

## “The Human Side of Holiness” Course Study Guide

“Be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect.” Jesus, Matthew 5:48  
“As He who called you is holy you also be holy in all your conduct.” 1 Peter 1:15

Do you want to be holy? If yes, how do you embody the words and life of Jesus?

Join apprentices of Jesus from around the world learning how to grow in grace to be holy like Jesus as guided by Dallas Willard's teaching, "[The Human Side of Holiness](#)". This free, 17-session journey provides a weekly, 30-minute webinar to help you unpack and apply Dallas' powerful teaching at Denver Seminary featuring over 55 hours in 17 videos available in the [Dallas Willard Ministries YouTube channel](#).

The course offers wise application, winsome affirmation and weekly accountability to envision and experience intentional, Christlike thought and action naturally developing from a biblical, accurate and true understanding of life in Christ to help followers of Jesus actually do what He commands.

The course covers topics such as:

- Our Part in the Pursuit of Holiness
- Love as Life
- The Reality of Spirit
- The Gospel and the Great Commission
- Transformation of the Whole Person through Disciplines
- The Sermon on the Mount in Daily Life
- How to Change
- Apprentice-Making in the Local Church

Each 30-minute session presents key themes by interactive teaching, open Q&A, practical application, and inspiring comments from world-wide friends of Jesus. This study guide provides a one page outline for each session plus additional resources for further personal transformation and group study.

*Attention Ministry Leaders* - Dallas states his class is “Teaching Teachers of the Nations to Teach People to Do What Jesus Taught”. Jesus College and Dallas Willard Ministries are here to help you and your ministry flourish in Christlikeness.

This free course, the 18th offered by [Jesus College](#), 16 in partnership with [Dallas Willard Ministries](#), is offered without cost thanks to our generous supporters of these ministries.

**Jesus College** — “*Be a student of the greatest teacher in history!*”

## Course Study Guide Table of Contents

**Your V-I-M Participation** 3

**The Course Listening Schedule** *with links & video lengths* 4

<b>Session</b>		<b>Outline</b>	<b>Transcript</b>
1	<a href="#">"The Human Side of Holiness" part 1</a>	5	22
2	<a href="#">"The Human Side of Holiness" part 2)</a>	6	36
3	<a href="#">"The Human Side of Holiness" part 3</a>	7	51
4	<a href="#">"Love as Life" part 1</a>	8	70
5	<a href="#">"Love as Life" part 2</a>	9	83
6	<a href="#">"Reality of Spirit"</a>	10	102
7	<a href="#">"Gospel, Great Commission"</a>	11	115
8	<a href="#">"Transformation of Body &amp; Habits"</a>	12	131
9	<a href="#">"Fruit of Spirit; Discipleship"</a>	13	147
10	<a href="#">"Relationship of Mind &amp; Spirit"</a>	14	165
11	<a href="#">"The Will &amp; Disciplines"</a>	15	184
12	<a href="#">"Disciplines"</a>	16	195
13	<a href="#">"Disciplines - What We Can Learn"</a>	17	216
14	<a href="#">"Life Transformation from the Heart"</a>	18	228
15	<a href="#">"Change, Disciplines, Indirection"</a>	19	244
16	<a href="#">"Knowledge, Grace, Discipleship"</a>	20	256
17	<a href="#">"Discipleship in Local Congregations"</a>	21	278

**More Courses & Resources from Jesus College** 290

**Jesus College - "Master's in the Master" Training** 291

**Post-Script from Jesus College** 292

**Miss or re-watch a session?** — The sessions and presentation slides (PDF) are recorded and posted in the [Jesus College Library](#) in case you miss a session, you want to study further, or lead others through the material.


\* — Special thanks to Richard Bates, James Hutter, Sande Rajcic and Tami Wright for their work on the transcripts. The [\[brackets\]](#) & **bold** disclose the Doug Webster's organization, emphasis and cross-references of these sessions to other Dallas Willard teachings.

## Your "V-I-M"<sup>1</sup> Participation

We are confident by the Spirit of God you will find "The Human Side of Holiness" to be excellent, insightful teachings of Dallas Willard through the integration and real life application of what we call the "Four Horsemen of Dallas' Writings" — *The Divine Conspiracy*, *Hearing God*, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, *Renovation of the Heart* <sup>2</sup> and his magnum opus *The Disappearance of Moral Knowledge*.<sup>2</sup>

We encourage you to make your experience more than just a free webinar added to your Christian study routine. Place it as an intentional discipline for spiritual growth. Ideally, invite a partner, a spiritual growth "spotter", to journey with you to better learn, apply, and grow in Christlikeness as a launch pad from the sessions.

Here are a few suggestions on how to make the most of this course.

- 1) WATCH one Dallas YouTube video for each of the course's 17 sessions available for free on the [Dallas Willard Ministries website](#). See the **course schedule** (next page) for which Dallas session will be discussed each week. 
- 2) REVIEW the handout outline and scriptures adding your own notes to contribute to each session.
- 3) SHARE - Offer questions and comments that stood out in your personal study with Jesus and Dallas in the Word. Enter them in the Q&A tool on the bottom of the Zoom screen during the session. Linger longer for the post "Q&C" time.
- 4) PRACTICE - Answer the V-I-M questions and put into action the "Means" - the spiritual action Q: in each week's guide.
- 5) RETREAT - As part of your practice, invest one hour solo weekly with Jesus discussing your key discovery from the week.
- 6) REFLECT - At the end of the course, type or write a 300 word summary or journal entry recognizing the impact of the study and the vision of how it can, by God's grace, form your spiritual growth in Christlikeness.

1 - V-I-M = *Vision-Intention-Means* — Dallas calls this the reliable pattern for spiritual change, really any change. As you envision a life with God as an apprentice of Jesus, you will seek and find the means to practice a life of hearing God. See Session 4 & 11 in this course. For expansion on V-I-M, see *Renovation of the Heart*, chapter 5 ([Webinar on the book](#).) Another rich resource on V-I-M is in the [Life With God Bible](#) Introduction, xxv-xxxvi]

2 - *The Divine Conspiracy* - Sessions 2-5, 13, 14, 16, 17; *Hearing God* - Session 2, 3, 15; *The Spirit of the Disciplines*\* - Sessions 3-6, 12, 13, 16, 17; *Renovation of the Heart* \*- Sessions 1-4, 7, 11, 17; *The Disappearance of Moral Knowledge & Knowing Christ Today* - Sessions 2, 5, 7, 8


\* These two books were required reading in the original class syllabus

## "The Human Side of Holiness" 2023 Course Schedule

<b>Session - Date</b> (YouTube #)	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Length</b>
1 - January 5 (1)	<a href="#">"The Human Side of Holiness" part 1</a>	[58:04]
2 - January 12 (2)	<a href="#">"The Human Side of Holiness" part 2</a>	[51:03]
3 - January 19 (3)	<a href="#">"The Human Side of Holiness" part 3</a> <i>(Course sessions 1-3 are Day 1 of Dallas' teaching at Denver Seminary)</i>	[1:14:27]
4 - January 26 (4)	<a href="#">"Love as Life" part 1</a>	[58:57]
5 - February 2 (5)	<a href="#">"Love as Life" part 2</a>	[1:17:18]
6 - February 9 (6)	<a href="#">"Reality of Spirit"</a> <i>(Course sessions 4-6 are Day 2 of Dallas' teaching)</i>	[50:20]
7 - February 16 (7)	<a href="#">"Gospel, Great Commission"</a>	[1:02:12]
8 - February 23 (8)	<a href="#">"Transformation of Body &amp; Habits"</a>	[1:04:31]
9 - March 2 (9)	<a href="#">"Fruit of Spirit; Discipleship"</a> <i>(Course sessions 7-9 are Day 3 of Dallas' teaching)</i>	[1:07:53]
10 - March 9 (10)	<a href="#">"Relationship of Mind &amp; Spirit"</a>	[1:16:22]
11 - March 16 (11)	<a href="#">"The Will &amp; Disciplines"</a>	[47:15]
12 - March 23 (12)	<a href="#">"Disciplines"</a>	[1:20:04]
13 - March 30 (13)	<a href="#">"Disciplines - What We Can Learn"</a> <i>Sermon on the Mount (Righteousness)</i> <i>(Course sessions 10-13 are Day 4 of Dallas' teaching)</i>	[44:18]
14 - April 6 (14)	<a href="#">"Life Transformation from the Heart"</a> <i>Sermon on the Mount (Detail)</i>	[57:42]
15 - April 13 (15)	<a href="#">"Change, Disciplines, Indirection"</a>	[37:59]
16 - April 20 (16)	<a href="#">"Knowledge, Grace, Discipleship"</a>	[1:29:44]
17 - April 27 (17)	<a href="#">"Discipleship in Local Congregations"</a> <i>(Course sessions 14-17 are Day 5 of Dallas' teaching)</i>	[47:38]

**Session 1 – "The Human Side of Holiness" part 1** [58:04]

"And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in Heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

 **Session Theme** — "Lead them into doing everything I told them to do."

**What does Holiness Look Like Shorn of Its Legalistic Expressions?**

"This is the assignment." What is Dallas referring to? Do you agree?  
What does it start with?

**How Do You Make Disciples?** — Matthew 4:17

Introducing the word "Apprentice" for Disciple  
Threefold Ministry of Jesus: Proclaiming, Teaching, Healing  
"Repent" (defined) *Think clearly about your thinking*  
One reason we don't make disciples - \_\_\_\_\_

**Trinitarian Fellowship & Reality**

The order — *Called out* - Colossians 1:13, Matthew 16  
How are we brought into Christian churches? What is a disciple?

**The Main Thing** — Mark 12:30-31

Not "ought" to but "actually" do the things Jesus said. How?

**Final Thoughts on Legalism**

- 1.) Marks of Holiness
- 2.) The Importance of Holiness — Hebrews 12:14


**Personal Meditation** — Mark 12:30-31

**Application for Holiness Training → V-I-M**

Vision — What does holiness look like to me lived out?  
Intention — "Be holy." How much do I want a holy life?  
Means — How can and will I shift my thinking from Romans 7 to 8?

**Session 2 – "The Human Side of Holiness" part 2** [51:03]

"Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory." Colossians 3:1-4

 **Session Theme** — *"In the Two Landscapes, God is the landscape."*

**The Two Landscapes** - *"Raised up with Christ...glorious"*

**Treasure & Vessel** II Corinthians 4:16-18

The problem is, we tend to be obsessed with the \_\_\_\_\_  
"We look not at the visible, but the invisible."  
Born again - the ability to see the invisible.

**Visible - Temporal & Invisible - Eternal Landscapes** \* Elisha's Butler

Conscious of the Invisible Landscape of the Kingdom of God  
Psalm 19, Romans 10, The Ten Commandments

**The Kingdom of God is...**

The Cross and Your Kingdom/Queendom/Persondom  
*There's another life! Putting our faith in Jesus Christ.*

**Three Types of the Gospel...plus a Fourth**

1. Sin Management & Heaven Bound
2. Liberty for the Oppressed
3. Church Centered
4. Confidence in Jesus, the Whole Person  
*"Miserable Sinner Christianity" or "Renovated Heart with V-I-M"*


**Personal Meditation** — II Corinthians 4:16-18

**Application for Holiness Training → V-I-M**

Vision — Which of the two landscapes dominates my daily reality?  
Intention — What is my commitment to picking up my cross?  
Means — What will I see and seek to make God the landscape today?

**Session 3 – "The Human Side of Holiness" part 3** [1:14:27]

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...and suffering produces perseverance...character...hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us." Romans 5:1-5

 **Session Theme** — *"The will surrendered to a good God engages the holiness process."*

**Knowing God** Amos 3:2; Adam & Eve; Mary & Joseph  
The Human Part of Holiness — *"Growing in grace & knowledge"*  
Active not Passive - *"Put off the old, put on the new"*  
Romans 5:1-5 - The picture of what "holiness" looks like

**Q & A with Dallas**

Character - What you do without having to think about — Identity  
Perseverance - in Prayer Luke 11 & 18, Col. 3, II Peter 3  
Set up to grow in grace & knowledge of Jesus

*Does this Gospel I preach have a natural tendency to produce disciples or just consumers of religious goods and services?*

Giving & Prayer  
Prayer - *Power sharing device involved with Kingdom work.*

**Spiritual Formation** — The process of taking on the character of Jesus

The Six Dimensions of the Whole Person like Christ to love God  
The Will - *"Executive Center"* at The Cross - *"Surrendered"*

**Added Bonus** — Dallas' exhortation on Youth Ministry  
To students, *"You have a kingdom."*


**Personal Meditation** — Romans 5:1-5, 12:1-2, Deut. 4:29

**Application for Holiness Training → V-I-M**

Vision — What holiness characteristics do I see in Romans 5:1-5?  
Intention — What "cross(es) capture(s) most of my focus?  
Means — How & when will I proclaim the Kingdom to the next generation?

**Session 4 – "Love as Life" part 1 [58:57]**

"Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails." I Corinthians 13:4-8

 **Session Theme** — *"Love is a taking in a certain kind of life."*

**Here Comes Agape** I Corinthians 13

"There isn't anything that love can't stand."

Agape vs. Anger    Compassion vs. Contempt

You take love into your life, you subject your will to it

**The Pitfall of Pornography and Enslaved Desire**

*"Why do I do this? What does it mean about my desires and my will?"*

Training - You reframe the mind, feelings, and will

First introduction of the V-I-M Structure - "Degrees of Intention"

**The Substance of Scripture and the Law** Joshua 1:8

Am I in love with my wife? Am I in love with Jesus and the Father?

Leading people into being loving people

**Salvation is a Life** — *Born again into the Kingdom*

Life — Self-initiating, self-directing, self sustaining activity

\* Goldfish and Cabbage - a type of life in its environment

Back to the Two Landscapes - II Corinthians 4:16, Colossians 3:1

\* Refueling a plane midflight - Psalm 16:8, Joshua 1:8

*"Living in the Kingdom of God is something that requires personal growth, modification of character, learning how to rely on God at the same time as to act without relying on yourself. It involves learning that God is sufficient."*

**Personal Meditation** — I Corinthians 13:4-8; Joshua 1:8

**Application for Kingdom Power Training —> V-I-M**

Vision — What does love look like to me, and is it more than actions?

Intention — Why do I do what I do that blocks love in my life?

Means — What scripture and person will help refuel my soul this week?



**Session 5 – "Love as Life" part 2** [1:17:18]

"The second one is this, Love your neighbor as yourself." Mark 12:31

 **Session Theme** — "Loving your neighbor requires responsible choices."

**Love is Self-Limiting** I Corinthians 13

Exercising Responsible Judgment in Love (p. 87)

Understand Jesus teaching in context - "Blessed are the Poor"

*How* He teaches to understand *what* He teaches - Luke 14

What is good with limitation in community

**Q & A about Self-Limiting Love in Daily Life**

Discretion of self-limiting love for parents and others

The risk of situational ethics

"Self-limiting" language in scripture

Acts of Non-Violence - What good is at issue?

Jesus' act of Kenosis - emptying himself

Judgments always in terms of what is good.

Loving one at the expense of another

The language of unconditional love

**The Mature Life of Light & Love, Truth & Power** - Hebrews 13:5

In the context of love of God...*growing away from fear* Habakkuk 3:17-19

**A Human Being as a Spiritual Being in a Spiritual World**

As a spiritual being in the Kingdom, I am indestructible under God.

Living in His Word as apprentices of Jesus putting it into practice.

**The Primary Role of Faith** - *Interacting with reality successfully*

Beliefs in the Virgin Birth and the Bible

Growing to the point to do what we want

**Training for Reigning** - *Praying with confidence sharing God's power*

**Loving Your Neighbor Means to Decide...**

1.) To be a person of compassion 3.) Who is intimately engaged

2.) Who your neighbor is 4.) Focus on 2 or 3 people

**Personal Meditation** — Hebrews 13:5-6; Psalm 16:8

**Application for Kingdom Power Training** —> **V-I-M**


Vision — Can I and do I see limiting love as good and godly?

Intention — What drives me to love beyond my God given limits?

Means — How and with whom will I begin 4 steps of neighbor love?

**Session 6 – "Reality of Spirit" [50:20]**

"There is therefore now no condemnation, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death." Romans 8:1

 **Session Theme** — *"You are spirit - unbodily personal power - living in the spiritual realm of the Kingdom of God."*

**Romans 8 - Life in the Spirit**

Temptation - seduced by the visible landscape vs. "Regularity" of Jesus life

**The Two Landscapes** — *Setting our minds on the things of the Spirit*  
Faith is a perception of the invisible world to make the spiritual present.

**A Spiritual Person** — *Life dependent upon the Kingdom of God*

**What is Life?** Initiation • Direction • Sustenance from the Spiritual World  
Dallas' insightful commentary on the Book of Hebrews

The course theme restated: *"Coming to the Place Where We Could Actually Teach People to Do the Things That Jesus Said."*

**What is Spirit?** John 4:24, Hebrews 12:9; Exodus 3:14

"Unbodily Personal Power" Deuteronomy 8; Genesis 1:26

Q & Dallas The bodily death of Jesus? That's why we have a Trinity!  
*Jesus operating in the spiritual landscape.*

**The Body & Death** John 11 & 8

To do what Jesus said, we have to understand what we are.

**Personal Meditation** — Romans 8:1-5


**Application for Kingdom Power Training —> V-I-M**

Vision — How difficult is it for me to see the spiritual landscape?  
Intention — Where and how do I find myself seduced by the visible landscape - "lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, pride of life"?  
Means — Fast this week to set my mind, to feast on the invisible landscape and select Romans 8 as scripture to guide your spirit.

**Session 7 – "Gospel, Great Commission"**

[1:02:12]

Then God said, "Let Us make mankind in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the livestock and over all the earth, and over every crawling thing that crawls on the earth." Gen. 1:26

 **Session Theme** — "You are a never ceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's great universe."

**The Vision** - *Life Now in the Kingdom of God*

Being a disciple and building a community of disciples to do what He said

**Who are you and why are you here?**

Genesis 1:26; Rev. 22:5

To have dominion - creative responsibility for good under God.

An eternal kind of life by God's grace with His life John 17:3; Mt. 6:25-34  
To fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant to all nations Gen. 12:1-3; Mt 28:18

**Renovation of the Heart:** *The Whole Person in a Beatitude to all People*

Today's Q: — *How does this develop?*

*"Holiness grows in response to intelligent effort on our part interacting with grace, i.e., God acting in my life to accomplish what I cannot accomplish on my own."*

**The Mind & Body** - Character revealed through social, bodily actions

Character — *What a person does without thinking*

Character comes from the interaction of the parts of the whole person

\* Successful musicians \* Genocide \* Education \* Social Dimension

**Personal Meditation** — Genesis 1:26 (5 x's in the course); Rev. 22:5

**Application for Kingdom Power Training —> V-I-M**

Vision — Is my vision of eternal life well formed, clear and steady?

Intention — What do I intend with my character?


What do my intentions, tendencies reveal about my character?

Means — Meditate on and memorize Genesis 1:26 to form my mind.

## Session 8 — "Transformation of Body & Habits"

[1:04:31]

"Put off the old self, put on the new self being renewed..." Col. 3:9-10; Eph. 4:22-24

 **Session Theme** — "Our choices form the habits in our bodies leading us to act without thinking, both good and bad."

### **The Key to Transformation — *The Mind & Body***

More than just forgiven, far from being a perfect grand moral mechanism

### **The Body Is**

Personalized power pack accessible to my will, my kingdom action

### **The Body's Meanings**

"Piling up almost endless sequences of sensations and actions that have meaning that lead over into the next thing."

### **The World's System and Three Weapons**

**I John 2:16**

• Lust of the flesh • Lust of the eyes • The pride of life

\* The Illustration of Peter — "*The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.*"

### **The Body is Fundamentally Social** — *Playing the audience of One*

Suggested: William Law, *A Serious Call to a Devout & Holy Life*, Ch. 15

### **Our Habits** — William James

The Ethical and Pedagogical Importance of Habits

Maxim 1 - Launch strongly and decisively.

Maxim 2 - Never make an exception until the habit is rooted.

Maxim 3 - Act on every resolution you make.

### **The Discipline of Fasting** — *Feasting on the invisible landscape*

### **Personal Meditation** — Romans 12:1-2

### **Application for Kingdom Power Training** —> **V-I-M**

Vision — Can I see God's grace breaking my most inhibiting habit right now?

Intention — Where am I making exceptions to what I say I want to change?

Means — What discipline will I practice this week to grace to this habit?

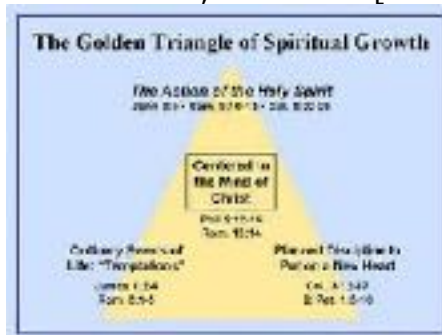
**Session 9 – "Fruit of the Spirit; Discipleship" [1:07:53]**

"Whatever you do, speaking or acting, do it on behalf of Master Jesus, thus expressing your thankfulness to God through Him." Colossians 3:17

**Session Theme - "Peace, Joy, Hope, Faith, and Love; Three Aspects of Discipleship"**

**Developing Christian Character - To put on the Lord Jesus Christ**

"The Fruit of the Spirit constitutes the framework and foundation of holy character: love, joy, peace, hope, faith, life—not as efforts nor as acts but pervasive conditions of the entire person." Dallas, Session 9 [03:15]



*The Divine Conspiracy*  
page 348

"The deficiency in our teaching [is] where everything is weighted to the Spirit as if he were going to do it. The action of the **Holy Spirit** is fundamental." [33:45]

**"Ordinary Events** - "You don't want to try to get out of the world." [37:00]

"Fullness of life in the kingdom: How do you do it? You find activities that you engage in that actually change it — and those are the **disciplines**." [41:00]

**An Apprentice of Jesus**

"As Jesus' apprentice (disciple, student), I am learning from Him how to lead my life in the Kingdom of God as He would lead it if He were I. I am with Him in all my circumstances learning to be like Him." [42:30]

**Three Main Aspects of Discipleship — Learning to...**

- 1.) Do what Jesus did.
- 2.) Handle ordinary life within the Kingdom: family, playmates, neighbors, job.  
"In Jesus Name" - Power of Attorney - on His behalf with His resources.
- 3.) Act with God's power.

**Personal Meditation — Colossians 3:17**

**Application for Kingdom Power Training —> V-I-M**


Vision — Do I envision the life I am living today could be lived by Jesus?

Intention — How important to me is being an apprentice of Jesus?

Means — What area of my life seems distant from practicing Kingdom living?

**Session 10 – "Relationship of Mind & Spirit" [1:16:22]**

"The kingdom of God is not in words, it is in power." 1 Corinthians 4:20

 **Session Theme** - "A vision of life where the power of God flows."

**V-I-M – A Reliable Pattern of Change** (Renovation of the Heart, Ch. 5)

**Vision**

1. Of the Kingdom of God and your life in it
2. Character goals
3. Power—your empowerment

**Intention**

To actually fulfill the vision

**Means**

1. For realizing the vision
2. Spiritual Disciplines effectively implemented

*"Disciplines are something in your power that you can do to enable yourself to do what you can not do by direct effort."*

**Discipleship at Work**

*Reigning at your Job*

The Church disciplines you for life and work to help you reign in the divine calling of your vocation - "divine service". (G. MacDonald)

\* MacDonald, *The Curate of Glaston*; John Calvin; Luther's "Plowboy & Milkmaid"

**The Will** - William James

*Getting a hold of the body and the mind*

Involuntary Life: An idea (sensation, feeling) with impulse flows to involuntary action - "Ideomotor" — like picking up a pen from the floor.

