fellowship, Study, Worship, Service, Celebration, Prayer, Confession.

Engage God in the places we have emptied by our disciplines of abstinence.

Disciplines are not righteous they are wisdom. They help us to live righteously under the grace of God.

“Means of grace”. They enable us to receive grace and to empower our lives with the presence of God in such a way that we can live to the glory of God.

“I am always in haste, but never in a hurry.” John Wesley
Haste does not have a tinge of guilt. Hurry is always tinged with guilt.

~ #16 Spiritual Disciplines enable us to weave the presence of God throughout the texture of our lives and carry out our work and our play in the name of our Lord Jesus giving thanks through Him to God our Father.
[57:10]

* Enron failure, Oil platform in the Gulf, etc.

Watch the disasters in the news. Where were the disciples? Usually there are Christians but they did not associate discipleship with salvation and discipleship with work.

If you want to see the world go right, you take God into all of the vocations and all of the workplaces.

~ #17 The church is for discipleship. Discipleship is for the world under God.
Our world will not work without disciples.

~ #18 Salvation is participating in the life Jesus is now living on Earth.

Col. 3 - *If you then be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your affections on the things above not the things of Earth.*

~ ~ ~ End of Session @ 59:19 ~ ~ ~

“God in Business”

Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

Session 3 — “The Value of Work” [04:45]

Leadership Lecture Series, Talbot - September, 2011

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nC0vUMZ2pb4&feature=endscreen&NR=1>

Human beings are meant to be inhabited by God. God is a worker. He projects Himself through the lives of the individuals. When we participate in work, we are producing a value in terms of what God is already doing. We know that Christ is literally the glue of the Universe. When we are working with any kind of material, we are working with Christ.

We have that attitude of faith and trust as we come to live with Him in the Kingdom of God. That certainly extends to our work with other people. Moralists use to say, *“The only really good thing is a good person.”* We contribute to the lives of others in our work because work is a communal activity always...like “Robinson Crusoe & Friday”.

Work is fundamentally God’s work. We can pervert and turn it away by lack of faith in God. The effect of work is the development of persons. Wealth comes in as a part of that. If you have money, your kingdom is extended. Your kingdom is the range of your effective will. If you have money, there are many ways you can extend the range of your effective will. That feeds back on the kind of person you are to become. That’s eternal work. The glory of our future is continuing creativity in the life of God. Comes out in Revelation 22. Once we get over the idea that Heaven is going to be an eternity at a resort, the outgoing of God in creation to create what is good in love is what we do. Since we have a lot to get over coming into the world we come into, there is a process of transformation that goes with. It is primarily a process of surrender to God in work.

That gives you a different version of what salvation is and what it’s all about. The reintegration of the person into the Kingdom of God to exercise dominion as indicated in Genesis 1 is what work is about.

Q - What gives work its eternal significance? [3:30]

1. Outcome - The work of value that is shared with others. “Work with your hands so you can give to others.” (Paul) Creativity and output.
2. Internal - What work does for me. I am becoming a certain kind of person in all that I do.
 - a. Work is learning how to act with God and with others in the production of value. We come back to the position of the servant and the dignity of the individual. The guy or gal mopping the floor needs to see that work as eternal work they are doing in God’s world.
 - b. The Kingdom of God and the individual which we hope would be taught from the pulpits would lay the foundation for that.

“God in Business”
Four Teachings by Dallas Willard

Session 4 — “*Business is Ministry*” [06:01]
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&v=86m62paYIQQ&NR=1>

[Only two comments from Dallas Willard]

Full time Christian service is one of the worst things that is hung on Christians.

The Bible begins in Genesis 1 not Genesis 3. The problem is not sin.

~ ~ ~ End of Four Part Teaching Series on Business by Dallas Willard ~ ~ ~