"Fiat" — consent with tension of an intervening idea for the act of will.

"Antagonistic Representation" - Conflicting idea in mind, not when driving!

*"What William James says has tremendous implications for doing the right thing, doing what we ought."* Dallas, Session 10 final statement

**Idea Work** — We are doing "Idea Work". The "Idea" runs the show.

The Gospel of the Kingdom of God is a fiat of spiritual transformation.

**Personal Meditation** — 1 Corinthians 4:20; Romans 14:17

**Application for Kingdom Power Training → V-I-M**


Vision — Where do I see the power of God around, in and through my life?

Intention — Do I believe and want the idea of God's power in me and through me?

Means — What discipline will I practice in my "job" this week to work with Jesus?

**Session 11 – "The Will & Disciplines"** [47:15]

"Think about these things....and the God of peace will be with you." Philippians 4:8-9

 **Session Theme** - "We 'will' life's practices from the ideas in our mind."

**The Will** (*Renovation of the Heart*, p. 33-35; 2002 edition)

*"To originate means two things most prized in life: freedom and creativity."*

**Living at the Mercy of Our Ideas**

Ideas like...a Tissue — Or — "Did God really say...?" (Genesis 3:1)

**Submission to the Will of God** Isaiah 26:3-4; Psalm 16:8

Thinking of God

Satan giving Eve an Idea about God

Our Idea of God

*"Worship is the most powerful discipline."* (*Renovation...*, p. 107)

**Renewal of the Mind** Romans 12:2 & Philippians 4:8

What would be at the top of the list?

*"Put into practice what you've seen in me...and the God of peace will be with you."*

**Spiritual Disciplines**

The Discipline of Solitude - purposefully abstaining from interaction.

*What, or who, is chasing you?*

**Personal Meditation** — Philippians 4:7-9

**Application for Kingdom Power Training → V-I-M**


Vision — What is my idea of God, my theology defining my reality?

Intention — What is chasing me that fuels my haste, worry, anxiety?

Means — When will I make time this week for solitude with the Lord?

**Session 12 – "Disciplines" [1:20:04]**

"You've heard it said...but I say to you..." Jesus in Matthew 5

 **Session Theme** - *"Four practices to form Christlike inclination and action."*

**Solitude**

You don't want to be too harsh on yourself. Don't be a heroic. Be experimental. When you go into a discipline, your teacher is Jesus.

Let children learn to be with themselves, to play alone.  
Encourage imagination for children & adults, and bring it to the Bible.  
Imagination is the primary instrument to come to grips with what is real.

**Silence — Two Types of Silence**

Quietness — Learn what it is. Silence allows you to hear the hidden landscape.

Not Talking — Power of the Tongue & Sin James 1:19; Proverbs 10:19  
Learning how to speak out of silence.

**Frugality**

(def.) Abstaining from using money or goods that are at our disposal in ways that merely gratify our desires for status, glamour, or luxury

Judgment about what is necessary and what is not; away from the sensual.  
- When there isn't money, there are promises resulting in debt.  
- Frugality isn't the same as stinginess and cheapness.  
Was Jesus poor and homeless?

**Chastity**

(def.) Abstaining from sexual involvements including thoughts and feelings to be free in our habits from domination by sexuality.

Desiring intimacy more than desiring or being desired.

**Personal Meditation — Matthew 5:27-30**

**Application for Kingdom Power Training —> V-I-M**

Vision — What daily habit of Jesus do I see myself emulating?


Intention — How much do I value being alone, silent, frugal or chaste?

Means — Which of these disciplines will I do practice this week to get off the conveyor belt of sin and to turn to other "good" ideas?



**Session 13 — "Disciplines - What We Can Learn" [44:18]**

"Unless your righteousness surpasses...you will not enter the Kingdom." Matthew 5:20

 **Session Theme** — *"Jesus has the best answers to life's most important questions & the power to form you to be one who lives a Kingdom righteous life."*

**How Does One Practice the Disciplines?**

1. Decide to live as Jesus' Student  
You can't get very far just messing with disciplines.  
You are now a student and you are learning.
2. You begin by trying to obey His teachings.  
When you do that, you will fail. *So, you're next step is...*
3. Observe why you fail.  
If you are unable to do, there is a reason why.
4. Do in reliance upon the Spirit what will remove the causes of the failure.

**Things Great Teachers Must Teach** — *Life's Four Greatest Questions*

1. What is the nature of reality?
2. Who is well off? Blessed? Living the Good Life?
3. Who is a "really good" person?
4. How does someone become a really good person?

**Sermon on the Mount**

Where is your "Blessedness"?

Kingdom Righteousness & Entering the "Heavens" Matthew 5:20

The First of Six Illustrations — "Murder & Anger" Matthew 5:21-26

*Jesus is not giving laws. He is talking about what the person who is at home in the Kingdom of God will characteristically do when the occasion is right.*

**Personal Meditation** — Matthew 5:20-26

**Application for Kingdom Power Training —> V-I-M**

Vision — Do I see myself as a seriously devoted apprentice of the Master Jesus?

Intention — Do I think I can live the Sermon on the Mount, and do I want to?

Means — What practice will I engage this week to "lay aside anger"?

**Session 14 – "Life Transformation from the Heart" [57:42]**

"You've heard it said...but I tell you." Matthew 5:27, 31, 33, 38

**Session Theme** — *"Jesus teaches to get to the root not the fruit of the tree."*

**The Sermon on the Mount Review - Contrasting Righteousness**

"The prevailing assumption: Righteousness is a matter of what you do."

**The Sermon on the Mount** — *Illustrations of a Kingdom Heart* [5:42]

~ Violence & Sexuality — Matthew 5:27-30 [10:25]

"Pharisaical righteousness is almost 100% 'Don't do this, don't do that. Don't do the other.' When you step into Kingdom righteousness, you get away from the "Don'ts'."

~ Divorce — Matthew 5:31-32 [24:30]

"Jesus just comes up and slaps the whole system in the face with the Beatitudes. He takes the ones that are crushed by that system and says, 'You can be there and blessed at the same time.'"

~ Not Make False Vows — Matthew 5:33-37 [29:00]

"I swear to God" versus "Yes be Yes, No be No" — "Using a statement in such a way as to convince others to do something or believe something which they don't want to believe or do" versus "Just state things the way they are."

~ Eye for an Eye — Matthew 5:38-42 [44:20]

Undermining the Pharisaical Law of Retaliation...but not teaching Pacifism

**The Lord's Prayer** [52:40]

"Our Father always near us..."

**Personal Meditation** — Matthew 5:27-42

**Application for Kingdom Power Training —> V-I-M**

Vision — What does it look like for me to act righteously from the inside out?  
Intention — How much of my invitation to Christianity was mislead...oversold?  
Means — How and when will I practice simply "Yes" or "No" this week?

**Session 15 — "Change, Disciplines, Indirection" [37:59]**

"Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world..." Titus 2:12

**Session Theme** — *"The principle of indirection by grace with disciplines is the path of power to form us spiritually into Christlikeness."*

**3 Paths of Christian Progress**

- 1.) Try Harder to do the Commandments of Jesus
- 2.) Live in Defeat of Brokenness Resting on Forgiveness by Grace - Romans 7
- 3.) The Power of Indirection by Grace through Disciplines toward Christlikeness  
*"Indirection means you do one thing by doing another."* [12:45]  
Obedience is the Key - *"Holiness means full obedience to Christ."* [20:10]

**John Calvin on...**

Holiness

Self-Denial...in Small Kindnesses...with Good Cheer..

...through the Cross - Humble but Hopeful by the Hope of Heaven

In a Vocation of a Divine Calling *"A vicar in a taco stand"*

*"As you learn more and more of dependence upon God, you are going to find that you don't have to try harder and that you wind up doing what Jesus said."* [6:50]

**Personal Meditation** — Titus 2:11-14

**Application for Kingdom Power Training —> V-I-M**

Vision — What would it look like for me to be a vicar of Christ in the small kindnesses because of the Christlikeness nature of my character?

Intention — How does practicing "indirection" influence and reflect my intention?

Means — What cheerful cross will I pick up this week to obey Jesus?

**Session 16 — "Knowledge, Grace, Discipleship"** [1:29:44]

"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh."  
Galatians 5:16

**Session Theme** — *"The role of knowledge in making disciples, living together in Trinitarian fellowship, and teaching people to do everything Christ said."*

**Knowledge • Belief/Faith • Commitment • Profession** [04:12]

Profession

The Faith of Abraham, Job and Today's Disciple on a basis of Knowledge  
The Skeptic undermining knowledge

Knowledge — (defined) "You know something, if you are able to represent it as it is, on an appropriate basis of thought and experience."

Believing what is true, what is not true, knowing truth we don't believe

Truth (defined) - "A belief, idea, statement, proposition, or whatever is true if what it is about is as it is represented in the belief."

Knowledge brings... [20:35]

- 1.) The right to act
- 2.) The right to direct action
- 3.) The right to formulate policy and supervise it and,
- 4.) The right to teach.

Belief, Commitment, Profession Defined & Described [23:40]

**Teaching People to do What Jesus Said** — 1 on 1 and Small Groups

Case Study — Teaching Someone to Get Rid of "Anger" [1:09:51 - 1:25:10]  
*What anger is. How not to be angry. Discover the causes of anger.*

You Do Not Have to Teach Everything Jesus Said [1:27:15]

**Personal Meditation** — Galatians 5:16-18

**Application for Kingdom Power Training —> V-I-M**

Vision — Can I see myself living without \_\_\_\_\_ ? Anger, Lust, Contempt...

Intention — Am I ready to live without \_\_\_\_\_ ? (Issue above). Seriously?

Means — What small group of respected, close apprentices will I engage to change?

**Session 17 – "Discipleship in Local Congregations" [47:38]**

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

**Session Theme** — *"With and by God's grace, we focus the Church on making disciples immersed in the Trinity who actually do the things Jesus commanded."*

**Two Problems in the Local Congregations**

The Distracted Local Congregation

Tradition — The Vessel Trap [5:45]

"When the vessel begins to replace the treasure and the treasure is left begging, or isn't really considered."

What does Dallas call a fundamental mistake of the Western church?

**What to do — Three Objectives for Transformation in the Church**

Make Disciples - *Can our group commit to that?* [15:15]

Trinitarian Ministry not Performance [22:19]

Teaching Disciples to do what Jesus Commanded [29:15]

1.) Expect Disciples to do what Jesus Commanded

2.) Announce You Teach Disciples to do what Jesus Commanded

*Being centered on the Great Commission will keep us on course.*

**Personal Meditation** — Proverbs 4:23; 1 Timothy 4:16

**Application for Kingdom Power Training —> V-I-M**

Vision — What does the church look like when it reflects what Jesus taught?

Intention — What distraction, traditions or lack of devotion block my intentions and growth into Christlikeness?

Means — What church leaders or group members are with me, or am I inviting, to join my journey into the human side of holiness?

**Session 1 – "The Human Side of Holiness" part 1**  [58:04]

**Class Introduction by Dallas**

I wanted to make sure I got the theme before you so I wrote this on the board ["The Human Side of Holiness"] but I see that it kind of faded as it moves in this direction and I think that maybe that is what happens in our lives.

**The Hope and Purpose of the Time Together with Dallas**

So we will put that in dark ink here on the front. "The Human Side of Holiness" — that's the theme I want to talk to you about and spend much of our time just going through the scriptures and thinking about experientially what this means. Now I think the most important thing that is happening here is what's happening in you. And I come with that understanding. Not that I want you to do anything, but I am counting on the Lord to draw near to you. I hope that you will give space for that. And I welcome you to talk with me as much as you want to. I have a special divine dispensation that allows me to talk with my mouth full of food. And I'll extend that to you. And so the eating times are good times to talk and I hope you won't hesitate to just, let's gather and talk. Because really, the big issue is for each of us individually what is happening to you. I'm looking for that for myself. I certainly have loaded my guns and I'm ready to shoot. But again, my rule is, I prepare like crazy but I don't trust my preparation, see? It's what God is going to do between us, and between you, one another, that really does matter. So I hope you will just think of me as one of the group. Think of me as being in the situation you're in because in most respects that manner I am; I'm simply a follower of Christ, walking through the world with other people, learning the Kingdom as I go. And so please don't put me in any special category other than just in your fellowship as another one who is a follower of Christ, learning how to do it and then let's learn as much as we can together.

**What does Holiness Look Like Shorn of Its Legalistic Expressions?**

So, now if you're looking at your first topic on your outline, you'll see it says, "*What does holiness look like shorn of its legalistic expressions?*"

*Dallas' Approach as Teacher of the Class* — And we're going to be working on that this morning and we'll be talking about a lot of different things and by the way I do want to emphasize that you don't have to stick with the topics that I have expressed. Because a part of what I was saying earlier

about what happens with each one of us means that you will have questions, you will have issues, you will have topics that are not coming from me. And so we want to make sure that you have opportunity to express those. So, now in these sessions, I won't just be rattling on. I'm mainly looking at you when I'm talking. And so if you have a Q: or comment or problem of some sort you let me know—if I need to finish a sentence or paragraph or something then I'll say "hang on just a moment"—but I want you to be alive to the discussions in these sessions. That okay? And I'm not going to preach at you though I may get excited and break out into preaching occasionally. But mainly I understand that this is in a good sense, an academic context. You're students, you're going to be responsible for subject matter and so I'm approaching it in that way. Just do feel free— if you can't get your questions in the hour write them down and we'll get to them somewhere around the building here. And so do keep that in mind.

[5:35] Now, this is a pretty good place to start I think. And I need you to agree with me about that.

Have you ever seen this before? This is the assignment:

*18 "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in Heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

"I have been given say over everything in Heaven and earth. So go make apprentices to me among people of every kind. Submerge them in the reality of the Trinitarian God, and lead them into doing everything I have told you to do. "Now look! I am with you every minute, until the job is completely done!" [Projected on the screen.]

And it's amazing how long it may take a religious group to get around to this. And you may know churches that spend a year or two trying to work out a missions statement. Isn't that strange? Don't you think? Really? This is by far the best church growth plan that ever hit the earth. Do you know what it did?

Rodney Stark tells us that within 300 years 50% of the population and all of the cities around the Mediterranean were Christian. There has never been anything like that. Never. And that happened because a small group of insignificant people with no resources whatsoever put that into practice. The church has always done best when it had the least. Did you know that?

That's still true. But that's because, basically, they did what this says. And they put their lives on the line and lived here.

And I want to say again there has never been a church growth program that comes even close to this one. Now, I need to get your agreement with things as I go along. And so as we start out—not necessarily because you're on the spot—but does your heart, does your life, agree with this? Be careful because actually this is pretty deep. This is pretty deep. And it's what you're investing in as a student of Denver Seminary or as a minister in some capacity; and just as a person because after all that's what it all comes down to. If you were in a position of a government person in some sort. If you were in a position as someone involved in finance or law, is that for you?

See, this is very important to think about this. It starts with the resources: "I have been given say over everything in Heaven and earth." That's the guy you work for. Okay? That's why the "so" or the "therefore" is there for. And actually the language here is better translated "as you go" You can check that out and get you all in scholarly mode and you look at the passage and study it. It's "as you go" "Therefore, as you go." This is what you're going to be doing. So you're going to be going; you don't have any option in life, you have to "go." As you go, make apprentices. And I like the word apprentice because it has a strong, applied concept to it. "Disciple" is a good word if it hasn't been washed out as it has in our culture, our religious culture. It doesn't mean much of anything. An "apprentice" that means you're getting hands-on learning in how to do something—basically how to live in the Kingdom of God. Your whole life, not just what you do in church or just your religious activities. Your discipleship is for the world. That's what discipleship is for. It's not for church. Actually, church is for discipleship. Well, should be. That's one of the things we have to attend to is the divorce in our world of "Christian" from "disciple." You don't have to be a disciple to be a Christian. That's the way it has stacked up that defines our situation.

## **How Do You Make Disciples?**

[11:30]

So that's where we start as we go we make disciples. How are we to think about that? Well, again, you know some of the words of Jesus can be helpful. And he said some startling things after talking to a group of people that he pronounced blessed when no one else was pronouncing them blessed. He said, "*You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men that they will see your good works and say, 'God is really good.'*" And that's what will make them become disciples. Because they will hear and see from you the things that will make them say "*I really need to know how to do this.*" This that you are doing.



Now of course there are many dimensions to that proclamation or preaching that's an important part of it; manifestations of the kingdom, that's an important part of it; and teaching. proclamation, manifestation, and teaching\*\*. [[\\*\\* Session 1 @ 12:25; #9 @ 48:00; #14 @ 43:45](#)]

Where'd I get *that* idea? That's what Jesus *did*. You study the gospels you'll find out he did three things: he proclaimed. That means you're putting up kingdom announcements. What does it say? "*Hey guys! Here's a new idea! The Kingdom of God is accessible to you. Where you are.*" That's the announcement.

**Matthew 4:17** "*Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand.*"

Now "repent" doesn't mean that you get down and beat your head on the floor. You might want to do that after you do what repent means because repent means think real clearly about your thinking. Metanoete - Greek "μετανοεῖτε" - means "get a thought about your thoughts" because your thoughts are what are driving your life. Here's a new thought: there is now the Kingdom of God available to you. It doesn't matter who you are or what's happened to you, it's still available. No qualifications. You just need to say, "*I'm sick of my kingdom. I'm going into this kingdom.*"

Now, we have to talk about the Kingdom at length because curiously enough it is the greatest missing element in the gospel today. And one reason why we don't make disciples is because we don't preach a message that makes disciples. So we have to come back to that and spend a great deal of time on it. Make disciples. That's the first thing.

## **Trinitarian Fellowship & Reality**

[15:00]

Now, there's an order in this and once you make disciples you need to gather them in Trinitarian fellowship and reality. You need to gather them. When you've got disciples you bring them together and that is what becomes church. So "ekklesia," a word, a word in common use, and Jesus though his disciples claims that word and if you now understand about kingdoms then you understand ekklesia because ekklesia means you're called out. Disciples are people who are called out. And they're called out of their kingdom primarily because each person has one and we must be very clear about that. And then they collude, they get together, and you have a lot of little human kingdoms and sometimes that grows into something bigger, but that's what you're called out of. Paul's way of putting that in **Colossians 1:13** - "*Brought out of the kingdom of darkness, and brought into (translated) into the Kingdom of the Son He loves*" is to say that you

have been delivered from the domain of darkness and translated like you'd been in English and now you're in Spanish. You've been translated into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. You know Colossians 1:13? Oh, that's a good one. That's a good one. And now you want to remember that when you're thinking about the order here. He called into a kingdom and the church is something that Christ is doing. That's what he said, wasn't it, in **Matthew 16**. And if you look at the Matthew 16 passage you'll see that interestingly it's about the kingdom. You remember the keys? The keys? The keys are things that you use to get *in*. That's keys. Now, some of our religious groups have actually translated it into something to keep others out. Religious monopoly. "Oh, you can't get in because I have the keys. Unless I let you in." But that's not God's idea. God's idea is that the church is built by Jesus and that's what he's doing now among other things is he's building his church. And that's going on right around you and me all the time. Not everyone is responding, not every one understands, not everyone is able to see that God is good because of the people they meet. So, there's a lot of confusion and if I may say so, Satan's main project is to mess up the message and he works full-time at that. You may not have much attendance at church but you can be sure the devil is there. That's history. That's his main focus is to mess up the church. And one of the ways he does it is to divert people from apprenticeship to Jesus and getting people, instead of making disciples, to make Baptists. "*Go ye therefore into all the world and make Baptists.*" Now, I can pick on Baptists because I'm a Baptist so I know some of you are too so don't worry about it. You can be Presbyterian and get the same treatment. He didn't say go make Presbyterians, or Catholics, and lo and behold, he didn't even say as you go, make Christians. Now, you may have a little hard time with that but you need to think about that. "Christian" is a word that occurs three times in the Bible. Compare the times that disciple occurs and it is *disciples* who are called Christians. In Antioch, they could no longer think of them as a Jewish sect so they had to come up with another name 'cause now you had Gentiles and Jews and all kinds of people. The cutting edge of the Kingdom movement was going on there and so they, "What are we gonna call these people?" Well, little Christs - Christ people - something of that sort. And so, then we got Christian but then as history goes along, Christian gets divorced from disciple. And one of the things we really have to think about intensively in this intensive is how we handle that today.

What does that mean today? How do people get brought into Christian churches? How does that work so that you don't have to be a disciple to be a Christian? We have to think about that a good bit.

Let me just ask, are you all able to hear me on the back row? Okay. If it comes to a point to where there's a problem hearing now, you throw a shoe at me as the man did to President Bush. Because there's no point in you not hearing, so please let me know if I'm not speaking well enough or clearly enough for you to hear but it looks like its working. Okay.

[Howard adjusts Dr. Willard's mic.] Am I on? Wow. Power. One of my favorite movies is that movie Bruce Almighty. It's actually *very* deep, isn't it? I've got the power! And actually it teaches old Bruce some good lessons, doesn't it?

Okay, so you make disciples and we'll be talking about what a disciple is because we want to be sure and go out of here if we haven't already, we want to go out of here with an understanding of what that is. Because if you're gonna make disciples you need to know what one is, right? And of course you're not going to do very well at making disciples unless you *are* a disciple. So we need to really be clear about that and we'll be coming back to that to spend a lot of time on that.

### **The Main Thing**

[22:45]

—> ***"Lead them into doing everything I told them to do."***

Now then, we're ready for the main thing that I want to talk to you about. And don't go there first, but as you come through those you run on to "lead them into doing everything I've told you to do." Now I word it that way because it's not talking about teaching them that they *ought* to do something. You might teach someone that they ought to ride a bicycle but they couldn't ride a bicycle. You're talking about teaching them in such a way that they actually do the things he said. And now that's the center focus, from my point of view, of what it is that we're doing. You have some objectives of the course here in your handout and you can look at those and that will be helpful.

The wording that I'd like to use now for these sessions. Here's my ambition: "That students would see clearly how, on an experiential basis, they can actually approximate in real life to Mark 12:30-31."

Now, do you know those verses? Mark 12:30-31.

**30** *"...and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength."* **31** *The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'* *There is no other commandment greater than these."*

This is the lawyer questioning Jesus about what is the Great Commandment. You remember that, I'm sure. And Jesus' answer was "*Thou shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.*" Now, stop a moment and ask yourself "What does that mean to do that?" In order to work that out we're gonna have to talk about your *parts*. How do you love God with your heart? How do you love God with your body? Your strength? How do you do that? What does that mean? So we're going to have to talk about the parts. And then, of course, Jesus added that you should love your neighbor as yourself. And we're going to try to see that in connection with this [points to the screen displaying Matt 28:18-20.] "*lead them into doing everything that I have commanded you.*"

Because you don't do that by teaching them to do things. You cannot do that by teaching them to do things. See, that's one of the curses of serious Christianity through the ages is that it has degenerated into legalism. And most of the denominations, if you look at them, you will see that they have taken a few points in Jesus' teaching and put them in terms of actions that people must do, and have identified holiness in terms of doing those things. And often it comes out quite comical like in what kind of clothes you wear. Now, in saying its comical, I don't want to be nasty. But frankly, a lot of the legalism that people creep into is comical. You think God ever laughs? And the things that we might fight over and split on usually fall in the area of legalism. I have never known a church split over "*Thou shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with mind and strength, and your neighbor as yourself.*" I want to ask you, have you ever known a church split over that?

When I ask a Q: I seek answers in terms of—because I'm apt to say things that aren't true —so you know, as James said, you folks who are teachers are in real trouble. You remember that? You're bound to say a lot of stuff that is false. Now, if I knew the things I was saying that are false I wouldn't say them. But I don't know that in many cases. So you may know of a church split. One side said, "we believe", and maybe even practiced, "that you should love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and your neighbors as yourself." And the other side said "No. No." And they said, "Well, okay then we can't worship with you we're just going to go down the road and start another one or maybe even another denomination." Then, don't you think that's an interesting fact that we don't split over that sort of thing? Because what that shows is the things we do split over tend to be legalisms. Or even not that, just, personal feuds. So, when we look at that passage now—and really everything I'm doing from my point of view, and as far as my intentions are clear to me—

**Everything I am doing in these days now is related to that phrase:  
"Lead them into doing everything I told you to do."**

Now, I don't know what will happen because the Lord is running the show. But, it's fair that I would tell you what my intentions are. And my intention is to get each of us to a place to where we could look at a teaching that Jesus has given, and say, *"I know how to teach someone to the point where they would do that. They would do it easily and they would do it routinely because it drops off of them like fruit drops off of a tree. That's what they do."*

So, what would be a good thing that Jesus said? Well, you start at various levels because his teachings are at various levels. Like the big commandment there in Mark, that's at the top level. And, we actually want to think of about that because our teaching needs to be at the level of the Great Commandment. How does that relate to praying for those who persecute you—and not with gritted teeth. "Bless them, Lord." How does that relate? So we have to think about the levels of teaching and how we're going to teach people to do things. So, I'm going to spend our time in one way or another mainly on that project.

Now, I need to ask you, is that something you're ready for? You see, I said something years ago in *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, (I think it's on page 16), that I do not know of a single local church or organization that has a plan to do that. And now I say it again in the hope that some of you are going to say "Yes, here is a church, here is a group, that does that!" That actually teaches people how to do the things that Jesus says —and again various levels—because sometimes he's talking about anger and sometimes he's talking about turning the other cheek. See those are different levels. You see that? If you're an angry person, you're not going to deal with the other cheek stuff, right? If you get stuck at the other cheek stuff, and you're not thinking about anger, it's not gonna work. But have you ever known a local group that taught people how to turn the other cheek? Not that they *should*. We have lots of that and huge amounts of guilt around it.

Like, interestingly, one of the main functions, *in practice*, of the Beatitudes is to make people feel guilty. You read them and you just feel *"Oh, it's so awful I'm supposed to be poor. I don't want to be poor. I'm supposed to mourn. But that's why I take Advil—or something stronger."* And so people are just, they don't know what to do with it, with the teachings of Jesus. So this part of the instructions is unfortunately lost.

## Suggested Reading

[34:10]

Now, I ask you to do a lot of reading that has bearing on this but the main thing that I want to make clear to you now. And perhaps it'll help you pull together the things that you did in your reading or are doing in your reading which strikes many people as very strange. When they pick up William Law's book, *On a Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, it gives you a different perspective on things, you know, and changes perhaps the whole approach that one has been taking. Or, I asked Howard to have you read Calvin's *Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life*. And it gives you a side of Calvin you may never have heard of. Or Andrew Murray on Humility. And then I think you've been dragged through a couple of my books, right? And that can get kind of confusing at the start, especially. But if you understand the project now is to bring us to the place where this would look like business as usual and not something that we have trouble coming to grips with or relating to what we're actually doing in our project or in our life.

## Shifting Our Mental Approach

[35:45]

If we can shift that mental approach to what we're doing as Christians and make that the heart of what...then we have a different world emerging. And you have to imagine what it would be like, for example, where the main membership of our churches and our organizations were comfortable with doing the things that Jesus said—out of a life, a mind, a soul, and so on—that made them routine. What we're looking for is easy, routine, obedience. Easy routine obedience is the kind of obedience you do without thinking about it. When it's appropriate it's just there.

See someone who plays the piano, for example. They get a lot of things down to routine obedience and as a result they hit the right notes at the right time. That's the outcome of what they have internalized and that's the nature of human action generally. Unfortunately, it works for sin, too, because what you see in many people is routine, easy sinning. And it's a really great issue for us to come to think, well, that could be shifted so that what was good and right and what Christ has called us to, is what we do as easily and routinely as we now sin.

**Q:** [37:45] As you were speaking, I was bad as a child. I was thinking this is true, “Jesus and whatever”. Why is everyone so unhappy and not living in the joy of the Lord of this truth. And now...Even as a child I understood that.



**Dallas** Well, that's one of the things that you get when you graduate from Sunday School. You go to Sunday School and they tell you about the wise man who built his house on the rock. And what did the wise man who built his house on the rock do? You remember what he did? And what the foolish man did?

Student — The wise man heard and obeyed.

Dallas — Heard and obeyed. The foolish man heard and did *not* obey. Now, when you grow up you learn you can't really obey. It's impossible. Besides, if you did, you'd be proud and go to hell. Not understanding that one of the things you learn is not to be proud, right? The teaching takes care of that little issue. Any other comments at this point or questions?

**Q:** [39:20] I guess one of the main passages that make me feel like it's impossible to get to that place is in Roman 7 where Paul says I do what I don't want to do, and just, understanding like, Paul, who was so advanced in being content and he still had that struggle, and so...

**Dallas** So you didn't go on to **Romans 8**? Do you *remember* Romans 8? Now there's a systematic body of interpretation of Romans 8 that cuts it's tie to Romans 7 because Romans 8 proceeds to talk about exactly what Romans 7 was about. "*There is therefore now no condemnation*" and they read that as forgiveness. There's no guilt.

*"And those who are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit or the Spirit of life that is in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death."* (Romans 8:2)

Now what was Romans 7 complaining about? The law of sin and death. "*That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled*" — and you interpret that positionally, having to do with forgiveness — so the law is fulfilled in you that in the sense that now the price has been paid for all of your sins. See, the interpretation of that passage that most people have leaves them stuck in Romans 7. And they don't look at Paul's actual life and see that he didn't live in Romans 7. He didn't live there. He's talking about a passage of life in which he found that he could not, by his wonderful ideals and principles, as a Pharisee and sincere follower of the Law, he could not do it.

Now, it's really important that you brought this up there because you know this is one of the things that sort of hangs over us and there's a deep truth in it because you cannot do this in your own strength. You can't do it. It's absolutely impossible. But glory be to God you don't have to live in your own strength. In fact, you were not even made to do that. You were made to live in the strength of God. See, we needed **grace** before we sinned. Adam was living by grace. Now, I know that's twisting your categories a bit I'm afraid,

but think the thought: if man had never sinned, they would have lived by grace. So now you have to get grace over here where it has to do with life and not with failure. The point of grace is not to patch up failures, though it does that. It is to give you the life you were meant for, and that life is seen in **Genesis 1:26**. You know the Bible does not begin at Genesis 3? The story does not begin at the fall, it begins at creation.

[\* - 1 @ 42:50; 2 @ 20:48; 6 @ 30:30; 7 @ 10:00; 10 @ 42:10]

Okay now, I threw out a lot of things like that, you may want to come back and talk about. You may want to respond immediately, but these are really the fundamental issues because in the minds of most people.

Let me tell you a story about *Renovation of the Heart*. When it first came out the people who had to represent the book to the booksellers, the bookstores, could not represent it to them because it suggested it was actually possible not to live a life of defeat. And they were so hung up on the idea that Romans 7 is the story of the Christian life. Real life story, right here in Colorado. But you see, it's reflective of this attitude that you're meant to live in defeat. Now, let's once and for all say that we're not talking about perfection in any legalistic terms because you are finite and you live in a world that's gonna tear you to pieces at every chance it gets. You better not plan on that. At least you won't need to worry about it for a while.

So, you focus on particular things, the things that Jesus taught and learning how to do that. And legalistic perfection does not matter anyway because we've already been ruined on that count. And that is one thing where grace has to come in and say what God said in effect to Abraham. "Abraham, you're a goof up. But you trust me. And I'd rather have that." "*Abraham believed God and God counted that as righteousness.*" [Romans 4:3] Now that meant that God resumed his relationship with Abraham on a different basis and a better one.

By the way do you remember what Abraham believed God for? Do you remember the story well enough? What did Abraham believe God *for*? He believed God for a *baby*, a male heir. That's the issue. And it was a big one because this was going to be a miracle. And Abraham's life with Isaac is one of miracle, of trusting God for what was *impossible*. See? That's the *trust* that stands as the basis of your relationship and my relationship to God. That's trust. That's reliance on the Kingdom.

Now, we come to the Kingdom through Jesus—we're gonna talk a lot about that because if you got kingdom without Jesus you ain't got the Kingdom. And if you got Jesus without the Kingdom...why worry about where you got



Jesus? Cause a king usually does not come without his Kingdom. And, so, the picture of Jesus as the sacrificial victim, *alone*, is not accurate. It's not accurate. That's why the resurrection is so important. And Paul says, you'll remember in 1 Corinthians 15, "*If Christ is not risen, your faith is in vain; you are still in your sins.*" [v. 14]

Now that's a verse that we need to think deeply about because that's what we're talking about — getting out of our sins. If the only issue was Christ suffering on our behalf is to get our guilt taken care of, you will not find any place for the resurrection. It will become an addendum of some sort. But if you understand that redemption includes your life now, and that comes through your union with the risen Christ in his Kingdom, then you can see the broader picture that Paul is talking about. If Christ is not risen, he's not a part of my life. If he's not a part of my life, I can't deal with it. And I am stuck in Romans 7 with all the right beliefs and total inability to deal with life.

Okay, how are we doing here with this? Are we all in agreement this is a good thing to do? Do you think that if I could teach someone to do what Jesus said it would be a good thing for me to do?

**Q:** [48:30] There's a lot of talk about what is the gospel?

**Dallas** Yes, there is. And I'm going to afflict you with a bit of that. But please go ahead. No, that's the crucial Q: .

Student continues: When you mention 1 Corinthians 15, I was just reflecting on if that's the Q: , 'What is the gospel?' Is this the gospel?

Dallas: [Pointing to the screen] Well, the gospel isn't up here. But this is what comes out of the gospel. If you decide to make disciples, you're going to need to have a gospel on the basis of which disciples are made. Okay, a major Q: for all of us as we think about what we hear and what we do is, "Does the gospel I preach have a natural tendency to produce disciples or only consumers of religious goods and services?" And then you, as ministers, you supply those goods and services. Or, does it actually light people up so that they go off like a rocket? My definition of a missional church is one that you can't stop from growing. That's a missional church. It's not one that sort of one day wakes itself up and shakes itself and says, "Hmm, we should have some missions." Now, some churches need to do that, I can see that. And, it's not an altogether bad point to make. But probably if they were not already on a mission, it's something deeper that needs to be dealt with.

**Conclusion: Final Remark about Legalism**

[50:45]

So, now I'm planning after the break to go into more of that. But I want to just conclude this session by a final remark about this issue of legalism. I put it to you in this way.

Suppose you learned that Clarence Brown is a holy man. What would you expect him to be like today? Now, there's two ways of thinking about the Q: . One is to be alert and think about it in a normative sense and you might say, "*Well, I would expect him to be Christlike.*" And then you need to spell that out some. But there is another sense which is operational and that will be in terms of particular practices and particular things that people say.

Now, here's a real tough one—don't get mad at me, please. In order to be a holy person, are there certain things you have to say about the Bible? Would you think that Clarence, here, holds a certain view of scriptural inspiration as a condition of holiness?

What about social justice? It's a big topic today, isn't it? An important topic, very important. Unfortunately, it's very badly focused on symptoms and not on causes. Poverty is a symptom. What are the causes? How do you trace that through the educational system and to the church? The causes, we're talking about.

So, we're gonna talk about being holy. We need to redo it in terms that are meaningful for us today. And many of the issues that come out of holiness or unholiness are deeply important: the nature of the family, relationships between men and women, ecclesiastical authority, all sorts of issues that get in the news. They're very deeply important. But, I hope you are going to start thinking about holiness at a deeper level that might be expressed in many passages in the Bible. The fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, kindness, meekness, faithfulness, self-control. What do those mean in the category of holiness? If you knew someone had the right view of scriptural inspiration would you be prepared to make any inference at all to the fruit of the Spirit? Or, have you, perhaps, known people who had the right *views* of social issues, scriptural inspiration, whatever you want to you want to talk, and you're just as mean as a snake. You may have known someone like that.

## **Two Levels of Holiness**

[54:35]

So maybe you can jot down a few things at two levels.

What might be expected as marks of holiness in your environment today as *marks* of holiness.

And then, perhaps if you were to list two or three things, then some reflection on is that adequate? Is that what we need? Is that what we want? What is a deeper look at holiness? How does it look today? And kind of keep that in the air, because holiness is very important, is it not? Is it?

Actually, an old guy said that "*No one without holiness shall see the Lord.*" [Hebrews 12:14] And that's probably a good thing because, if you're without holiness and you actually see the Lord, it'll probably blow your fuses. But holiness has slipped out of our vocabulary along with discipleship partially because we are still bouncing off of a legalistic conception of holiness. Not as prominent now, especially in the same form. Like in the North when I was young, in the northern part of the United States, you could not smoke and be holy. In the South, you go in front of a church between Sunday school and the worship service you would think burnt offerings were being offered up. But when you smelled it, you knew it wasn't holiness.

My wife and I when we married we went on our honeymoon to a place in Northern Georgia a retreat, a Christian retreat, Lake Louise. We went swimming in the lake. And someone came down and rather gently said "No mixed bathing." And well, we told him we were married and then it was okay. Apparently you can—that's mixed—okay. Well, what kind of an issue is that? See, those are ritualistic marks of what is proper and right and holy. Holy people do not do mixed bathing.

What in our world today - what in *your* world as a mark of holiness falls in that category? It's very important for us to think about those things if we're going to do right by the call to holiness with which you can see God.

**~ ~ ~ End of Session 1 @ 58:04 ~ ~ ~**

**Session 2 — "The Human Side of Holiness" part 2**  [51:03]  
"Two Landscapes"

**Colossians 3:1-4**, "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory."

Let's look at a different passage now that bears on this. And if you want to look at Colossians 3 for a moment, we can start there. And then take a another one to just help us begin to get a picture out of which what we were talking about begins to make more sense. **Colossians 3:1-4** "If you have been raised with Christ," others put it in terms of "Since you have raised with Christ" that's okay. "Been raised up with Christ, seek those things that are above." Now, we need to talk about what *that* means because we're not talking about the moon, okay? "Seek those things that are above where Christ sits at the right hand of God." And that goes with, "All authority has been given to me in Heaven and earth" see, that's saying the same thing. So, that's where you want your mind to be—where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For you are dead..." There's a piece of good news. We're past that. "You are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God." So among other things that means you don't know what your life is. [In order] to remember that. You don't know. Your life is hid with Christ in God. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then, you also will appear, glorious." Glorious.

Now that's a particular landscape\*\* in which you live as a person who has entered the Kingdom of God and who is living from what is *there* and *not* what is in the visible world.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

### Treasure & Vessel

[2:48]

Now Paul works through that very carefully as you may recall in **II Corinthians 4:16-18** where he talks about, "The outward man perishing...". This is a part of that great passage where he introduces the contrast between the treasure and the vessel. And the knowledge of God through the

face of Jesus Christ—once you understand what that is, that's the treasure. The vessel is the outward environment in which you live including the body and if you look in the mirror you begin to see that the outward man is perishing, right? The body is like a house, no matter how well it's built, just give it time, and it'll start to sag. It'll start to sag and parts will get lower and higher and that's the outward man. Now Paul was also talking about the pressure of events. And he gives a list of the things that he was going through and you see the two sides—the treasure, and the vessel. Sorrowful? Vessel. Always Rejoicing? Treasure.

You know that passage now. I tend to get immersed in passages and spend too much time on them for what I have to say to you so I'll try to say, "Now, you know that passage." So you can work through that; it'll help you a lot 'cause, our life is a matter of a treasure and a vessel. And the problem is that we tend to be obsessed with the vessel and not with the treasure. Once you understand that principle you understand a lot that we talked about in the last hour, about church organizations and so on because they get wrapped up in the vessel. And then one of the worst things that can happen to them is they get obsessed with surviving. And of course, it's all over at that point. Because the Church, it's aim is not surviving. God's in charge of that. Church is dealing with what we were talking about here, that's what it's called to do. If it does that it will prosper, nothing can stop it. [If ] it doesn't do that it'll wind up trying to survive. A church that is struggling to survive—you might as well let it go. But that's one of the most traumatic things to Christians, generally, to live through the death of a church. Because they are not thinking in terms of what is above where Christ is seated on the right hand of God. *That's* where the Church is. Nobody sees the Church but God. He's the one that sees it and he's the one that runs it. And we have to keep that in mind when we are taking care of our little station, whatever that may be—or our big station.

Because God is the one in charge. **He's the landscape\*\***. [6:15]

He's the landscape. So Paul goes on to say the outer man is perishing but the inward man is being renewed day by day "*while we look not at things that are visible. But at things that are invisible.*"

See, one of the things you get when you get born again is the ability to see the invisible. Now you have to be told that if you don't know it already. You have to be told that so you can begin to recognize it when it happens. It's like hearing God. God talks to everybody all the time. But if you don't know what it is and listen for it, you will never know it. Then you'll live life on your own. You won't look at the invisible, you'll look at the visible. "For the things

*that are visible are temporal. But the things that are invisible are eternal."*  
Now you decide. You decide.

**Visible - Temporal & Invisible - Eternal Landscapes** [7:45]

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

**II Kings 6:15-17 "The Story of Elisha's Butler"**

*15 Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" 16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 Then Elisha prayed and said, "O Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the Lord opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.*

Remember the story of Elishah's butler? He went out to pick up the paper and bring it in one morning, and as he raised up saw himself surrounded by an army. Did I get the right passage? So, he was really excited, wasn't he? And he came back in and what did he say?

Student - What shall we do?

Dallas - What shall we do? We've had it. Now then, read what Elisha said back to him.

Student - "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."  
Dallas [8:53] - Two different landscapes\*\*, okay? One is the visible, one is the invisible. Now, when we approach our lives, especially if we are followers of Christ, we have to always remember those two landscapes. Now this is, of course, just biblical stuff, right? "Moses endured as seeing him who was invisible" and it is the consciousness of the landscape\*\* of the Kingdom of God that allows us to walk in that Kingdom, with Christ, and see the deliverance that comes by grace in that Kingdom—remember grace is simply God acting—and the Kingdom of God is what God is doing. Now you in your theological classes, you will hear words like "reign"—it's the reign of God—but the *reign* is just "What is God doing?" "*Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness.*" What *is* that? You're gonna tell someone how to do that, what you gonna say to them? What is the Kingdom of God? You need

to know what it is in order to seek it, don't you? What is it? It's God acting. Very simple.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

Now, of course that includes reigning. Because God acts in many ways. And the Kingdom of God is present in many forms. We're experiencing a dimension of the Kingdom of God when we come out here into the hills and look at the critters. That's one of the manifestations of the Kingdom of God. That's why it's such a blessing to people who don't even know anything about the Kingdom of God. They come out and look at a tree or a mountain and go "Ahhh!" There's something about that. What is it? Just dirt. Rock. It's because that's one of the witnesses of the Kingdom. And you know in **Psalm 19** it says that, doesn't it? And then Paul picks up that same theme in **Romans 10** where he's talking about the gospel. That's real. As is the Kingdom of God comes in his law.

### **Finding the Invisible Kingdom of God**

[11:55]

I can tell anyone how to find the Kingdom of God. Just take the Ten Commandments and do them. You'll soon find that only God can support you. And you'll experience God in action when you do that. God's law is an expression of his Kingdom. You want to find the Kingdom of God? Act in the law. That's what Jesus is talking about in its updated form when he says, "*If you continue in my word then you are my disciples indeed and you will know the truth and truth will set you free.*" [John 8:31-32]

That's how you find the Kingdom of God.

Now, at it's premium best, you find it in the words of Jesus. That's the best form it comes in. He comes with his word, and if you study **John 6** carefully where he's talking about eating his flesh and drinking his blood...and you know, he really gets those folks in that culture excited, cause they didn't think you should do that. Drink his blood? I mean that was...drinking blood was about the farthest thing you could imagine. Now to get those pagans up in Scotland talking about blood pudding but for goodness sakes. But he said, "Now, you folks, calm down. You're misreading this. The flesh doesn't profit anything. It's the Spirit that brings life. *And the words that I speak to you are Spirit and are life.*" [John 6:63] See that's why you go to the words of Jesus as though you had found a treasure trove of *life*. Because in them the Kingdom of God comes to you and invites you to step into them. "*Repent for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand.*" [Matthew 4:17] It's right here. "*The*



*word is nigh thee it is in thy mouth. It is the word of faith that we preach,"* Paul says. [Romans 10:8-9] The power of the Word, when you accept it into yourself, brings the Kingdom of God to life in you.

Now, you have some growing to do because he doesn't just wipe out everything and erase it all and push the delete button and start over again. You still are you after you're born again. And there's a lot of you that has yet to be dealt with. Being justified by faith, we now have peace with God. But the war that was between us and God now breaks out within ourselves and the parts of the self, which is a massive reality, have to be taken in hand by effort and grace.

### **Spiritual Formation — What to do?**

[15:15]

So the real Q: in what we call spiritual formation is, "What to do?" Spiritual growth comes in response to intelligent, informed, effort. Now, that's the human side of holiness. We have to learn and we have to make the effort. And if we do nothing, nothing will happen.

Now, if you have a theology that's got you frozen to the point that you can't do anything I don't know what to tell you. An old preacher used to say "the only thing you have to do to go to Hell is nothing." It's all taken care of. Ticket's paid, just do nothing. Now, of course, no one consistently lives the theology. And they are confused about earning something and doing something. And they've been misled into thinking that all doing is earning. When you lift the food with the fork to your mouth, you don't earn anything. But you get to eat. No one hands you some merit for lifting the food with your fork to your mouth. That's action. It's not earning. There's a lot of good things involved in it. But, the only issue is not earning. The real issue, once you settle the earning issue—which is you not into that—is action. And that's where you need to have that picture of the landscape\*\* and to be able to express it in terms of the Kingdom of God and the invitation to enter the Kingdom of God.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

### **The Kingdom of God (def.)**

[17:25]

So let's take a little time to just work on that. [\[places transparency on overhead\]](#).



*The Kingdom of God is the range of God's effective will. It is where what God wants done is done. The gospel of Jesus is that life in the Kingdom is available to us now. We can experience the Kingdom and live in it, by placing our confidence in Jesus for everything, and by being his constant students precisely because we have confidence in Him.*

What is the Kingdom of God? It is "the range of God's effective will. It's where what God wants done is done. That's the Kingdom of God. When you pray 'Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done'" that's what you're praying for. You're praying for God's effective will; what God wants done is done. Now, you might say, "everything is like that." Well, if God wanted it to be that way he could do it that way but he's not laid it out like that. And he has given you a kingdom. Or in your case [addressing a woman] a queendom, and that's good too. And he expects *you* to have a domain where you have your way. That's not bad. That's good. [stoops down and picks up a student's bag] Suppose I was to just take this up here, start looking through it, [pokes his nose in the bag] rummaging around [takes out a book] 'I wonder what's in there?' [Addressing the student] How are you feeling right now?

**Student** - Violated.

**Dallas** - Violated! [Holding up bag] This is *her* queendom. Okay? *She* has a right to say what goes on here. Now, every person is like that and that's God's appointment. That's why you're worth dying for. And he has great plans for each one of us. And we get born, and we come into the world, and have this little thing called a body and that's our first challenge because when we get here, our effective will is worth very little. And our first task is to grow with our body and how we love to see that in a child. And they are meant to grow. And the mastery of their body...you see your body is the primary place of your kingdom. And if you didn't have a body you couldn't even use a credit card. Your body is the primary place of your kingdom and that's good, that's as it was meant to be, and maybe we'll talk more about body depending on how things go. But, the body is absolutely central to the spiritual life. Absolutely central. But it is meant among other things to extend and this is a part of the natural world as well as the spiritual world. But, the natural is meant to be under the spiritual. But just human beings on their own, because of what they're able to do, and learn, and extend their body, can do incredible things. We get used to them today but they're incredible things that you do.

[20:48] Now, when you start out in **Genesis 1:26\***, the first thing you're given charge of are fish. Whoopee. Right? Now we're still hung on fish. You can make a living selling fish, to look at or to eat. But, you know, that's

where we entered, historically, God's creation. We were in charge of animals—creeping things—so cockroaches are in your charge. You can decide what to do with them. [\* - 1 @ 42:50; 2 @ 20:48; 6 @ 30:30; 7 @ 10:00; 10 @ 42:10]

*Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." Genesis 1:26*

I hope you have time to meditate on **Genesis 1:26** while you're here because that's the picture of you. You are a creative being under God. Your soul hungers for that. Your life that's expressed in technological progress.

Some years ago a bunch of killer whales got trapped in an ice floe. What was the human response? "Let's go get 'em out." That's natural. That's what we are made for is to be in charge of the earth. The killer whales don't think, "There's some people down in trouble in a mudslide in Mexico. Let's go get 'em out." When the next time you're challenged with how close a chimpanzee is to you just think about what the chimpanzees spend their time thinking about and what they don't spend their time thinking about.

See that's the human kingdom and socially, its essentially social, because nearly everything that we can do individually depends upon the development of the social context. Just think about education. Education is essentially a social process. If it's not, it's going to be very limited. Money. Transportation. Computers for Heaven's sake. We're having trouble with Twitters and the people who send messages while they drive trains and airplanes and automobiles. See, that's what the kingdom of man does—it gets out of control and of course more deeply at the level of sin which becomes socially organized and has to be dealt with in terms of what? What's the answer to sin? Well, the only answer you will hear from the human point of view is education. What is the answer to all of the problems? Education. Education. Education. That would be true if you were getting the right education, but education in what?

[23:54] When Jesus comes to announce the availability of the Kingdom of God he is the world's primary educator. And if you have trouble thinking of him in that connection, please stretch your concepts a bit. Because the force of Jesus in the world has been mainly through education, that went with grace, to transform life.

Well, don't get off of that now. But if you want to understand what the Kingdom of God is [pointing to the screen] *"the range of God's effective will"* you have to start with what a kingdom is and your best way of understanding that is to *know your kingdom*. And the easiest people to teach us are kids because believe me they know about it. All they need is a word for it. But there in the kingdom struggles from the start, if you have more than one child in your home, you know how the kingdoms clash. And a main part of what you have to teach them is how to live with one another; how to live with other people. If you read the little Calvin book, you'll remember that in one passage he says, "Every man carries a kingdom in his breast." That's the problem. The main threat to God's Kingdom in *my* life is *me* and my kingdom and that's the human story. Unless you watch marriages and families and economic situations and so on, it's kingdoms clashing. What happened on Wall Street: a bunch of kingdoms ran amok and destroyed some other ones. [Mr. \[Barry\] Madoff](#) (who must have been named by God—I mean that can't be an accident—he "made off" with it). But, now, you see that's kingdom stuff. Now, he learned how to work with powers in order to ruin the lives of thousands upon thousands of people and what did that amount to? That meant destroying [points to the screen] the reach of their effective will. Because that's what money is all about. Money is a way of extending your kingdom. If you have a little money you can go to a funny looking building on the street and get someone to give you a hamburger. Otherwise, you'll have to take a gun with you if you want a hamburger. See all of that, now once you get this picture—and that's why I'm spending so much time on it.

### **The Two Landscapes\*\***

[27:00]

The problem is always to determine what are the realities that you can count on. And the major thing you have to understand to get your life straight is the fundamental reality in your life is God and his kingdom. That's the fundamental reality. Now, you don't have to accept that. And you can insist on having your own kingdom. And many of the people who are famous now for developing what has been called the New Atheism are basically people who are asserting their own kingdom and the human kingdom and saying we will not have God. Because if there is a God, my kingdom is not ultimate. And then you come right down to the basic activities and teaching of Jesus about the cross.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

**What is the cross?** The cross is the end of your kingdom. That's what the cross is. That's why you have to take it to follow Jesus. "*You cannot be my disciple unless you take your cross daily and follow me.*" [Luke 14:27] You can't do it. It means you can't succeed with it because the demands of discipleship will overwhelm you if you're trying to run your own show. So, you have to give up on that and take up your cross and the cross means the end of self-will. And if the only landscape\*\* you see is the visible, well you're going to think that's the worst thing that could happen to me. And that's what many people—Christians—think when they read the Sermon on the Mount. They think this would ruin my life. And you know what? It would. But there's another life. And that is the place where we begin to see and enter the Kingdom of God. And, putting our faith in Jesus Christ means that we count on him to be totally reliable about what is real.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

So you go back to the first two of the **Ten Commandments**, those are statements about reality. The first two of the Ten Commandments are designed to protect you from thinking that the only reality is the visible world and that you are visible yourself. Well, in a sense you are, of course. But in a sense you aren't. And on God's side, that's where he comes looking for people who will worship him in spirit and in truth. In spirit is what you really are inside. Because that's what gets at your kingdom. That's what gets at your kingdom. And for the most part you don't see that like Elisha's butler because frankly, if you had to live with that around you all the time that would be the end of your life. You can't imagine what your life would be like if you could not *not* see the kingdom. That's why God has made that possible. He is so big that if he didn't hide you couldn't avoid him. So, he is a hidden God. And now then what are you gonna do about that? So, that's where *seeking* the kingdom becomes all important. See that's why it's important that you be free because it's with your freedom that you come to be the person that God wants you to be. So you're free, not coerced. If God wanted that he could do it like that [snaps fingers]. No more sin. It's all done. That's not what he has in mind. He has in mind you bringing your kingdom into his kingdom. And the gospel of the kingdom then, is this:

[Screen shot] *The gospel of Jesus is that life in the Kingdom is available to us now. We can experience the Kingdom and live in it by placing our confidence in Jesus for everything, and by being His constant students precisely because we have confidence in Him.*

So, now the only saving advice, if you wish, is, guess what? Trust Jesus. That's the whole deal, right? That's how you enter the Kingdom. Not just something he did or something he said, but him, the whole person. The lady in the back please.

**Q:** [32:10] I just had a quick Q: if you could repeat the part about "He is so big..."

**Dallas** God is so big that he has to hide in order that we can hide from him. Now, see that was the project, "*Where are you Adam?*" That's a deep, great preaching text and all of that and you have to work whether or not you think God knew where Adam was all along. That's Open Theology territory. But it has deeper implications either way you would go. But, the point is, he was hiding. He was hiding and that's the human enterprise. One reason why we love children so much is because they haven't yet learned to hide their souls inside their bodies. Did you know that? They can't do it.

Our little Becky when she was little learned there were such things as jokes but she didn't know how to tell them. And so she would tell something she thought was a joke and just fall on the floor laughing. But, to tell a joke you have to keep the cat *in* the bag. That's hiding, right? You have to know when to let the cat out of the bag. In order to do that you have to be able to manage your body in a certain way. So, timing is crucial.

All of that goes into Kingdom. Because the Kingdom stuff is the only thing that allows you to understand human life. And most people in their battles with one another are just like two dogs fighting over a bone in an alley. They have no idea what's going on. That's the effect of *lust* to use the colorful word, in human life. It destroys the soul. It tears it apart. Then, people have no idea what's going on and yet they're so self-righteous and full of themselves that they think they could tell you *exactly* what's wrong—it's usually with *you*, not them.

[34:50] So, this idea of Kingdom is really fundamental and the teaching about the gospel then comes. Do you agree that that's what Jesus preached, the Kingdom of God and its availability? That's what he preached. Now every New Testament scholar, no matter what their theology, knows that that is true. You simply can't deal with the text without knowing that. But, then you have elaborate theologies designed to set that aside —and comes with various names and various versions and so on. That's the theology I was raised in. And it was extremely common was that what Jesus said was of no relevance to us. Today, what Paul said was it. And of course, if you can do what Paul said you can take the Sermon on the Mount in a walk. Did you know that? Paul and Jesus didn't preach different things. Just do Ephesians 4

and 5 and then go back and look at the Sermon on the Mount. It looks like old news, okay? But, the theology was designed to protect us from the gospels. There's no Q: what Jesus preached. He preached...now he didn't just preach *that* there was a Kingdom of God. That would've been ho hum again. Everyone knew that. What was different was the *accessibility* of the kingdom. And that was really radical; from the human point of view, that's what got him killed. Because what he taught was the Kingdom is at hand to *you* no matter *where you are*. And the people who thought they were in charge of the Kingdom did not like that. And so it's this inversion that drew the wrath of people in power, both secular and sacred as they say, down on him and from a human point of view. It's right there in there scriptures. "*Do you not know that one man would do better to perish than that the whole nation perish?*" This was said by a man who was totally absorbed in human stuff and he knew his position was in threat and he would lose his job and the Romans would come down on everyone and so forth. So, that's just politics is all it is. That happens every day all around the earth—from the human point of view. Okay. Well, how much time do we have before lunch? It's about time, okay. Well, let me get you started on this. [\[puts up another transparency\]](#)

### **Three Types of the Gospel** [+ a 4th]

[38:00]

1. Your Sins will be forgiven and you will be in Heaven in the afterlife if you believe that Jesus suffered for your sins.
2. Jesus died to liberate the oppressed, and you can stand with him in the battle.
3. Do what your church says and it will see to it that you are received by God.

We have to build on this foundation the Kingdom and the message that is preached. Because you cannot go anywhere with holiness with the wrong message. You cannot go anywhere with spiritual formation in Christ, with transformation, with the wrong message. So, now, let's just think about these. I've given you three gospels that are commonly heard at present. And now, you know, you don't worry about disagreeing with me. You can disagree with me about *everything*. Howard's going to grade you, I'm not. But so anything I say may be wrong as I said. So you take it in that spirit. But practically speaking, three gospels are heard at present.

### **# 1 - Forgiveness of Sins as the primary part**

[39:00]

*Your Sins will be forgiven and you will be in Heaven in the afterlife if you believe that Jesus suffered for your sins.*



Now, the first on the list is the one that's more common in our context. That is the context of we who sort of are evangelicals and we are concerned about forgiveness of sins. It's not the only one that is, because actually number 3 is also big on the forgiveness of sins. It's much older than what we are caught in today. But the first is simply this is the gospel your sins will be forgiven and you will be in Heaven in the afterlife if you believe that Jesus suffered for your sins. Now, if you listen to the wonderful men who are—and I'm not speaking with double-entendre — who represent Christianity on the television sets and so on, nearly all of them preach the first gospel here. And they are good men, and God blessed them, and they don't mean it, and I will mention one not to take him down but, because he's so good, and it's Charles Stanley. This is what Charles will tell you is the gospel, especially as he comes down towards the end of the session where he wants to lead people to make decisions. Now, he doesn't believe this is the gospel, and if you listen to what he says in general, you see he's got much more that he wants to pack into it. But this is what comes out.

And most of our folks don't know how to call people to *decision* on any other basis than this gospel. They don't know how to evangelize for disciples. They don't know how to make "Trust Jesus" fit with "Repent for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand." And they also are very concerned to get people where they're ready to go. That's not a bad idea. We ought to be ready to go. And all the stories about the person who left a meeting and didn't make the decision and a trolley ran over him—they have a point. But then you have to talk about the ones that the trolley *didn't* run over, and they were left here until they died with no gospel because they had already had the gospel.

So, what about getting ready people ready to live? So, one way of witnessing is not just "If you died tonight, where would you go?" But also, "If you *don't* die tonight, what are you going to do?" What then, right? It's very important to take care of what's going to happen after you die. Unfortunately that has been set up in a way that doesn't have anything essentially to do with what you do until you die. And in the form that I think every thinking person who is an evangelical Christian would reject. It comes down to something, a version of the gospel, that has no connection with the spiritual life, no connection with moral character, and people are left to cope with their life with nothing that helps them.

## **# 2 - Jesus Died to Liberate the Oppressed**

[42:45]

Jesus died to liberate the oppressed. You recognize that gospel. You can stand with him in that battle. That's fundamentally the left-wing gospel

theologically. It tends to line up politically, too. But that's another story I dare not go into.

**Q:** [43:00] Is the first one missing the mark entirely or incomplete?

**Dallas** It is incomplete. It is essential but incomplete. #2 is also essential. But if you just take the first one as the full gospel, it won't be anywhere. And that is a standing battle.

Read *Sojourners*. You get one side of it. And these are wonderful people, Jim Wallace is a sweet wonderful man, but the people who normally will listen to him really can't cope with #1, partly because they don't really believe in sin. You know sin is a term that has disappeared from our vocabulary. And that's unfortunate because you don't know what sin is, you're like a farmer that thinks the only answer to weeds is more fertilizer. So we are, now—and actually many people who use the word don't have a really good concept of it that applies very well. But one and two seem to divide the Church left and right pretty well.

### # 3 The Church

[44:35]

*You take care of your church and it will take care of you.*

Now, the third one actually falls on both sides depending on which group you're listening to and it's much more common than you think. I suspect, I don't know. Individually, you may be way ahead of me on this. But, the idea that the gospel is you take care of your church and it'll take care of you. Now, the old form which Protestants generally think they have rejected is the idea that properly ordained people in the church are in charge of the sacraments and the sacraments are what saves you, right? So, you need to get baptized in the beginning and shriven at the end, and you've got a good shot at it. But, you need to do a lot of confessing and other things that are sacraments. Now, see that's a perfectly intelligent way of approaching the issue of salvation. And you can understand how human beings would develop that because now we've got the whole deal under human control. Protestants, by and large, reacted against that, but then as Protestantism developed they had got a different system of sacraments which were *right beliefs*, and they are in control of them, by the way, did you know? And why should you belong to a particular church? Because they have the right doctrines. And that's why your denomination is better than any other. And we've loosened up a little bit on that but in my childhood, which was some time ago, Methodists and Baptists had serious doubts about whether or not the others were going to make it, right? Now you see that is in essence practicing the same sacramental system. That's a tough one to deal with. It's very attractive because frankly people can identify a church, they can



identify ministers, it's comforting to believe that you just have to deal with them and you're okay. They will, as the song says, "fix you up with the Spirit in the sky" right? And you'll be alright. Now, we will break in just a second but I just want to leave this last gospel with you. [Screen shot]

**#4 - Put Your Confidence in Jesus, the Whole Person** [47:05]

*Live with Him as His disciple now in the present Kingdom of God.*

**Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:1-14; Colossians 1:13; John 3:1-8**

Now you do that by faith and response to God's action. The new birth is from above. And by the way, it's the same place that Pilate's power was from. You remember when Jesus was standing before Pilate and Pilate said, "Don't you know I've got the power to kill you?" And Jesus said, "You wouldn't have any power at all if it wasn't given to you from above." That's the same place that the new birth comes from. It's not "born again". "Born again" is actually a biblical term, but it's "birth from above." And what were you...what were we talking about? *"If you then be risen with Christ, set your mind on things that are above"*, that's the invisible landscape. That's the invisible landscape\*\*.

*"Set your mind on things from above where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth because you are dead."* Colossians 3:1-2

That's the good news. That's the good news!

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

**The Human Side of Holiness**

[48:35]

Now, then, the issue of the human side of holiness becomes a matter of *how do you*, by your regenerated choice, enter into that by your own activities?

How do you come to be the kind of person who just routinely does the kinds of things that Jesus talked about because you know that you are doing what is good and in accord with reality and you have to struggle with some of your tendencies built into your body that [are] already galloping in another direction? But, that's where growth and grace comes in.

So, "miserable sinner Christianity", as we used to call it, which is — you remain a miserable sinner until you die, and usually with the thought that your problem is your body. And "flesh" is mistakenly misread as your body.

## "The Human Side of Holiness" Course Study Guide

The "miserable sinner Christianity" is the idea that you never get better. And our implicit theology is very much invested in that, very much invested in it.

And in Chapter 5 of *Renovation of the Heart* you know I sort of go over the reasoning on this before I introduce the VIM [Vision-Intention-Means] thing, you know? Because I want people to see the VIM thing in the context of all of the things that say you can't do this. Because you *can* do it, and if your vision is tied to the Kingdom of God, and your life in the Kingdom of God as an associate of Jesus in what he is doing in world history, then you have got the wherewithal to learn holiness that is a sweet, life-giving stream flowing from God through your life and into the lives of other people.

~ ~ ~ **End of Session 2 @ 51:03** ~ ~ ~

**Session 3 – "The Human Side of Holiness" part 3**  [1:14:27]

**Romans 5:1-4** - 1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

I want us...I didn't quite get done with what I had wanted to cover. But I'm almost there and I want to look at a few scriptures with you now. And first of all **Romans 5**. And you will get a picture here of how life works and develops beginning with being justified. What I've been saying to you is that we don't want our thinking to start with justification. Everything starts with creation. You cannot understand redemption unless you start with creation because redemption is buying back from what? to what? and that's why you cannot deal with redemption, and for that matter, with glorification unless you start with creation because it is that creation that you find out *who you are* and that's the most important thing to understand, is who you are. And that is what alone put you in place for your actual life. Now you know these verses I'm sure but I hope you might see them in a new light.

V.1 - *"Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Now notice it didn't say through his death. It didn't even say through his resurrection. As Paul says, "There's one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." That's all we're at, is the risen Christ, the person, the whole person and one way of thinking about salvation is to say it is being caught up in what Jesus Christ is doing today on earth. And I better say that again. One way of thinking about salvation is to say it is being caught up in what Jesus Christ is doing today on earth. That's the point. That's the part about "if you then be risen with Christ. Justification brings peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ "through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand." (v. 2)

Now can you see how your understanding of grace now becomes very important? What is the grace you stand in? Is it just forgiveness? Or, is it God acting in your life constantly? The grace wherein you stand is not just forgiveness, it is interaction—constant interaction with God. That's what knowledge is. Knowledge, biblically, is not what we call head knowledge. It's interactive relationship. So when the prophet [Amos] says to Israel on behalf of God, "You only have I known of all the nations of the earth..." Okay now,

try to get the idea here. God is not saying I don't know anything about the Nubians, or the Eskimos, you're the only people I have any knowledge of. Obviously he's not saying that, right? He knows about all of them. What *is* he saying? That's where you get the biblical conception of *know* [as] *interaction*. What he is saying is, "You are the only people on earth that I have entered covenant relationship with. And in relationship to which I am a living God"—a living God.

When Adam knew Eve it was not just head knowledge. When Mary said "I know not a man" she wasn't saying "I don't know about men." She's saying "I have not been in a certain interactive relationship with a man." So this is very important to understand that. Now, grace and knowledge go together. So in **2 Peter 3:18** where the writer says, "*grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*", I'm going to challenge you to write that verse in your words utilizing the notion of knowledge and grace that I'm trying to give you.

Can you do it? 2 Peter 3:18 "Grow." Now, you will notice that that is in the imperative. That means it's something for us to do. **That is the human part of holiness** and I'm hoping that I can burn that phrase into you minds so that you'll never forget it. Because that is the issue.

We don't need to worry about God's part, he'll do that. He'll take care of that. But there is a role for us to play. "Grow in the grace and knowledge..." Now, how would you do that? And I hope that you will take the challenge to write it in the words that I've given you about grace and about knowledge. You can share that with your spiritual friend, or maybe we want to share it with us, at some point as we go through these sessions. "Standing in grace" wait a minute we're not done. "We jump up and down in hope. We exult in hope of the glory of God."

v.2 "We exult in hope."

Hope (def.) "Anticipation of good."

Fear (def.) "Anticipation of evil."

So hope pushes fear out. The anticipation of good.

v. 3 "*We exult in tribulation*"

Well, not only this but we also jump up and down in our tribulations we're so happy. We exult in tribulations. Why do we do that? Because we say now is another occasion in which I get to see the hand of God in my life. I get to see how God is going to take care of me, how he's going to deal with these issues. And we kind of joke about this, you know, in church. Quote the

words from James, "Count it all joy my brothers when you fall into all kinds of troubles." The word "temptation" there doesn't convey in modern English what is wanted. "Count it all joy when you fall into all kinds of *troubles*." It's not like counting it all joy when you're in the market and The Human Side of Holiness of 31 168 you get to walk by the rack that has all the magazines on the front of it. Whee! Rejoicing in this tribulation! No. This is about troubles. That's another word for ordinary life. You will not have many days when you don't have an opportunity to rejoice in troubles and you do that because you know that now is another opportunity to see the care of God for you.

*"Perseverance...character...hope"*

Now, when you do *that*, then that gives you perseverance. Perseverance is a long word for sticking with it, staying with it. It's very hard to persevere without hope. And if you have hope then when troubles come you have something to rely on that enables you to stay with it—stay with what is good, stay with what is right, and then that develops character. You see how that works here in the passage?

Now we're just taking here one of the New Testament analyses of what goes on in the spiritual life of one who is following, trusting, Jesus. Now if we don't know that, then we don't know what to do with this. We think, "Well, I had faith and I'm justified, so, what? What comes next? Well this tells you what comes next. But *you* are a participant. And one of the reasons why I want you to think about this passage is stated as if it might somehow be passé. But it's not. And you have many other passages like 2 Peter 1, Colossians 3, many other passages where it is put in the *active*, not the passive.

*"Put on bowels (heart) of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience. Bearing with one another, forgiving as Christ has forgiven you and above all, put on love, the bond of perfectness..."* **Colossians 3:13-17**

"Put on *bowels*" — those are guts. God says where your life runs from. In the ancient world it's still true. In our language when we get on the football field or some place, "Don't you have any guts?" "What kind of guts have you?" Well, Paul tells the Colossians "Put on guts." Now most of your translations can't stand that. You have to go back to the old King James so they say something like heart. But heart is not in the right place for what it's saying when Paul says, "Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, forgiving one another, [if ] anyone has something against another person as Christ forgave you, so also do you. And above all these things put on agape which is the bond of perfectness." That is to say it just takes it all in.

See, that's active. *You* are supposed to do it. You don't do it alone but if you don't do something it won't happen. See that's the crucial thing to understand for our purposes in these days together—is to get the point of *what to do* Now, you have to have the background. That's why we start talking about the gospel and then we're gonna move on now in this hour to talk mainly about the whole person that is mentioned by Jesus in Mark 12 when he says the Great Commandment. Of course, that comes out of the Old Testament. Jesus tweaked it a bit and brought it more up-to-date and we need to pay attention to all the things that he [already] said about that. We're gonna do that in a moment. But you have to have the background. But the whole point is to get now into a position where we could take someone who says...let's imagine a person who said, "I would like to learn how to turn the other cheek so that I would routinely and easily do that." And you would say, "Well, I can teach you how to do that." See, that's where we want it to come out. And then we can go back to the Great Commission and say, "Well, that's what we're supposed to do." And then we can put a sign on the front of our church that says "We teach people how to do everything Jesus said." Wouldn't that be better than a snappy proverb of some sort?

v. 5 - *"Hope does not disappoint us because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."*

*"Perseverance brings character..."* Wait a minute we're not done yet. *"Proven character brings hope."* I thought we already had that. I'll tell you, you haven't seen anything yet when you have that first hope. It's when you carry on you learn hope under an entirely new dimension. And then we can say hope does not disappoint us because why? *"The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."* So now you get a picture there, you see. Okay that's what's going on in your life. How is that working in *my* life? And it isn't like you sort of go through this and then you're done with it. It's the process that goes on because things change and you change as you go on through your little time here in your body as it now exists.

Okay, so that's a kind of picture of what holiness might look like. But when you look at **Romans 5:1-5** you are looking at holiness. You're looking at it. That's what it is. Now, if I have a disagreement with someone about doctrine and they—our at least I—am here [bracketing over his bible with his hands Romans 5:1-5] that disagreement is going to take on an entirely different tone. And I might find that the disagreement is a great occasion for me to learn from my brother or sister, if not to agree with them, to learn how to love them. People occasionally say to me, "Since you're so smart why are

you in church? You see everything is wrong with everything." My wife and I are deeply involved in church and we expect to be that way until we get graduated. How to go to church is a huge issue. And if you just go to church to see The Human Side of Holiness of 33 168 whether or not the preacher and the worship leader are doing okay, then you go home...see that's not quite going to church. Disagreement at church is precisely the time not to leave but to stay.

**Q:** Would you talk about character one more time?

**Dallas** Well character is what you do without having to think about it. It comes from who you are; your identity as a person, and not from your decisions, though decisions are involved in it. You don't have to decide about character. Character is there, ready to go. And that's what we learn from our bible stories and from life. See, Peter had good intentions, he just didn't have character. Then so when the event came he made the wrong decision because Peter as a whole was headed in the wrong direction. All of them said, "We will not run." But they did. It was in their legs and their legs took off and took everything else with them. That's character. It's very important to understand that. Basically character is the matter of coming to the place to where you're running without thinking. Now, actually everyone is like that. So when we come to deal with that issue we're having to deal with *change* of character. Because we learn to do all the things that were wrong, and they're sitting in our body ready to go without thinking much. That's character. Did someone else have a hand up? Okay. Yes!

**Q:** So then the perseverance would be the person training themselves.

**Dallas** Well the person, and that would include their body.

**Q:** So, in prayer, if you want a character of prayer in all situations, you practice it now so that, when the time comes you need to have that prayer, you are ready?

**Dallas** And Jesus taught that explicitly didn't he? Perseverance in prayer.

*"Men should always pray and not give up"* that's in **Luke 18** isn't it?

[In] **Luke 11** you had the picture of the man who's standing there with his teeth in his mouth and his bare face hanging out saying, "I need some bread." And the person isn't gonna give him bread and the person stands there just asking. He doesn't go away. Now we may have time to come back and talk about that, but see, that's a case of perseverance and prayer has many, many dimensions in terms of character formation. And again perhaps we'll be able to talk about those later.

Well, that's a good passage. I've listed some other passages, too. Probably I shouldn't take any more time on that because time will get away from us.



But I want you to see the idea and I want you to combine the idea of the passive and the active. This fairly exemplifies the passive though actually perseverance is not passive. And then the verse from Colossians I quoted "*Put on therefore as the elect of God holy and beloved.*" That's explicitly active. It's imperative. And **2 Peter 3:18** is imperative, "put on" okay, "grow" okay. We're to do it, we're to grow it. So you have to keep those two together. And when you do that you begin to understand how the process of growth works that comes out as routine, easy obedience. And then you think of the activity of the individual Christian of the church, well that's what's going on in between, right? So, our churches should be set up to encourage and help people at all the stages where they are from the time when they have just been converted and they're full of joy but they're also full of a lot of other stuff. From that point From that point, then you come down to old age, retirement. What do you do at that point? In terms of growth. See, churches should be set up to help people at all of those stages to continue to "*...grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*"

[Slide Appears] *Does the Gospel I preach have a natural tendency to produce disciples, or only consumers of religious goods and services?*

Now if you have the understanding of the Kingdom, and you're preaching what Jesus preached, then you've got a gospel that makes disciples and they're ready to grow and ready to be taught, because you know, if you don't have this disciple, you're probably not going to do very well teaching. If you walk up to someone on the street and offer to teach them algebra, you probably won't be warmly greeted. But if someone has signed up for an algebra course that may not have been very happy about it—but if they signed up—then you're at least in a position to teach them aren't you? You have a presumption that they want to learn and so then you're there if you haven't established that presumption of wanting to learn the things that go into spiritual growth then you're going to go nowhere.

See, and that's the problem with the gospel that does not have a natural tendency to produce disciples. And you wind up with consumers, and often unwilling consumers, and you have not established a principle *in* them which will move them onward and so then you as a minister wind up with the job of getting people to do things they don't want to do. Does that sound familiar? Instead of establishing a principle which allows them to grow, and, maybe they don't particularly like to do some things, but they're committed, and they know it's good for them and they're going through it. And then you don't have to try to get them to do it. And one of the things that we as ministers should get out of is the business of getting people to do things. We don't have any business doing that. If they are not involved and ready to go



and we just help them do it, then we need to go work somewhere else, not on getting them to do things.

You get a person who, for example, doesn't want to give abundantly of their resources, their problem is deeper. See giving and prayer are the two primary entrance steps into the Kingdom of God, after you come in. It's giving and prayer. That's how you engage the Kingdom. But if you haven't engaged the kingdom you're apt to be thinking in terms of your kingdom and how it depends on you having your money and you might be mad at the preacher for trying to get you to give money. And you don't understand that by giving money you are involving yourself in the Kingdom of God.

Prayer is a power sharing device that God has worked out for a world of recovering sinners.

Did you know that's what prayer is? He wants to get you involved in his kingdom work and he gives you this opportunity. But he knows that you need to grow. And so prayer is safe because he's the one that's running the show. So he probably will send you through a process of learning where your prayers become expressions of love. Prayer and giving. Now, if you don't establish the principle at the first then you wind up where many of our churches are now.

The dear lady who runs the prayer ministry down at the Presbyterian church at Newport Beach said to me in exasperation a while back "The hardest thing in the world to get Christians to do is to pray." And it actually is harder than getting them to give. Now why is that? Well, it's because of the problem with what they heard as the good news.

Now we have to deeply ask ourselves, "How do we bring people into our fellowships?" And it's good to start with. It just sort of be descriptive about it, and think about how people wind up as members of a Christian church. And actually there are a lot of different ways aren't there? And that's a subject worthy of a good deal of discussion. We won't have time to do anything with it I think. But that's where we need to start thinking—along these lines. And then of course you have to think about what are we going to do with the people who are already there? How do we deal with people who, in all sincerity, have responded to the gospel they've heard and wind up stuck in their spiritual life and can't get anywhere? And often they want to but without teaching and help and example, they can't get a hold of it and make a new start somehow because they're stuck in their theology. See, that's where we need to be able to go back and help them listen to Christ and see what he's saying and begin to respond to that.

**Q:** [28:45] It seems to be about not trusting God, not knowing Him to be good, is what is foundational. How do you get through that so they can move forward?

**Dallas** Yes. That's exactly right. And so what we need to do with people is help them begin to see that God is really good. You can't trust God if you don't believe he's good. Now, this is *really* fundamental stuff. I discussed this at some length in one of the chapters in *The Divine Conspiracy*. [Chapter 3] I'm saying "Well, if you want to help people get on the right track you start with "God is good." Now, how do you do that? Well, there are various ways that you can do that. You want to talk about Creation, and you want to talk about Christ, and you want to talk about history, and finally it will come around to the individual. Because if you're going to trust God you're going to have to believe that he's done well by *you*. He's done well by you. And you're not this little, unmanageable, worthless little thing over here that human beings have probably suggested. Perhaps your parents did, or a teacher, or someone that you had to...God's good to me. Has God done well by me?

Now, of course, there are some ways of approaching that where if you really are burdened by your guilt and your sins and God has forgiven you, that's a tremendous gift. It's enough to convince you that God is good to you. There will be a few other things to deal with. But, I mean that's a big start, and it'll carry you a long ways. Perhaps all the way; that's a real good thing. But it's uncommon today to find anyone who is really troubled about the guilt of their sins. They may be and not know what that is because we live in a very confused condition today about psychology and the psyche and all the things that are going [on] in it. But you do have to come to believe that God is good and that's a big one. Many people for example their theory of Christ's death is that it shows that God loved *you* because he died for you. And that's true, but it doesn't make a beginning. The surprise is not that God loved me, the surprise would have been if he didn't. Because the issue is not that God loves *me*, it's that God is love.

But many people—out there in California we have a thing called the Western Exterminator, [it] has a little man standing on a top hat and he's looking at a bug, with a hammer behind him. And that's many people's image of God. He's just waiting for, waiting for you to do something which you've probably already done.

And you remember that series *Maude*: "God will get you for it!" And that's people's idea of God as a cosmic policeman and so on. And so we have to really bring the light of the gospel in a way that changes that.

[33:05] John Wesley was asked on one occasion "What do you preach?" A man in depression came to him, and asked him "What do you preach?" This was his answer: [Dallas reading from overhead]:

*"I do preach to as many as desire to hear, every night and morning. I would make them virtuous and happy, easy in themselves, and useful to others.*

*Whither would I lead them? To Heaven—to God the judge, the lover of all, and to Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant.*

*What religion do I preach? The religion of love, law of kindness brought to light by the gospel.*

*What is it good for? [Dallas - See, these are wonderful, wonderful questions.] To make all who receive it and enjoy God [Dallas - And you know, you almost have to just stop there. Just enjoy God. See, that's back to your point. That's in the Great Confession, isn't it? To love God, enjoy him forever.]*

*...and themselves: to make them like God; lovers of all; contented in their lives, and crying out after death, in calm assurance, 'O grave, where is thy victory! Thanks be unto God, who gives me the victory, through my Lord Jesus Christ!'"*

See, when you look at that you realize why the Wesleyan movement hit the world like a bomb and there was a time when people thought, everyone were going to become Methodists. They found a way around that, unfortunately.

## Spiritual Formation

[35:40-44:50]

If I had more time, I would spend some time talking about the way that spiritual formation is set up in the opening of *Renovation of the Heart*. I want to say that spiritual formation is a word for...

(def.) *"The process through which people go in taking on the character of Christ in all the dimensions of their personality."*

Those are the ones mentioned in the Great Commandment

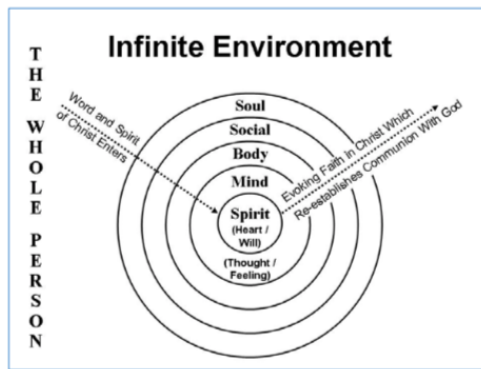
*29 "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." **Mark 12:29-30***

6 Dimensions: Will, Mind (Thoughts & Emotions), Body, Social Context, Soul

They've got your will, and now we're going to have to talk about these each individually. That's your *will*, that's your *mind*, which includes your thoughts, and your emotions, or feelings, that's your *body*, that's your social context and it's your soul. So all of those go into the process of spiritual formation. And that is, generally stated, that is what we work on with God in the process of spiritual formation.

So, let's suppose you had someone who wanted to learn how to be vulnerable, and turn the other cheek, how you do that? Not just reduce it to a legalism which is what it usually means. You could get the meaning of it and teach them in such a way that they would actually do it. And they wouldn't have to stop to think about it. That is, it would be a part of their character. So then, how are you going to do that? You are going to have to deal with what is in their will, with what is in their thoughts, and their ways of thinking, their emotions and their feelings, with what their body is ready to do or not to do. Because in most cases, people have slapped back before they thought about it. See, that's their body, because your body is where your character becomes deposited. And that's a good thing, that's a really good thing. It's also scary because the fact is we learn to read one another's bodies and that's a part of the human conspiracy to stay in the system of sin. And our social relations are set up in certain ways, this all is tied to our body. Usually those are systems of fear and suspicion and mistrust, rejection, withdrawal because we're running our kingdom and we know how dangerous it is, and our body is keyed to fight and flight and fear and all of those things that have a chemical correlate in our bodies. Our body is alive to the spiritual side of the world and then of course there's our soul and the soul is that part of us which organizes all the rest of it to form a person. And if the soul is broken, you don't actually get a person out of it.

## "The Human Side of Holiness" Course Study Guide



### "The Total Human System - All of which is to Love God" [39:50]

[Diagram on p. 38 of *Renovation of the Heart*]

This is in *Renovation of the Heart* but I want to put it in front of you to talk about it. That's a picture of you and me. Perhaps the single greatest error and problem in spiritual formation is believing, or leading others to believe, that it's all a matter of the will. And that is a disastrous error. The will is central but it has to work with the other parts or it can never succeed. Willpower is a myth. I asked for Howard to make available to you a couple of selections from William James\*. His briefer psychology on "Habit and Will" because one of the things I'm hoping to do with you is to work through and give you a way of thinking about habit and its place in life and then the will. But willpower is the surefire way to fail. Willpower is so small that it's almost non-existent. And about the only place you have much is in how you direct your thoughts. And in most cases you don't have much there—or maybe none. [\* - William James - see Sessions 3 @ 40:50; #7 @ 49:15; #8 @ 11:10-12:55, 24:30, 31:25, 1:02:55; #10 @ 44:45, #12 @ 52:00]

So we want to think about these different aspects carefully when we're talking about coming to do what Jesus said. Our actions do not come from our will. Our will plays a part, but only a part in our actions. And many of our actions don't involve the will at all. And that's not a bad thing. That's a good thing. The human system and life cannot work just by decisions. And I have to bear down on that because it's such a fallacy that people have—"It's just a matter of decision." And some few things are a matter of decision. For example, turning your life over to God. You can decide to do that; there's gonna be a big follow-through that's involved for it to be successful. But you can decide to do that. You can surrender your will to God. And the primary function of the human will is to rely upon God. And when that is withdrawn—which is what happens in the story of the fall but all of us replicate that. When that happens then the will turns back on itself and becomes poisonous and hopeless because it is in a world which will not adapt to its will. And all of us here are old enough to have discovered that. [43:10]

Now, it was never meant to govern our life or our world. It was meant to give a direction back to God, and then a connection with God, which *will* make our world manageable. But the surrender of the will to God is the single most important thing that you can do to begin the journey. That's why, as I talked earlier about the Cross, that's why the Cross is so central. And we have to be careful and understand it rightly, because the Cross is not your neighbor with a barking dog. The cross is not what troubles you. The cross is what sets aside your will as the ultimate guide to life. That's the cross. It sets aside your will as your ultimate guide to life.

It says, "*No. God's will is the ultimate guide to life.*"

And now, once you settle that you still have a lot of things to do because most of you, your "self," most of your body, these aspect here [looking at diagram on screen] will not have been surrendered to God automatically by the surrender of your will. Now then, you have been born from above—that's what happens at the surrender of your will—and you can begin *with* God to deal with everything else that has to be dealt with.

[44:45] Let's take some time to go over these things and try to get a formula to help us understand what they are.

## **The Will**

So let's start with the will. The will is the executive center of the self. It's the executive center of the self. It is the place where *you*—uniquely *you*—initiate processes, events and brings things into existence. It is the most precious part of you and God respects it. So much so that he will allow people who do not want to be with him to be away from him. He will allow that. He was not override.

That's why one of the hardest things to pray for is a relative. For many reasons, but one of the things that we wind up praying for is the overriding of their will, and he doesn't do that. That's why in human affairs, the will is so precious and so sacred. It's because its the one place that you—and uniquely you—exercise your kingdom in the creation of what is good or what is not good. And then your body is given to you so that your will can gain a wider sway and your environment is meant to fit into that. But at the root of it all is your will.

Now, *because* it is the root of it all, that's what has to be surrendered to God. And that is why Jesus says, you know, "If you do not..." His language is graphic and strong. "*If you don't hate your mother and your father and your sisters and your brothers and your own life, also you cannot be my disciple.*"

*"If you don't take your cross daily and follow, you cannot be my disciple."*

The problems you will have to solve as his disciple cannot be solved if you are still on the throne.

That's why **Alcoholics Anonymous** is so unyielding on this. You can't go anywhere until you pass that gate. And of course, a lot of the success that is due in that program or the other 12-step programs which do something similar, is due to the fact that they surrender. Now, unfortunately, it's on a particular point. That's why 12-step programs allow you to stay on the throne. And it turns out you can be sober and a very miserable and mean person. I'm not trying to take away from the benefits of A.A. because they have saved the lives of many, many, people, and that's good. But basically it's a Christian program that was adapted as such to be nondenominational by people who understood it was a Christian program. And then gradually it has moved away from that and there are a lot of churches now in this country that could not survive economically but for the rent paid by 12-step programs that meet in their basement. Wonderful irony, because if the churches had been doing what they were supposed to do there would have been no need for A.A.. It's a very instructive thing for us to think about. But the churches generally were caught up in self-righteousness and they didn't want drunks as they would call them. I think that's an old problem, isn't it? So God in his desire to bless people sent Bill W. and Sam Shoemaker and others and they devised a program that everyone knew was organized around God. And it's still fundamental to A.A. teaching, that two-word phrase, "Not God." That's *me*. I'm not God. Until I get that taken care of I'm gonna need some help from the bottle or somewhere. Because when you're *not* God and you're *being* God, you're in trouble.

So, now you've settled I'm not God. This thing is beyond me, I can't run it—whatever it may be that we're talking about. And that is what is crucial about the will, is the surrender of the will to God.

**Q:** [50:30] If the will is the executive center and core, what do you mean when you say that our actions don't come from the will?

**Dallas** Right. Ask an executive of a large company how his choices get down to the people at the bottom. So now, this is crucial to, positively, to talk about how the world *does* work with the rest and we want to get into that. But the will...and that's why I said, there's very little to willpower. That's why, if you hear a person say, "I'm never going to get drunk again," you automatically say, "Oh yeah. We know what's going to happen." Now, if you say, "I don't want to get drunk again and therefore I'm going to do this,



that, and the other," that's different. But almost no one—there are people who actually can do that. Thank God. They can say "I'll never get drunk again." That's because they have become so sick of themselves that they're also changed [points to the screen] in some of these other interspace...Yes.

**Q:** [51:40] The decision to surrender your will to God, is that coming from will power? What part of your body does that?

**Dallas** Well, your body doesn't do it. Now, you're pushing a very delicate theological point and my response to it is this: it comes because the will has been strengthened to good by the presence of God. [Pointing to screen] That's why over here I have the Word of Christ coming in to the Spirit and then on the other side, faith in Christ and in God coming out the other side.

**Q:** [52:30] Would our prayer for our relative be, "May the Word of Christ enter.."?

**Dallas** Well, you know, the spirit apart from regeneration is seeking, and there are differences, and a person... Now, here we get into some deep theology—double predestination and all that sort of thing. But the person who really doesn't want to have anything to do with God, I think, never turns in faith because God does not assist them. But the rule is, "*If with all your heart you seek me, you will find me,*" Actually, I'll find you. [Deut. 4:29]

**Q:** [53:16] What if you are related to that person who doesn't seem to have any interest in...?

**Dallas** Then we should pray—in my practice and my advice is—we want to pray about what comes to their mind, and their body, and the social context, to begin to redirect them. Very often on my prayer for a person in that case is, "Please, bring someone into their life that can help them." So we can still pray and although prayer will not overwhelm the will, there are other things that can be done and we should be asking God to do that for them. Now, that's his decision as to whether or not he does that and he knows best about all of that. But for my part I'll keep praying until I find out something better to do. So we should pray for our friends, and our relatives, our lost ones. We should pray that they will hear a word, that they will meet a person, they will have a circumstance of some sort that will bring them to the end of themselves. Because that's where you actually have to come to the end of yourself. And you will always find God when you come there—that's his address. The end of your rope is where God is to be found.

See, that's where people don't generally get to and as long as they don't, then there's almost no hope. And again, go back to the A.A. thing. You see that first saying is a statement of hopelessness and you will know, I'm sure,

because of many many cases of people being converted in response to the Atheist Prayer was we call it, "*Oh my God, if there is a God, save my soul if I have a soul.*" Now, you can't do that as a trick, but if you're actually at that point God will respond. He doesn't leave anyone who comes to that point. That's the meaning of the statement, "*Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*" Being saved is easy if you get there.

[55:40] So, the surrender of the will now, is crucial. That's really what we're talking about when we talk about making a disciple. Talking about someone who says, "I give up. I don't have any resources. I trust you. You are my Lord. I am not my lord. You are my Lord." See, now, that, that's a huge moment. And that's what we should pray for and work for as we preach the gospel as we do our best to live as the light of the world where we are is that people would come to see that. And see that their only alternative in life is to put their confidence in Jesus Christ.

Now obviously you've got to have something coming from the mind to do that and this is the point at which we say the will never works on its own. The will requires two things: a thought, and a feeling.

- \* If I'm thirsty but don't know where the water is, I can't decide to go get a drink. If I know where the water is and I'm not thirsty, I won't decide to go get a drink. That's why ideas, words, and so on are so important.
- \* Children - And that's why it's so dreadful when you stop to think about what the world is running in the minds of people constantly. Of what children and young people have to face in the way of feelings and ideas. And they don't have character yet. I mean, some are blessed with it a little earlier than others. They pretty much just have impulsive will, and whatever thoughts or feelings are running through them. And that's a very bad position to be in. That's why, of course, they need an adult world where there is at least some sanity and hopefully some good teaching about God and what God is doing. And of course, they're very receptive to that if it's given to them.
- \* The World and Children - But now we live in a world where children don't know the Bible stories, they know the comics, and that's what their lives run on. And if you ever watch these things with your grandchildren, or your children, or whatever you get a picture of what they have that is fed into their minds. And you need to think about the difference between those, and coming up with a mind full of Bible stories. There's not a lot of hope in what they look at constantly and what they hear in school and all of that. So, no. But the point here is your will is locked into a set of ideas and a set of feelings.

**Q:** [59:00] When you say, "the decisions to surrender your will", are you saying that it is a one time thing?

**Dallas** It can come in that form. It need not because it can come in the form you discover and the old fashioned word "confessing faith" is actually a discovery. It's a, "*Why I believe.*" That's confession. That's confession. Now, sometimes a child who's raised in the right environment will have decided without a moment of special effort. That's no Q: that happens. Robert Murray M'Cheyne, one of the greatest saints of the last centuries, never knew when he was converted. Because he had been fed the Bible stories, and the presence of Christ in his home, *and he didn't know there was anything else.* And that's happened with many, many, young children. It happens sometimes with adults. They discover that they've decided. The process of mind by which you come to it. C. S. Lewis' famous story, you know, he's wrestling with these things for years but it was one moment when he got in the sidecar of his brother's motorcycle, and they drove somewhere, and when he got in he was an atheist—when he got out he was a believer. He says nothing about how his brother drove or anything. Because, I mean, it really was, he discovered that he believed. And then of course decisions, all of that... [points to student] You were going to say something.

**Q:** [1:01:00] Can one take their decision back? Can the will be altered?

**Dallas** Well, what happens after you surrender your will is actually a pretty complicated issue. For example, suppose you have a child that makes a decision as a child, but they receive no training and they're just left to grow up and they're told about things like "Don't use drugs," and "Don't get pregnant," and "Don't get in jail," and that's about all they get. They're going to have some re-decisioning to make down the road.

\* Dallas' Conversion Story — [1:01:50] That was my case. I was a moderately wicked young man though I was converted soundly when I was nine years old. But I had no teaching and no one gave me any direction as to the spiritual life. So when I wound up at the age of 17 or 18 I had to make some transitions. In my case, it was I had cheated on an exam in my college, and we had some very powerful preachers who came, and I realized that I had to confess this to my teacher and clean out the bucket. So, now then, someone thought, "Well, would I have gone to hell before that?" I actually don't think so. But I wouldn't want to be in that position anyway. And so there are a lot of issues here. How does your life go after your decision? And that is tied in with the issue, now, if you don't do certain things do you need to get saved again? I don't know how you could give a definitive answer to that. I know how you can use the text of the Bible and so on to prove one thing or another and, unfortunately, it turns out you can

prove it both ways. And I just say, "Well, why should we not do our best not to get in that position?" On the other hand, many people are in that position and we need to deal helpfully with them.

**Q:** [1:03:20] Would you say that your spirit and the will can be surrendered but the other parts not?

**Dallas** Absolutely right.

**Q:** Oppositely, could the other parts be surrendered?

**Dallas** ... Could be surrendered and the will not? No. I don't think so. But, I think it's very clear that your will can be surrendered and your life in a mess. And we have all kinds of good testimony. Peter is the one that stands out above all. No Q: his will was surrendered but his mouth wasn't. And so that's why it's important for us to talk about this, is to help us understand the dynamics of life flow around these [points to the screen] and to understand how each part enters in.

So now, why is it important for people to hear that God so loved the world? What is that? Those are ideas. What an idea. There is a God, a God of love, and he loved the world so much that he sent his unique Son into the world that people might find life.

Listen folks, that is a big idea And it's so important that our children get that idea. And many times it's much later they begin to respond, but the natural response to that verse would be to fill you with joy and gratitude and to make you say, "Such a God as this I will trust with everything I am." But it is tremendously important what is proclaimed, what is said. And that's why we want to be tireless in saying it. Wisely? Yes. There are unwise ways of doing it. Sometimes does more harm than good. And we have to be aware of that. It is a part of the privilege of the child of the Kingdom to proclaim the Kingdom and to use what we know of God to help people understand what it is.

That's the idea. Now the idea—all ideas always come with emotions. The idea that you are alone in the world and on your own has a whole set of emotions that go with it. Same way with the idea that you're not. That there is a God and this God is actually for you. So the emotions go with it. But you have to have both feeling and idea to make a decision. Now then, as decisions grow we attend to the feelings and to the ideas. So we study, we arrange circumstances that enable us to have feelings that are more appropriate. That's where spiritual disciplines come in. God also helps us with our feelings. The God of hope he's called in **Romans 15:13**, wonderful verse. *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing."*

See, that the complex of feelings that comes there, that's important. And the feelings actually reflect deeper conditions. They're not just feelings.

**Q:** [1:07:00] So, an idea can come into your mind like, "God is for you", but there may be a process of the emotions catching up to that, and it might take that process?

**Dallas** Exactly right, that's the way it works. And I wanted you to see a little bit of that in those verses from **Romans 5** because you actually see hope recycling, once there, and you start out with justification by faith. Now faith is not knowledge, but it's ideas and feelings and they dispose you to trust God, and then trusting God you stand in hope and grace, and that moves on. So, as the proverb [4:18] says, "*The path of the just is like dawning light that shines brighter and brighter until the perfect day.*" You see that's the process, that's why we want to understand that the will when surrendered to God engages the process. And in part it engages the process of changing the mind, right? So you remember **Romans 12**. "*Don't be conformed to the world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*" That's how central the mind is. And see, after you start as a disciple then you are largely in charge of what comes into your mind. And really the first significant freedom you have as a human being is where to place your mind. Now, that's not perfectly free, because, you know, people get locked into ideas, they get obsessed, you know, a large part of what we commonly call possession is through ideas and feelings. And so there are other ministries that are needed for many people before they can do disciplines. It's very important to understand. Disciplines are not the answer to every problem because not everyone can do them.

So, we need a community of people who are watching what is happening, listening to one another, responding to one another, proclaiming the message, teaching, encouraging, doing things that help people be hopeful in various ways. Sometimes it's just a matter of being with them. You know, sometimes just someone *with* you, hoping *for* you.

For a major part of my young life I *believed*, I had hope because my grandma did. These things are not individualistic. And we want to try to be...that's why fellowship, not necessarily what you do in Fellowship Hall, which is very often not much fellowship, but really being with others. That means being in a position to take time. That means disciplines on your part so you're not run to death and don't have time. And so a whole structure of activities emerges out of this.

The gentleman with the camera had a Q: or comment.

**Q:** [1:11:00] I was thinking about how a lot of youth ministry is decision based trying to get kids to make decisions and they are hammered with it. I'm wondering what it should look like, what kind of shift we could make that might be more towards surrender. What could ministers do differently?

**Dallas** Well, now you have provoked me. I think, if I may say so, **youth ministry** is one of the great wastelands and problems. It is partly based upon that fact that young people are not respected. They are not presented with opportunities to think things through, to come to honest convictions. And so, we wind up trying to entertain them, and keep them coming back with the hope they won't get pregnant, or get on drugs or something of that sort. That's often what parents want us to do for their kids in the church.

We have to respect young people much more and allow them to come to decision. There is a time to ask a person, "*Wouldn't you like to decide now to become a disciple of Jesus?*"

There is a time, but that requires discernment to recognize that time and to know when it would be the right thing to help that person make a move. Too often we harass them into decisions, or social pressure or something. And that way they don't become disciples. That's why we have such a high graduation rate from church when kids pass out of high school—when they get on their own and they're not under the pressure.

So I think, really, we need to pay attention to thoughtful teaching, listening with young people especially, the primary form of witnessing is listening, not talking— and being with them and letting them come to what they need to come to in the way of faith and decision and so on. So this is a really important topic. You see, if we think *thee decision* is the thing then we will aim at the decision. And the decision is not the thing, the decision is an outcome.

What we want to do is help people understand. And we can often do much more by asking them a Q: than we can by asserting something. And communicating to them this idea that they have the kingdom is one of the most helpful things in bringing them to the point to where they can make a decision. They struggle with the idea but they don't have words for it, they don't know how to handle it, they feel guilty about it, and we need to be able to help them understand what it is, and to know that it's a good thing, and understand how to handle it.

~ ~ ~ End of Session 3 @ 1:14:27\* ~ ~ ~



Session 4 — ["Love as Life" part 1](#)



[58:57]

We want to spend most of our time identifying love with a certain kind of life because salvation is a life. Towards the end of the hour [go to 33:05] I want to look at our handout I gave you the other day and just walk over a bit of that and take questions if we can. But now we come to think about love as it is discussed in **1 Corinthians 13\***. And a good thing to reflect on is just how we feel when confronted with this chapter because I think it intimidates people. Partly because they misunderstand it and they think now they've got to *do* that. Also, it doesn't fit well into our ecclesiastical context. Because we hear him saying "If I speak with the tongues of men and angels—and by the way, it's important for you as scholarly people to understand what an incredible role rhetoric played in the ancient world—and speaking with the tongues of men and angels would be something highly treasured. It isn't just speaking in unknown tongues...speaking in *known* tongues. And actually, we do a lot of that in our present world—judging people by their speaking capacity—and too much if I may say so in our religious context especially.

[\* - Watch "[Healing the Heart](#)" #1, 02:30-05:50]

Paul made a choice in his ministry not to engage that. And when you read, especially, 2 Corinthians where he's talking about his ministry you see many indications—as well as elsewhere—1 Thessalonians, 1 Corinthians, that he deliberately made a choice not to be impressive as a speaker. And if you haven't thought about 2 Corinthians 10:10, you want to look at it because there he's kind of laughing at himself, pretending he's gone crazy, and he's talking about his accomplishments and he says in the tenth verse, "And in fact, here's the rap on me: they say, they say my letters are really something—heavy, substantial. Personally not much." And his speaking stinks. And ask yourself how you would like to go on the Mediterranean circuit with that rap on you. But Paul was very purposive about it. And when he comes to say "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not love"—agape? Boy, is he ever carrying a load. And then he goes on! Why is he doing this? Think about why he is addressing these issues.

*"Though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and though I have faith so that I could move mountains..."*

Where do you suppose he got those words? "...could move mountains and have not love, I am zilch, nothing. And if I bestow my goods to feed the poor or give my body to be burned and have not love it profits me nothing." So if you have someone in to candidate for leadership are you going to discount all of that? Nothing isn't very much, not very much.

So it's a kind of shocking opposition and you understand it's in a context where he's talking about various kinds of capacities—gifts of the Spirit—and



actually when he finishes 13, he goes back to talk about that. He doesn't dismiss gifts of the Spirit; he doesn't dismiss human abilities, he just says without *agape* they don't amount to anything. Now why is that? That's because *agape* is the lifeline to the life of God. That's life— *agape* is divine life. It *is* divine power. It isn't that you have to choose between *agape* and the other things. The other things are fine if they are under the control of *agape*.

## Here Comes Agape

[6:25]

*4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

*8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is [d]perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.*

Now, for many of us folks in our religious circles that's enough to get us off the train right there. Pull the emergency cord and get off. "Love suffers long and is kind, love does not envy..." What is envy? Envy is resentment to another person because of blessings that they have —it's resentment. It's based on a sense of deficiency in oneself. "Love suffers long and is kind, does not envy..." That means you are thankful that other people are better than you. Wait a moment... Yeah. That's why Paul says in Philippians 2 that "each consider others better than himself." "Love does not exalt itself, it is not 'puffed up'"—I love that phrase, "puffed up"—"doesn't behave itself unseemly..." Now, that's the old fashioned language, and by the way, I'm a nineteenth-century figure, so I quote the King James. Actually I think there's some advantages to it as a translation. There are disadvantages as well. What does that mean, "Does not behave itself unseemly?" You can try various words on it: Love is not a jerk, doesn't jerk people around, love doesn't give people a hard time. Try that?

Love does some other things. For example it's not hard to approach, not hard to approach, not unapproachable. It doesn't seek its own. "Love bears all things..." What does that mean? That means when Paul says, "You know, I've seen that there isn't anything that love can't stand." "Believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things..." He didn't say *Paul* did that, he said *Love* did that. Love never quits, never fails...

Now, [it's] important to understand...please, don't turn that into a legalism and say, "Well, I want to be loving so I will be patient." Well, actually you can be patient and not loving. So, what you're talking about here is a very deep kind of set of the whole person. And that *set* itself is a *power*. Well, let me give you a comparison. Take *contempt*. Contempt is a structure that enters into peoples' lives and then it does things. You can explain why people do the things they do if you understand that they are a person given to be contemptuous. Anger can be taken into your life as a power and it will organize your life, to a certain extent, and the more you give yourself to it, the more it will organize your life. And people will come to realize that you are an angry person. And probably you will also be contemptuous because anger and contempt are very closely related.

Love is like that. You take love into your life and you allow it to penetrate your mind, and you allow it to penetrate your body, and your social setting. You subject your will to love, [gestures to the board behind him] that's the center of it—we should have said, that's the Executive Center—but as you do this and you live with it, it takes over your whole life and in the process lines you up with the commandments of God. And that's why Paul says what he does, and that's why Jesus said what he did, because when he said, "The Great Commandment are these," he was including all of the others in it.

But now, you don't not do those because you're not supposed to, or do them because you're supposed to, or not do them—you do them because of who you now are.

## **Pornography**

[13:00]

So now let's take a particular case that's very troubling in our world: pornography. This is an increasing difficulty both for men and women. It is a curse on the ministry. Just a devastating sort of thing. How can you deal with pornography? You have to become the kind of person who would not find it interesting. And you're not going to do that by deciding one day, "I'm not going to be interested in that." You do that by coming to think in a different way about yourself. I mean, what are you thinking about *yourself* when you engage pornography? And actually, if you think through, or enough, that'll cure you on the spot. Well, not on the spot. It's a *lengthy* spot—you have to go through that. But at the point when you see what you are doing to *yourself*, to say things like, "Well, I've got to do this..." That's not a position for a human being and the image of God to be in. And you begin to ask yourself, "*Why do I do this? What does it mean about my desires and my will?*" and so on.

Let me just take that as an illustration because I mean people have such a hard time with it. But the hard time is built into the way they think about themselves, about God, about other people under God. And when you see this right you don't want to do that. Not in the sense that, "Oh I *want* to do it but I *don't* want to do it," but in the sense, "I don't want to do it." See, that's the training or the character away from something. Now, that's, in general, true of *everything* that comes in the way of temptation and sin, is you reframe the mind, and the feelings, and your will, because your will training is very important here. Not will worship, like Paul talks about, but will training. You accept the fact that you have to train your will because if you don't do that you will not have a place to turn around and start changing your mind, changing your body, and your social relationships, and, really down to the level of your soul. Your *will* has to turn.

### The V-I-M Structure

[16:20]

Now the structure that we want to talk about later is in Chapter 5 of *Renovation of the Heart*, the V-I-M structure, the division is fundamental. But there's an interaction there because unless you have some degree of intention you will not readjust your mind. And for example, one of the big problems with pornography is that people—their will—is enslaved to their desires and they don't know who they would be if they gave up their desires, and they can't find a place in their will to turn and say... See, in so many areas, you have to *want to not want* what you now want; you have to *want to not think* what you now think. So that's sort of the minimal motion, that of intention, that can help you—and of course, I believe that only the grace of God enters at that point. It doesn't decide for you. Grace and God do not make decisions for you—you make decisions. But there's help, and we can count on that.

So now love comes in and seeks what is good not what you want and that in itself is a great shift to come to seek what is good and not what you want. And now then, once you get settled in seeking what is good, you can go back in many cases to ones that are legitimate, and subordinate them—not in the case of pornography—and subordinate your wants to what is good—to a will that is surrendered to what is good. That's what love does, it comes in and possesses. So now you don't have to deal with some stuff that was over here in your mind that was not good and not loving because it's not there anymore. So how did you get that there? Well that involves some work sometimes. And there are processes that you can go through, and for a Christian who understands the importance of scripture, they can replace a lot of their thinking by scripture memorization.

When you take the scripture into you, it's a *substance*, and it is *active*, and it *works*. That's one reason why you want it *in* you. And then it will help you deal with your other thoughts and desires and replace them. Now, that is why one of the greatest disciplinary verses in the scripture is **Joshua 1:8** "This book of the law will not depart out of your mouth." That's a real good place for it, is in your mouth and if it's in your mouth a lot of other stuff *won't* be in your mouth. So that means you're keeping it up front, when you're standing in line, doing other things...go *there*. "This book of the law will not depart out of your mouth, but you will meditate therein day and night that you may do—observe—according to all that's recorded in that book of the law." Now what will that result in? "Then you will make your way prosperous and you will have good success." Well, what's the connection between having the law in your mind, and, of course, in your whole personality, because it spreads and diffuses? What is the connection?

Well, you see, when you have the law in your mind it directs your action in conformity with the Kingdom of God. So you wind up acting with the Kingdom of God. That's why you will make your way prosperous and you will have good success. Is because you are aligning yourself with the Kingdom of God. See this is a part of the answer to the Q: , "Well, seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness' how do you do that?" One way of doing that is to take the law into your mind and dwell on it.

Now, there are other aspects of this sort of thing, practicing the will.

I mean a good practice for the will is to have an itch and not scratch it. Can you do that? Now, you might say, "Oh, I can do that." Well, you can. It's trivial, I know, but we have to lighten up a bit here from time to time. It's good practice.

See a doughnut and not eat it. And look at the doughnut and say, "What's that to me? Who needs that?" Because a part of what you're doing now, in growing in love is coming to grips with your desires which are *not* directed in love, by and large, and they have to be brought under—see the Christian teaching is not the desire is *bad*, it only goes bad when it becomes the rule of your life. So we are not Buddhists and we're not Stoics. We don't think desire is bad. But we know that it has to be subordinated to what is *good*. And we understand that that is what *love* does. Love subordinates desire to what is good. The answer to lust is love. Why would I not look upon a woman to lust after her? Because I love her. Just that simple. I love her.

\* Am I in love with my wife? [23:15]

Now, someone asked me in the break, am I in love with my wife? And the answer to that is, on and off for about fifty-five years, now. On and off. But I have been *loving* her and she—much greater testimony to goodness—has

been loving me all that time. She loved me when I was not in love with her and when she was not in love with me. See, and you really need to help people understand that. That love and "in love" —"in love" is fine if it's under love. So, we've been loving one another all that time since we met at Tennessee Temple College. I went into the library and there she was. I checked her out and never took her back. I can still remember the sweater she had on. The skirt. Oh, what a wonderful thing. But thank God, far beyond our own wisdom, we learned to love one another. And that is where God comes in, you see? That's not a human attainment. And if we have that, then we can be patient, we can be kind, not resentful, all those things because it is love that is in us.

[25:15] So the point is, if we are going to teach people to do everything that Jesus said we want to lead them into being loving people. See? And that's why the gospel is so central. "God so loved the *world* that he *gave...*" You understand what that *means* and we are led to trust love ourselves. We understand something about, at least, that God is really back of it and that he will support it. See, many people feel that if they love as we're describing it here, then they will experience great loss and they don't trust love. So they look at the Sermon on the Mount for example and see all the things just listed by Jesus. Well, you know if you do this, and you do that, and you do the other, and they said "*This would ruin my life. I'm not going to do it. I'll just feel guilty and I will be forgiven because my sins have been paid for.*" But to think of actually doing it wipes most people out because they don't understand that it is a part of the life from above that comes upon entry into the Kingdom of God. So you can trust it. And you have knowledge upon which you can base your faith, and then you can put your actions on your faith and God will be with you. That's the way knowledge, and faith, and action, work. You don't try to just work by commitment. We have to talk about the difference between belief and commitment and profession\*\* [YouTube #11] because this really causes folks a lot of trouble. They think they believe something and they don't. They're just committed to it, or maybe they're not even committed to it, they just profess it. And profession will get you almost nothing. Because usually we profess things *without* commitment, *without* belief, and *without* knowledge. And then when we come down to the facts we find we don't believe what we professed and we don't come to understand the strength of faith. So we're going to have to work over these because love is a way of knowledge that provides a foundation for faith.

[\*\* See Dallas Willard - "[Knowledge & Faith: Religion or Reality?](#)"]

\* David the shepherd with Goliath [28:12] - Let me just illustrate it simply with little David when he comes out from the sheepfold and comes up to where Goliath is, hollering across the valley and saying nasty things about the Israelites. And David can't understand... "Why is this going on? How could this *be*?" And he says, "I'll take care of this guy." And they all treat him like he's an idiot and then he says, "Listen, I've been in these things before and I know how it works on the basis of my experience." And he tells them about a lion and what happened to the lion. And he tells them about the bear and he doesn't beat his breast and give the Tarzan yell. He says, "God helped me." See, he had knowledge of this on the basis of his experience. And so he said in faith, "I will take care of this guy."

[29:30] Faith (def.) is where you are ready to act as if it were true. You have faith in something when you're ready to act as if it were true—like you all have faith in those chairs. And I can tell by the way you're sitting there if you didn't have faith in them you wouldn't be sitting there that way.

So, David goes out and picks up a few stones and does business. Now, he wasn't trusting himself, he was trusting in God, and he *acted* and God sustained him. And then after that, he knew more than he did *before*. Now he knew what happened to the giant. See, that's the way these things work. Now, love is like that. You have to learn to trust it. And if you don't trust it, then what will happen is you'll take things into your own hands and follow your desires and they may be really nice sounding desires—not necessarily bad in themselves—but you will not have the action of God with you.

That's what is called "flesh." Flesh is the natural abilities of the human being. Do you go with those? Now, to not go with them is to constantly go with the intervention of God in your life. So, when you're faced with a challenge to love—that is, [pointing to screen] to seek what is good in a particular situation and not respond just to your fears or even your hopes or whatever—then you make room for God. Now if you don't make room for God you'll make room for something else. You remember what it says in Ephesians about anger? **Ephesians 4:26** - "*Be angry but don't let it lead you into sin*" that means primarily don't hold on to it. Anger is like pain, it's not bad in itself but you wouldn't *choose* it if you were smart. So, anger says, "Hey! Something's wrong. Fix it." Don't get caught up in anger. If you *do*, you will make a place for who? Satan. Make place for Satan. See that making a place for Satan, making a place for God. You make a place for God by love acting in faith—faith working by love. You make place for God and that means you're tying in to the life of God.

Now, we want to just enlarge on that a bit. (We quit at noon, right?)



## Salvation is a Life

[33:05]

Salvation is a *life*, okay? It is a life that is tied into God’s life. You are born from above; that’s how you enter. That’s one of Jesus’s descriptions of entering the kingdom—you have to be born from above. That means that now you take on a different life. So we need to talk a little bit about life. Life is one of the primary descriptions in the New Testament of what you get when you surrender to God—you get life. Now, what is life? You have to think about that. Now I have in *The Spirit of the Disciplines* [chapter 3] I have quotations and discussions and I’m just assuming that you can tie in a lot of what I’m saying in these few minutes that we have here with what’s in the book, okay?

Life is self-initiating, self-directing, self-sustaining activity. Self-initiating, self-directing, self-sustaining activity. Life always occurs in an environment from which the living thing takes in nourishment. Okay, now just briefly illustrate it in ways that you can fill out. A child soon learns what it is for their goldfish to die. And that goldfish, when it dies, that’s the end of its self-initiating, self-directing, self-sustaining activity, right? And then, of course, you learn other things about what happens when life departs, the child does, the fish rots, okay? Why? Because the life that was in it and was organizing its body is not there any longer and so its body comes apart.

Now, the life that is in a cabbage is different from the life that is in a kitten. It’s true, isn’t it? What does that mean? Well, the initiating, the sustaining, the directing is different. If your cabbage suddenly became interested in strings and marbles like a kitten you would know that something was out of order. It’s a different kind of life and the environment means something entirely different. If you saw your kitten out in the yard eating dirt like the cabbage does, you’d know something was wrong. Different kind of life, see? That idea of life now, is very important. What does it mean to be spiritually dead? “You were dead in trespasses and sins” that means that the life that was appropriate to you is gone. You are *not* drawing from what you should be drawing from; you are not initiating, directing, sustaining the activities that are appropriate to your nature. “The day you eat thereof you will *die*.” [Genesis 2:17] What does it mean? It means you have now cut yourself off from the environment that can sustain the life that you are meant for. So, now your life is going to be different, right? You have cut yourself off from God. You did that by not trusting him. And because you didn’t trust him, you didn’t obey him, and now you pulled up yourself by the roots and you are in a process of corruption. You are dead. You are in the process of disintegrating like a cabbage plant that you pull up and put on the sidewalk.



Now, okay, am I making any sense at all to you? Okay. So now you're born again. That means that a life has reentered you. This is what Henry Scougal in his great old classic called *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*\*—one of the most influential pieces of writing on the Evangelical side of modern religion that there is, just a few pages. *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*—it's one of the best things you can ever read if you want to really understand the heart of Evangelicalism as a historical movement. You can get it on the web. There are a few good things about the web. You will find it very hard to read because these people, they did not make concessions to the reader. But actually it will do your mind good. Because now we've been training our minds to react in little bits and pieces. [\* [Three Prayers of Henry Scougal](#)]

At USC we have an excellent writing program. They teach you how to write even if you have nothing to say. But you can write real good; probably get a job writing advertisements. In any case this is a really magnificent piece and if you brace yourself and get a hold of it and you will see why nearly all of the great modern Evangelicals like Wesley and the rest of them point back to that book and say that was a landmark in my life. And it's all about now, what I'm talking to you about — *a life from above*.

Now, understand, to say that means now there is a principle of initiation, of direction, of sustenance\*, that is not from the natural world. And lo and behold, we are suddenly back to where we started yesterday: **the two landscapes**.\*\* *"Though the outward man is perishing, the inward man is being renewed day by day. While we look not at the things that are seen but at the things that are unseen."* (**II Corinthians 4:16**) [[#2 @ 2:48](#)] You see those verses in Colossians, *"Since you're risen with Christ, seek those things that are above where Christ sits on the right hand of God."* **Colossians 3:1**

[\* also see video [#6 @ 16:55](#)]

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video [#2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00](#)]

Here's an image for you. You ever see those videos of airplanes that are refueling in flight? It's a great image and that's what you're doing when you set your mind on things that are above. You are actually taking in divine substance and that is the nature of the life of love. And it is a reality that comes in, and as well learn and we progressively allow it to happen, and encourage it to happen, and do things that help it to happen, and don't get your synergistic blood up and think Pelagius is coming in the door because if you don't do something none of it will happen. You know when you're dead

in trespasses and sins, God takes an initiative—not necessarily that you can't do anything, but you *won't*—and that's enough to fix *you*, just that you won't.

So now, I'm skating the theological abysses here. But the thing is, anyone who comes to God is going to come to God because God has touched them in some way. But then they have to respond; and God enables them to respond. But he does not make decisions for them. He does not...that's one thing you can bet on. God will never make a decision for a human being or a person. You make the decision. And you don't say, "Well, what's going to happen?" You're going to go to lunch here in a moment. You're gonna make a bunch of decisions. You don't think, "Well, let's see what will happen..." What will happen is you won't get anything to eat. Now, if someone didn't provide it you wouldn't get anything to eat either. And of course, there's a lot that's going on in you and your thoughts and your feelings and so on and you need all of that there. But decision is important and without it nothing happens. And you learn to give God the glory for whatever happens. You progress, and you make a lot of mistakes along the way about this, but you gradually learn that he doesn't share his glory with anyone and he doesn't do that because it'll kill you if you, if it does. You start taking God's glory to you, you have cut yourself off from God. Now, whether or not what's gonna happen to you is a different story but you can cut yourself off from God and be a born-again Christian. All you have to do is take off on your own. All you have to do is to think you are able, in yourself, to do what you need to do for God. And he says, "Okay, since you've got it in hand I'll let you go" and probably the best thing that can happen is you wind up in the belly of some whale somewhere, crying out to God and that's good. "Whale Seminary" is one of the best seminaries ever been run.

[45:00]

So now life, see? Life. Life has its own rhythms. You continue to have a natural life. That's not bad. That's good. If it is *under* the governance of the life that comes from above and that life is also love. That's what it is. That's its essence. And so when it *moves*, it moves at the initiative of love, it *moves* in the direction of love; as it moves it is *sustained* by love. So now I'm concerned to communicate that idea of *a life*. And partly because life is essentially the kind of thing that *develops*. And that's where we have to spend much of our time now for the next hours.

But life essentially is the kind of thing that develops. To be born again is to enter the kingdom, it's not to live in it. You go through the door of the house, you don't live in the door, you live in the house. And living in the Kingdom of God is something that requires personal growth, modification of

character, learning how to rely on God at the same time as [you're acting], to act without relying on yourself. It involves learning that God is sufficient. Such wonderful verses as **Psalms 16:8** "*I have set the Lord always before me. He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.*" See that's another one of those *great* verses like Joshua 1:8 that just says volumes. Okay. How do you set the Lord before you? Well, there's something to be learned there. How *do* you set the Lord before you? And you learn that through a process, that is gradual, reliable, it is a way of knowledge, as well as a way of faith. But you learn that if you do that—since he *is* at your right hand—see, his being at your right hand means that he is acting with you, and for you. That's what your right hand is for. It's okay, if you're left-handed you can say left-handed there. That'll do just fine. He is at your left hand and that gives you the secret of not being moved. What does that mean, not being moved? You're not swept away in the currents of life.

So let me give you a real tough one here. Suppose you fall in love with someone you're not supposed to be in love with. You may have heard of that actually happening. Now, what do you do about it? Well, it depends on what you have set before you. If you have set romantic fulfillment before you, you're probably in high weeds at that point, see? If you have set the Lord before you, you've got something to anchor you so that the emotional flow of things—you will not be moved. That means that you have a resource to anchor you so that you don't have to live in denial or in the acceptance. Because you are founded on something solid now. And I know that one of the main tests of the Christian, especially those in leadership, is precisely this sort of thing. And we see it around us in the cases but the important thing to understand with the cases—the famous cases, you all know these—it's *not* what happened that blew the lid off of it. The important thing is what was going on all the time before that. Now see, these folks have made a choice about where to live that ultimately defeats them. And they're confronted with something—no doubt with a little help from the enemy, he's always working on these things—and there they go.

So, "*I have set the Lord always before me, always before me, he is at my right hand. I shall not be moved.*" Now that's a way of handling the resources. See, when you do that, when you set the Lord always before you, you are *consuming* the fuel of a godly life. That's what you're doing. You are refueling in flight. You know, some years ago they invented these little robots that when their batteries were running down they would just go plug themselves in until they got recharged and that's what we learn to do—but not on just an emergency basis. We want to do that—I mean there *are* emergencies—at Ziklag on one occasion, David's own people were about ready to kill him. It's not unknown for leaders to be in that position. And

wonderful line, it says, "He strengthened himself in the Lord." And you wonder, "What did he do?" Probably went off on a rock and sung a few songs to himself, see? He set the Lord before him. He knew how to strengthen himself in the Lord. He knew when he had to do it. So, there are emergency situations is what I'm saying. So we want to take...usually, if you're not in a solid characterological, constant position, then when the emergency hits you won't know what to do. It's very important to keep the *constant* flow going and the Psalms are full of that, of course. The first Psalm, "Blessed is the man" and he goes on to say essentially what is said in **Joshua 1:8**.

But now my point in all of this—please don't lose it—is you are *taking in life*. You are taking in life from above and that is absolutely crucial, now, if you are going to live the life of love in the Kingdom of God. And then when you are going to teach others to do the things that Jesus said, you're going to teach them how to do the same thing. What is the person thinking who blesses those who are cursing them? What kind of *soul*, what kind of *mind*, what kind of relationship to others? See, if you don't understand that, you're saying, "Okay, whenever someone curses me I'll *do it!* God will *inject me* with *infused* grace at the most." Do you know sometimes he does that? But he will not regularly do that. Now, if you are preparing yourself...see, if you're going to bless someone who is cursing you, like Jesus did on the cross, you have to be full of blessing. So when someone punches you what comes out is not cursing because *there ain't no cursing in there*. You've done got that out. You're not into pronouncing evil on persons. Your mind knows better. Your feelings go in a different direction toward them. You think about your relationship to them differently. Your soul has got it all put together in such a way that you can actually do what you intend to do which is bless them.

Am I making any sense at all to you? Okay. See, my emphasis is upon the *system* and how love moves into that system and brings with it a *life* and then out of that life the things which Jesus taught routinely and easily flow.

**Q:** [54:50] So, if you can't love someone the way that would be God-pleasing to love them, then the resource that you have is that you can release that person to having God love them through you.

**Dallas** That's a good thing, but now you also want to say well...there's something in me that needs to be changed. And so you back up now, and you don't go into great gobs of guilt because you are *forgiven* and you know that that's not the issue. So now, you do what...you release the person to God. If you can't do anything else, you can do that. And actually that's a kind of blessing because if they are placed in the hands of God that's going to be a good thing.

**Q:** [55:5] Aren't you actually loving that person?

**Dallas** You are doing the best you can. That's right. No, look, what you said, what you said, it's very good. But you have to accept that. That's the best you can do to love them now. At a certain point your body rebels if it's not into love, and so you are limited because you are finite and this whole system is still working. So you do the best you can in any circumstance. What I'm just saying to Ingrid is a very important point, is that now don't just stop there. Go back and see why was it I wasn't able to do more and that gets you off of that particular issue, and the particular action, and now you're thinking...now, the answer is going to be "Well, I don't have an adequate vision of myself and the people around me under God." See, when you bless someone you will their good under the invocation of God. Now, you have to have a vision to do that. You have to have a body that's not already cursed them before you start thinking about it too. But you're probably okay on that. And so if one has a problem...I mean, take a case where you're *really* injured—like what someone has done. Now, you have to have a lot of resources to sincerely bless them in that circumstance. You have to have a lot of... you know, you're gonna do a Stephen here at some point, who's going to follow his Lord by asking that they be forgiven and you may need the heavens to open to do that.

Open heavens is an interesting concept—I don't know that we will get around to talking about it—but when the heavens open you see what was there all along. You see what was there all along.

Ezekiel—the heavens open—he was in circumstances where he needed to see that and he saw what was there all along. We started out with the two landscapes\*\* yesterday remember? We talked about Elisha and his butler\* and Elisha said, "Lord, let him see what's there all along." He didn't say "trot up some chariots of fire." No, no, they're already there. And now that's a part of what goes into setting the Lord always before me.

[\* Elisha's Butler - see Session 2 @ 7:45]

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

~ ~ ~ End of Session 4 @ 58:57\* ~ ~ ~

Session 5 – ["Love as Life" part 2](#)



[1:17:18]

Today we're talking about love and we're talking about it's a life and there are a lot of aspects of it that I really can't spend the time I'd like to; I ask you to read the book by Andrew Murray on humility. Humility is *absolutely* essential to love because humility is what enables you to get yourself out of the way. And then actually that allows your self to come back in, because love does not leave you out. Wonderful verse in 1 Peter 5, "Submit yourselves under the mighty hand of God." [pointing to a student] You've memorized that. Good. "...that when the time is right" what will happen?

**Student** - He will exalt you.

**Dallas:** He will exalt you. How about that? That's the standard teaching of Jesus. Now, notice, *you* will not exalt you. Doesn't say that. You will not exalt you. *He* will exalt you when the time is right. See that's the way this works. The verse in Matthew 5, "*Let your light so shine before men that they will see your good works and exalt you?*" No. Glorify *you*? No. They will see God. Now, once you understand the connection between the life that is in you, and *love*, and *power* and all of that, then you see how it fits together.

Now I have to touch on one other thing about love in general and then I want to try to relate all of this to spirit and that'll be our main job for today.

[Dallas walks over to the white board and points to what he's written on it]

*"Love is self-limiting because you are finite and are in a communal situation under God."*

But here's what happens if you aren't careful with love, is, you don't know how to limit it. And that leads into people thinking that to love is to just do whatever people want. Now, this is one of the things that is scariest about love and it also ties in deeply to the problems with Jesus's teaching when they are read legalistically. So you read a verse that says "Give unto him that would ask of you, and the one who would borrow of you. Don't turn away." So if someone says, "I'm gonna borrow your gun to shoot you..." Love is self-limiting because you are a finite creature in a communal context.

So, when you love one person that does not mean you do not love others and that you do not love yourself. But *you* have to be responsible for judging and I want to really drive this point home to you because one reason that makes people take a legalistic reading is so they won't have to exercise responsible judgment. And folks that's just not in the situation here. Responsibility for judgment under God is a part of being a loving person in God's world. You have to be responsible for judgment. And the judgment is



always guided by what is good. So when you are acting in love what you have in view is what is good for everyone affected. So if you're gonna love your enemy...well, suppose your enemy wants something very bad. Is to love them to *do* what they want?

I had a friend once who was a loving man, he really was, but he was given to legalism and he said if a man came down the street with a rifle shooting people, the only thing that he could do would be to kneel and pray. Now, I use this case purposefully because it really gets into a whole knot of issues about loving. Sometimes it gets discussed in general terms like Pacifism. Sometimes it's simply a matter of resisting evil. Didn't Jesus say, "Don't resist evil?" So does that mean you let anyone do whatever they want to? Now, this is where it's very important to understand how Jesus teaches. In general, Jesus teaches contextually—in a context—and if you want to understand what he's talking about you have to understand the generalization that he is *dismissing*. So, when he says, "Blessed are the poor" what is the generalization he's dismissing?

**Q:** The poor are accursed?

**Dallas** The poor are accursed, the rich are blessed. Now you all know that was the thinking wasn't it? So that when he's talking with the rich young ruler, and he's talking about how hard it is for rich people to enter the Kingdom of God, that he wasn't talking about people going to Heaven...that's connected but not the same thing and it's very important to understand that. Entering the kingdom of the heavens or the Kingdom of God is not the same as going to Heaven. There *is* a connection, and you need to understand it. But I'm hoping by this point in our time together you understand the Kingdom of God is a reality that is here and now and the issue of entering the kingdom of the heavens or of God is an issue about entering into an interactive life with that kingdom, now.

So blessed are the poor. Really? Because, it's so wonderful to be poor. Hadn't you noticed? Well, it slipped me. The blessing is not in the condition, it's in the kingdom and the point is the Beatitudes are proclamation of the gospel. They are simply indications that blessing is available to *anyone* in *any* condition in the Kingdom of God. And of course, Luke gives you the woe be's doesn't he? And who do the woe be's turn out to be? Precisely the ones that human beings say are blessed. Does Jesus resist evil? Yes. He resisted evil. What's he saying when he says, "Turn the other cheek?" What's he responding to? He's responding to the normal human way of acting that was authorized by religion, sometimes without much basis in the law. Like, for example, when he comes to the point about you shall hate your enemies. The old law, he said, "Well, that was something that had been cooked up by



people." It wasn't actually commanded. You shall hate your enemies. No. Now, he says, "Love them." See, he's speaking against a practice and if you don't understand that it's very hard to get what Jesus is saying in many, many passages. And look with me a moment at Luke 14 to get a vivid illustration of this. And the general thought I'm trying to get to you right now on this point is that you have to understand *how* he teaches in order to understand *what* he teaches. And if you don't do that legalism, again, will run rampant over you because you will see what he's saying as laws—a very common misreading, especially of the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plain.

## **Luke 14**

[10:20]

Now, in Luke 14 verse 7 and following: "He began speaking a parable to the invited guests when he noticed how they had been picking out the places of honor at the table..." a common practice in those days, not unnoticed today, though many people just put your name on the plate and you go there. But he is watching people do this. Places of honor. Well, what would be places of honor? Maybe the head table or wherever the honcho was going to sit, sit next to them. Now, he says, "When you are invited by someone in a wedding feast do not take the place of honor lest someone more distinguished than you may have been invited by him. And he who invited you shall come and say to *you*, 'Get up from this chair and go down there'" and in disgrace you slink out to the card table in the kitchen. Now, he says when you are invited, then *you go* to the card table, and the master will come in and say, "Where's John?" And they will say, "Oh, he's out at the card table in the kitchen. And he's *What?! John, come up here!*" And [he] will get up and he'll walk up to the head table and [he'll] sit down and people [will] think, "My he must be important. He must really be something. He must be somebody."

Now, can you, in your wildest moments imagine that Jesus was actually providing you with a formula for being honored at a banquet? But he said that didn't he? Well, he gives a general teaching that helps us in the following verse: "Everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled and he who humbles himself shall be exalted." So now this is how do you get to be exalted. There's a grain of truth in it. Humble yourself, well, but would you think he is recommending that as a social device? No, he's not. But he *is* telling you something deep and profound that allows for the fact that the person who went to the card table first was actually not humble; he just had a strategy.

The following is verse 12: "*When you give a luncheon or dinner do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your rich neighbors unless*

*they invite you in return.*" That plainly says, do not invite your relatives, right? Some of you have been looking for that verse. But see, you always read what he says in the light of what he is setting aside, and he is setting aside the practice of quid pro quo, and he's saying invite people. Help people who can't reciprocate because you're in the Kingdom of God and that's where you're taken care of. And you don't need to play that little game. And by the way, you can invite your relatives, too. The point isn't about the relatives, the point's about the practice.

Now, in all the teachings about love, you want to keep in mind that love is something that takes into consideration everything that is at issue in the context, and you don't become obsessed with the legalism about this person because your action affects other persons and especially it affects you. Now, some of you, I know, are psychologically sophisticated and you know something about boundaries and about how important they are. And you see one of the things that really unnerves people when they read the teachings of 1 Corinthians 13\*, or Jesus's teaching is it looks like you ain't gonna have no boundaries—and that is gonna really mess you up. And it's going to hurt a lot of other people. Because you have to be able to take care of everyone involved as much as you can and that involves you. And it's very important to take care of yourself because if you ruin yourself, you can't help anybody. You wind up a basket case of one sort or another. So being able to love others, your neighbors and so on, is a matter of taking care of yourself. And that is not selfish *unless* it's just a matter of you running your kingdom—and doing what *you* want and disregarding the well-being of other people—and then it's wrong. Because at that point you are now not limiting your love for yourself properly. [\* - Watch "[Healing the Heart](#)" #1, 02:30-05:50]

So now, let me just say do you get this idea of self-limiting? Love is self-limiting. It is self-limiting because it sees what is good and that takes into consideration the finitude of every one of us and the fact that we live in a community...and my friend who said the only thing I could do is kneel and pray for the guy going down the street shooting people was not exactly loving the people he was shooting, would you think? Huh? Did he have any obligation to them? Now if it were actually true that the only possible thing he could do is to pray, well then, he should do that. But there might be some other things that he could do *while* he prayed, or pray as he did it. Perhaps, even taking the life of the gunman. Hmmm? Can you do that in love?

Now I'm trying to toughen up your understanding of what love is. Can a soldier be a soldier and act in love and war? Well, you'd have to say right off that probably most of them *don't*—but *could* they? Now you can't begin to approach that and this whole issue of pacifism and so on unless you

understand this [pointing to the white board]. So I'm gonna stop for a moment and just ask you to think about it and see if you have questions as this is really vital. If you're going to be a 1 Corinthians 13 person, you have got to understand this. And then you have to be able to make judgments in humility—that is dependance upon God—that is what humility is, if you've read the Murray book, you've got that. It's dependance on God. You make judgments in the realization that you are not infallible but that you are the one on the spot and you have to make the judgment—and that's okay, God understands that.

So we're not reaching for infallibility, we're reaching for *responsibility*—responsibility in love. Now, take a moment, make your hardest statements and ask your hardest questions on this. Are you able to act in the light of that? It takes some training and practice and all of that but you have to have the idea first, and if you *don't*, love as described in the New Testament and practiced in Jesus will lead you to a death on the cross with no resurrection. I say if you don't understand this, you will be misguided by love and it will lead you to a death on the cross with no resurrection. The resurrection life which is love is where you want to live and you can do that. You will sometimes face the criticism of other people who want you to do what they want done and they say "Why aren't you a loving person?" And you will say to them' "that's exactly why I'm not going to do what you want me to do, because I love you."

**Q:** [21:51] Would you say self-limiting love requires discretion?

**Dallas** I say the reason that you don't do something is because you love. And that's self-limiting.

**Q:** Parents taking care of a child in college and not giving them money?

**Dallas** Absolutely. That's right. That's exactly right. And actually we know this with children. I hope we do. We know that you limit your love by what is good for the child and you have to teach the child that. And if you don't they'll never grow up.

**Q:** [22:42] I just had a comment. When you talk about boundaries and the love and not letting it all happen. You are thrown constantly to get that better rose and pruning can be very painful.

**Dallas** That's right. And the husbandman prunes the vine doesn't he? Even if it is fruit bearing he prunes it that it might bear more fruit and that's the general principle of love. Why does he prune it? "Oh, he just loves to see that thing's clipped off, you know." He wants to see it fruitful.

**Q:** So, I agree with the statement and I like very much the take on it But I guess I'm thinking in terms of a critic might say, "If we're taking, you know, our responsible judgment on, you know, the reading or whatever the words that might lend itself to a situational ethic or kind of a individualized truth interpretation, you know. What would you say to that and how would you guard against that?"

**Dallas** Well, the only way you can guard against that is first of all deal with the whole issue of relativity. If you were talking to a sensitive, intelligent person you'd want to discuss that, say "Yes, there is a problem here. Now how do you deal with it?" And then you talk to them about how, for example, living in community with others, studying the matter, reading the Bible, thinking about it. See, that's where you form responsible judgment.

\* One might say, "Well, you know, plumbers—their judgments are all relative because they just do what they think." And that's true. You can't do plumbing by formula. You have to know *exactly* how you do things and you make judgments about what to do and by and large it works very well. But a plumber is working in a community of other people who have judgments. He learns from them, he knows how to distinguish cases, and that's true in every area.

[24:53] Now, today, the threat is, see, we have a general ideology where **moral knowledge has disappeared\*** and judgments are treated as if to say the word judgment was to say, "Well, it's just your idea" and of course there's a tricky sense in which...[to the student: I haven't forgotten you. I'm going to come back to you, okay?"] There's a sense in which only judges make judgments. So every judgment is a judgment of someone. But that's simply in the nature of what a judgment is—it doesn't mean that it's not right, not well-founded, and so on. So, you live in a communal context and the discussion keeps going and you have the scripture to guide you, and common sense to guide you, and so in that context you make judgments as to what is appropriate in the given circumstances. And, again, we do that more comfortably with children but we take a vacation from responsibility for our kids as they get older and turn them loose and the students come to USC and they are told, "Well, you know, we have some rules about what you do in the dorms, and what you can do in the classroom, but other than that, suit yourself. And out the other end of *that* pipe comes a lot of human disasters. [[\\* See The Disappearance of Moral Knowledge by Dallas Willard](#)]

Let's see, we're not in a position...now I know you Denver Seminary and religious schools do a little better on this. Often, actually, not much better. But that's what we have to deal with today. So your Q: is really very right on and important to do and I think there is no answer to it except, well, you have to learn to exercise a responsible judgment.

**Q:** [26:55] - You talked about praying being a foundation for this. Is there anything in I Corinthians 13 pointing to a self-limiting love?

**Dallas** Self-limiting love is that language you won't find in the scripture anywhere. But if you read nearly any of the passages like Ephesians 4 and 5, Colossians 3, or any of the times where you have Paul talking about what you can do and what you cannot do, you'll see, if you compare them with one another, the judgments that they limit one another, that if you even, if you take the Sermon on the Mount, and you think about what you would have to do to be in a position to help people who ask you for things, you're going to see that *that* commandment is limited by others, that talk about, for example, in the same passage...speaking truth...giving help to other people...that will be limited by what you do in terms of giving to others. For example, if you're going to give to someone, then there are the other people that you are responsible for. And you're still responsible for them. Where does your resources come from to do that? So the language of self-limiting love is not anywhere in the scriptures that I know of. You have to think about what is taught, and see that that's what's required.

**Q:** [29:23] Um, I guess, how would you talk about—you know, you said you're a soldier or there's a guy running down the street with a gun killing people—maybe what love would look like, in that sense, killing *him* and then, taking his life. Like how would you respond to like, John Allen Yoder or Walter ? in acts of non-violence?

**Dallas** Hmm, we have a disagreement and I would listen and I do listen to them. The concept of an active non-violence is a good one. But then you have to define what counts as violence. Now, I do that in terms of what good is at issue. What good is at issue? And an act of violence would be something like using force and an act of non-violence would be not using force. Now, my friend, who said, "Well, I could kneel and pray," that would be an act of non-violence. What others could you do? Well, I don't know. Maybe you could try to rush up and embrace him. I suppose that would be an act of non-violence. So there are things to be done and we need to read people like Walter and others who have things to say about this. But we still have to decide what we're going to do. And if they were especially important in bringing out the fact that very often we turn to violence before we should. And that's most wars are bad because of that character.

**Q:** "Self-limiting love in scripture. What comes to my mind is the "Kenosis passage - Christ limiting himself. [30:55]

**Dallas** Now you want to remember that in that limitation, too, he was doing that in a larger scene and it's the typical...one of the greatest statements about what happens when you empty yourself and God exalts you. But his

action of limiting himself and coming into the world was constantly involving the kind of thing that we're talking about. Why didn't he come in like an explosion of some sort? What was the function of his limitations? And well, it was something else, though it was good, that he wanted to accomplish. But nearly all the teachings of Jesus and the New Testament, if you simply try to approach them whole you see how they limit one another. You simply can't do them all. And so then you have to have another kind of understanding that retreats to the level of the inside of a person and makes *judgments* about what ought to be done in particular circumstances. Those judgments, for a person of *love*, will *always* be in terms of what is good.

**Student** - I was thinking about boundary issues in terms of love. Most people that try to live without families aren't living with love in them. Seems like they are living more concerned about themselves. [32:30]

**Dallas** - No they're not. That's true. That's exactly right.

**Student** (continued) - I have a hard time saying love is love without self-limiting.

**Dallas** - Well, actually, no. No it isn't. But I'm hoping that this might be helpful in spelling that out by saying you live in a communal context. To love one person at the expense of others is something you have to make decisions about and then you have to add on to love a person is *not* necessarily to do what they want. And the boundary issue gets involved there, too, like for example I always tell someone who's involved in the receiving end of domestic violence, call the police. Call the police. Now, that's the best thing you can do for the abuser. That's the *best* thing you can do for the abuser. The abuser doesn't want it and tries to manipulate the abused in all sorts of ways by saying "Don't you love me?" You know? And it's just terrible what goes on there. But the idea of self-limiting love puts you in a situation where you can do what is good because there is a standard other than what people want.

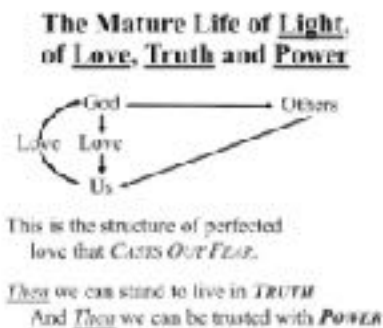
**Q:** [34:10] One of the things in the gospels that I have never heard preached on is how Jesus constantly eluded their grasp or just disappeared or somehow got away from the mob. He definitely had an awareness of his finitude as a man on the earth and he did take measures to get away from violence.

**Dallas** He didn't let people kill him before he was ready for that to happen, and that was a judgment about what was good and what was right. Okay, well I hope this discussion will help us and I wanted to just finally give you this little transparency.



**Q:** [34:50] Does the language of unconditional love muddy these waters?

**Dallas** It *does* muddy it because it really means that you give people what they want without limit and you focus with no condition and unconditional love is something that only God can do. Unconditional love in its essence as unconditioned involves infinitude not finitude. It's another case where a Christian teaching becomes perverted and turns into a very destructive cultural artifact—love you unconditionally.



### **The Mature Life of Light and Love, Truth and Power** [35:40]

Okay. "Perfect love casts out fear." How does that work? Well, you have to see love in this context of life and light and power. You understand that it is not just a little thing of willpower. You take love into your life from God.

God loves us and we—the second move—we love God. And, the third move, through God, we love others, and find ourselves then, in a community of love where we are loved by others.

And that is the structure that is presupposed when we say perfect love casts out fear. Because when you are *in* that context, then you are in a position where you have nothing to fear. Hmmm. Wow. Is that biblical? Yes, it is biblical. The wonderful statement in Hebrews that's tied to a statement which everyone knows, that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, but, usually don't recognize that that wasn't the beginning of the sentence. Then you need to go back in this passage in **Hebrews 13:5**,

*"Keep your lives free from the love of money, be content with what you have because God has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you."*

Now you don't want to burden yourself if you're troubled with fears. But you need to open yourself to the work of God and find those things that will help you remove fear. Fear is not an inappropriate emotion for a human being in this world. But it is something that we can grow away from—maybe that's the best way we can put it, we can grow away from it. And if we find ourselves *fearing*, that is anticipation of evil or harm that is coming to us



then we need to try to put that in a context where our vision of God takes care of the fear. We have a lot of high-water marks in the scripture, one of which is the very end of the little book of Habakkuk. And Habakkuk is looking at the sure and certain destruction of his nation.

### **Habakkuk 3:17-19**

17 *Though the fig tree should not blossom  
And there be no fruit on the vines,  
Though the yield of the olive should fail  
And the fields produce no food,  
Though the flock should be cut off from the fold  
And there be no cattle in the stalls,*  
18 *Yet I will exult in the Lord,  
I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.*  
19 *The Lord God is my strength,  
And He has made my feet like hinds' feet,  
And makes me walk on my high places.*

Now, please relate this to **Psalm 16:8** that we were using earlier\*,

"Though the fig tree should not blossom and there will be no fruit in the vines, the yield of the olives should fail, the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there be no cattle in the stalls..." (v. 17) Now that's famine and desolation.

"Yet, I will exalt—or, exult—in the Lord. I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength and he has made my feet like hind's feet..." (v. 18-19) That is, you're able to walk in high and difficult places safely. [[\\* Session 4 @ 46:50](#)]

### **A Human Being as a Spiritual Being in a Spiritual World** [41:00]

Okay now, we need to move on from this teaching back to the understanding of the human being as a spiritual being in a spiritual world. Without *that* we simply cannot deal with life in a way that allows the Kingdom to flow through us and to live a life of love. We simply can't do it. We have to understand that we are spiritual beings. That involves our body, of course, and we have to make a connection there that will say "I am indestructible."

Hmm? That's the deal. We have to come to think of ourselves as indestructible under God. You cannot do that if you think of yourself as simply a physical being because if you are a physical being you are destructible and you will be destroyed. A lot of people today under the influence of the culture want to think in terms of being their brain. Now, if

you are your brain we know what's going to happen to you. And when you stand up in church and sing, "When we've been there ten thousand years bright shining as the sun," you are speaking *balderdash*—if you are your brain, because your brain is not going to be there "ten thousand years bright shining as the sun." See now, we're pushed all the way back now to the verses we worked on yesterday, "When Christ who is our life shall appear then you also will appear with him glorious." (Colossians 3:4)

Hmmm? "Then, shall the righteous shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." [Matthew 13:43] Is that anyone in this room? That's your destiny. That's the kind of thing you are *now*. That's why you're indestructible and that's why you have nothing to fear. If you are living with Jesus, you are a participant in the Kingdom of God now. It's an eternal Kingdom. Eternal life is not something that starts after you die. Eternity is running now and you are invited to live in the Kingdom of God in a way that what constitutes your life here is preserved in what is eternal. [44:45]

Now then, you can begin to say, "Oh well, maybe perfect love does cast out fear." And that is the structure, and, of course, then once that is cast out this is what's coming later for us, okay? Then we can stand to live in truth because we have nothing to fear. You know the Eastern philosopher that said, "You shall the truth and the truth shall make you *flee*"? That's kind of a natural response to the truth if you're living in darkness—the truth shall make you flee. But *this* truth will set you free and you know the passage in John 8 where it's discussing this. He's talking about being free from sin, being enslaved by sin, being free from it. And now, here's what he said. He said, "If you abide in my word..." Okay now, this so you know there are translations that say, "If you continue in my word," and people think this is a non-stop bible study or something. Well, that's not all bad. But it's talking about abiding *in* his word, *living* in his word, the same word, verb *meno*, that is used in **John 15** to talk about the branch abiding in the vine, "If you abide in my word then you are my students, indeed," my apprentices, my disciples. That's how you be a disciple. But it's referring to putting his words into practice. How do you abide in his word? Put it into practice. And that's the path of the disciple. You *abide* in his word, and "you're my disciples indeed, and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free." Because the *truth* will put you in touch with reality, that's what truth does. But you're in touch with reality, it allows you to act in a way that is conformable to, consistent with, dependent on, reality. If you have falsehood, you wind up depending on something that's not real and that's the way that works. The truth makes you free by integrating you with reality.

## The Primary Role of Faith

[47:50]

Okay now, I have to come back to this later, [Session 16 @ 4:12] but I want to just say to you now that's the primary role of faith. Faith integrates you with reality if its faith in what is *true*. Faith is not something that God *likes* and therefore says, "Now I accept you because you have these beliefs. I like these beliefs." Too many people unconsciously wind up treating faith as if it were a work of righteousness, as if the advantage of faith is, "God wants you to believe that. If you believe that then he'll be good to you" and then that seeps over into our social setting and where often we condemn and accept people in terms of what they—well, maybe not what they believe—but what they *profess* to believe. And now I'm getting in deep weeds here because this really has to do with how we include people and exclude people from our fellowship.

And one of the things that happens with young people is they pick up the idea that somehow they are to be condemned or not, or received or not, in terms of what they believe. And that discourages doubt. And they get locked into a legalism about correct belief and they wind up professing things that they don't believe because they haven't been allowed to come to them. Right?

So we need to understand what it is about faith that matters. And what it is about faith is that it allows you to interact successfully with reality.

## Problem Case

[49:55]

\* Virgin Birth - Let's take a problem case here, much made of, the virgin birth. Do you believe in the virgin birth of Jesus? Okay, I believe in the virgin birth of Jesus. Well, how does that help me? One way, I say, "Well, my group believes in it; if I don't believe in it they're going to come down on me." Another one is, "God especially wants me to believe it. He *likes* for me to believe that and if I don't believe it he won't approve of me." Now, where a virgin birth occurs, of the kind that's involved in *Jesus's* life, you have got a *different world* to live in than one where that does not occur.

\* Bible - Same over the Bible. What's your view of the Bible? You have your beliefs about a high view of the Bible because that's socially enforced, or because you think God just especially likes it, or because having a high view of the Bible *really makes a huge difference in your life*. Well, this number three... Now God does like us to believe it because actually that's true, and it's nice to build a fellowship around it. But if you aren't careful you get a fellowship that's built around a *profession* where there's no real faith. So

when you hear a person talking about the Bible one way or the other you want to know to what extent do they *rely* upon the Bible and study it, and honor it, by their behavior. Not just what they profess to believe about it. See, a Q: for the Jesus Seminar is "What do you do about the parts that you believe Jesus *did* say? And probably if they would do something about that a lot of other things would straighten out. But if we're just going to discuss it to say, "Pink or Red?" Who cares? Who cares?"

\* One of Charles Finney's stories is about how a man came to him and he said, "I want to discuss the reliability of the Bible with you." So, Finney said, "Do you believe that you should love your neighbor as yourself?" "Yes...I think that's true." "Do you *do* that?" "Well, not really." "When you go and do that, then come back and we'll discuss the Bible."

See, that's putting belief where it matters, namely, in real life. And if you don't do that then you can *endlessly* discuss issues of faith, or not faith, or profession or whatever, and it *really* doesn't make any difference. Faith is *designed* to integrate us with reality and as it *does* that, then our character changes [points to the screen] and the final line upon the thing there is we can be trusted with power—*that's* what it's all about.

So let me give you a sentence and see if you can stand up under it. And that is that "God's purpose for *all* of our lives is that we should grow to the point to where he can empower us to do what we want." Does that go down? See, **God's purpose for all of us is that we should grow to the point to where he can entrust us with the power to do what we want.** I didn't make a mistake on the pronoun. And you might say, "Well, the power to do what *he* wants" that's *exactly* the point. But it's not just what he wants, it's what *we* want so there is no incoherence. Now, obviously that's working on 10,000 years, okay? 'Cause the wanter needs a lot of working. And actually that's what our life is about.

### **Training for Reigning**

[54:55]

Our life is about training for reigning—training for reigning. That's why I said earlier [session 3] prayer is a power sharing device for a world of recovering sinners. And you know why you get those bombshells of promises and the scripture that make you think anything could be done in answer to prayer? It's because that's true. But probably it will take you a while before God can turn you loose with that. He just doesn't want you to be limited in your expectations about what's going to happen and he wants us to be able to pray for anything with confidence that God could do it. That's all training for reigning, coming to the place to where we are living in this wonderful

Trinitarian communal structure of love, living in the truth, living from the invisible landscape\*\*— the things that are not seen, the Kingdom of God.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

Okay now. Transition. Questions? See, you have to have a concept of spirit to go with all of this or it won't go anywhere and the concept of reality of spirit...and, uh, we'll come to that in a moment.

**Love of Neighbor** [[Four Steps How to](#)]

[57:00]

### **First Step - Decide to be a person of compassion**

Before we do, look at your sheet on love of neighbor and let's see if you have questions and comments about it. I just make some points that I hope will be helpful in thinking about love of neighbor and we've covered some of these in our discussion. For example, what love is. We've talked about that—and basically, we've covered what I say is the first major step here, towards the bottom of the first page, is to decide to be a person of compassion. A person of compassion is someone who allows themselves to *feel* the need of other people. And that throws us back now to, "Which landscape\*\* are we living in?" and so on. But we won't go back there we'll just hope you can bring that over.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

**Q:** [58:02] I was wondering, like when you say, this part about compassion is a constant burden of life and all that. You say it requires resources but I'm just wondering, like, what, specifically will prevent you from being overwhelmed by the endless amount of need around you?

**Dallas** Well, in part, what we've just been through. But you're going to also need disciplines that will enable you to be clear about where you're standing in the face of all those needs and will mean that you are a rested, clear minded person who can make decisions. Now, many people handle this problem simply by shutting off compassion and, frankly, I think to some degree you have to do that. When I think about some of the issues in this world, if I just stayed there, I wouldn't be able to do anything else. And there are a lot of those issues. And so you do have to exercise judgment,

and then you have to do things like rest and solitude and silence, meditation on scripture, fellowship with others. You have to take care of your self. Of course, always under God, but you have to do theater it will simply overwhelm you. That's one reason why I use that language, self-limiting, because you have to understand that if you're going to be a person of love and compassion, you have to limit it—and it won't be done for you.

**Q:** [59:45] That comment makes me think of how Mother Teresa said she would only love one at a time in the sense compassion is self-limiting because when you are loving the one, you are not loving the billions around you.

**Dallas** So you better believe in God. You really had better believe in God. If you don't have a concept of the greatness of God, the problem of evil in this world will smash you. And so you have to believe that God is big enough to take care of this. I don't know *how* he's gonna do it, but you have to be able to do that or you cannot focus on the people who are truly your "*neigh* bors." Your *neigh* bors—the people who are *near* you, and you'll wind up, as so often is the case with people who are just so excited about the greatest happiness for the greatest number and making everyone around them miserable. So, that's really an important point.

**Student -** [1:00:53] Last year my wife and I started taking this approach. Where we focused on the people we're closest to and it severely limited—significantly limited—our church involvement level.

**Dallas:** Wow. Now we're into something big.

**Same Student:** It's *hard* because it's guilt...

**Dallas:** Well, but now you're going to have to work with that guilt aren't you? I mean you decide...what do you decide? Just to be guilty, or...

**Same Student:** One thing that was really encouraging was two of our friends went to Juarez, Mexico. And if we had chosen to start a bible study it would have meant the sacrifice of some of their well-being, and us caring for them, so to see it played out so extreme has been good for us in dealing with some of that guilt.

**Dallas:** You have given us a good teaching my brother, a good teaching, yes. And we have to, among other things, we have to evaluate our involvement in religious activities in order to see what good is actually coming from the things we're doing. That's a part of what you do in order to enable yourself to live with self-limiting love, to accomplish what is good that you can accomplish. I really...thank you so much for saying that. And you've touched on a sacred cow—to involve another religion. And we really have to be conscious of these. And we have to ask questions like, "*What are the*



*things that I'm doing that I think I ought to do but when I look at them candidly, are of limited value?"* shall we say. Now, actually, that *can* lead us back to them in a different way where they become of greater value. But that's a really important point.

So the first step is deciding to be a person of compassion. That means you're going to be alert to what's going on around you. That means you will be listening to people. What do you think went through the mind of the priest and the Levite as they passed the man on the road? Well, something did, something went through their minds. But probably it was *because* they were not people who were oriented toward being compassionate to what was going on around them.

**Student:** [1:30:52] Self-limiting love is actually what Jesus did with the twelve. They had a relationship that the rest of the disciples and followers didn't.

**Dallas:** No, that's right. That's right. And that was choice that he made and actually it looked like he was being pretty exclusive and he was. And investing in people like that requires that kind of exclusiveness and you hear people, like on television say "We love all of you." No they don't. And so we have to watch the sloppy language that gets to going and in order to be really responsible, and I do emphasize that means you take care of yourself. No one else is going to do that. And so someone else had their hand up.

**Q:** [1:04:55] So would this kind of explain Jesus's words to the Syrophenician woman about the dogs and the crumbs?

**Dallas** That's exactly the point of it. That's why he said to his own people when he sent them out, "*Don't go to anyone except the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*" Now why was that? Sounds like chauvinism to me. Why wasn't it chauvinism?

**Student:** They were ready.

**Dallas:** They were ready. Now then, he goes for a vacation up in Sidon. Here's a woman with a need. And he listens to her and she makes a very persuasive case. But he didn't want to have to deal with an outbreak in Sidon where he would have to minister — that was later. Beautiful illustration. Did he hate the woman? No, he didn't hate her. He loved her. But there were other things.

Now, here's another case. You remember how often he told people, "*Don't tell anyone. Don't tell anyone.*" See, that was...the people were not *ready* to hear. This was a long process that required him focusing on a small group of people to whom he could at one point say, "Now, go to all the world." See the Great Commission we started with last time, it's actually a continuation



of the Abrahamic covenant: "In you and in your seed will all of the families or nations of the world be blessed." How is that to be done? You can see it can't you? Now he says, go to *all* of them.

And, of course, that had some rough passages in it. And many of the people couldn't quite manage the idea that Gentiles could be a part of this picture so that had to be worked through. And it's a huge issue that we're still working with today. A social problem was the first thing that broke out in the post-Pentecostal church. And it actually is a rather fine point because it was having to do with widows who were Jews who were involved in the dispersion and those who lived in Jerusalem. Picky. Picky. Picky. But that's the way human life is.

So compassion, now. Compassion. Choosing to be a person of compassion. Learning how to draw on the Kingdom of God for that. Learning how to make judgments that limit it, and allow that there are *other* people who have to do *their* part, and that God is in charge of the whole thing. And that will keep you from burn-out and blow-up if you can do that.

## **2nd Step - Decide who your neighbors are**

[1:08:20]

So the next major step at the bottom of the page is deciding who your neighbors are. That's really a continuation of what we've been talking about. Your neighbors are people that you have a significant degree of influence over and can actually do things that will help them—not just formalizations of some sort.

So, you have to go through that process, and on the second page, "the decision to have compassion upon those closest to us wherever they are" and that starts with our family, our people that we live with, they are our neighbors. So, you have to make a judgment about who are these people and that you need to be guided by the Holy Spirit in that, and you will have that guidance if you're looking for it, and there will be some changes over time as to who is your neighbor and who is not because that's a growing relationship and perhaps they themselves will be in a different place and be in the position of loving *their* neighbors.

The decision to have compassion upon those who closest to us, wherever they are. That's starts with our family, the people we live with. They are our neighbors. You have to make a judgment about who are these people. You have to have guidance from the Holy Spirit.

## **3rd Step - List the few people you are most intimately engaged with**

[1:09:42]

List a few people you are most intimately engaged with in life. And this should be a fairly small number. Now, you can still give contributions to people on the street, or...that's a relatively unattached relationship. And, of course, you have to make judgments about that and I would say you need a small group, and then perhaps a little larger group, and, then, maybe a third circle of understanding. And you would then calibrate your efforts to help people in those circles differently.

**4th Step - Focus on an Inner Circle to 2 or 3 people** [1:10:50]

Begin with an inner circle as best you can devote serious attention, thought, prayer, and service to two or three people. Allow time for this to develop, probably a few months at least until it becomes a grace sustained habit and then you can bring more people into the range of your effective neighbor love and so on..." Now, in order to do that you are going to have to have a range of spiritual disciplines for your life that enable you to remain strong and balanced and effective in drawing from the Kingdom of God. So now, I'm just saying—and I mean there's nothing legal or infallible about that—but I want to say to the group something definite about how you would go about loving your neighbor as yourself. Because as it exists, it's kind of like a cloud, a nebulous sort of thing that floats around and we have not identified our neighbors and so we can't really take meaningful steps to love them.

Now, in our world you still support people on the other side of the world. You feed hungry children, you do all of that and that's good. But that is not loving your neighbor as yourself. Loving your neighbor as yourself is a much more concrete, communal kind of thing that you need to identify and work with judgment made in love from the life that comes from the kingdom. Now, do you have any further comments about that? Questions? This is saying there's a way to do this, I suggest this, see what you think. And, of course, if it doesn't work then get something better.

**Q:** [1:12:50] - Is there an easier way?

**Dallas** No, I don't know one. I don't think of this as hard. Actually, I think of this as a way of making the practice intelligible and doable and the main step is really identifying your neighbors. And, in our culture, at least out in Southern California, that's a pretty significant task to identify, and it means among other things in some cases it will be, well, how about the person two houses down on your block that you don't really know much about. But, I mean, sometimes the Spirit prompts you in the direction like that.

**Q:** Would that instill...seriously in the matter. That would be, as far as identifying a neighbor I guess not go out and pick whoever...

**Dallas** - No, no. I wouldn't do that. Absolutely not. You want to do this prayerfully and asking for guidance. In some cases you don't need to ask for guidance because your wife is your neighbor and you better start there—or your husband, or your child is your neighbor. And well, often it's interesting the way this language has developed. We don't think of them as neighbors. And very often we wind up passing over them and not being compassionate on them. But we want to start there and move outward.

**Q:** I would just like to say to your point, I know you were joking, but sometimes the *easy* way is to *avoid* the neighbor. You know, when we go out into our fellowships or whatever where we feel good with people that are like us, as opposed to what God may be thinking for us to engage in that closer relationship.

**Dallas** And a really important thing is to think about your small group that you're involved in. Are they your neighbors?

**Q:** [1:15:05] Can you unpack by what you mean by intimately involved with to get to the third, outer circle?

**Dallas** What would be a case of that? That might be for example someone you're sharing a ride to work with. Maybe someone involved in a social activity that you would be conscious of and compassionate toward and trying to listen to see what is happening and what are the questions that are going on and what could be said to help them and might something more than that be done to help them and so on. So that to me is a relatively uninvolved situation but one where you want to be conscious and compassionate still.

**Q:** [1:15:55] I get tripped up when people want to be my friend, and I don't have room.

**Dallas** That might be a case where you would find, "This should be my neighbor" but not automatically, not automatically. Yes. You have to make a judgment about that. So when people come and want to be your friend there are a lot of different things that could be going on there and you want to be conscious of that. And then perhaps it would be [an] occasion where you would say, "Yes. I think I should do this." But probably it will not be so strictly in terms that they had in mind. Still, people reach out to us and that's significant and we want to respond with compassion and understanding and then we have to make further decisions about what we're going to do.

~ ~ ~ End of Session 5 @ 1:17:18\* ~ ~ ~

**Session 6 — "Reality of Spirit - Visible & Invisible"**  [50:20]

Now, the reality of spirit is what we have to talk about. And the great temptation, of course, is to be seduced by the visible landscape\*\*. And if you get seduced by the visible landscape you will live in death.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

## **Romans 8**

So, to start us off good, let's just turn to **Romans 8** and watch how this develops:

*"There is therefore now no condemnation, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death."*

Now, when Paul speaks of a law, here, he's talking of a kind of *regularity*, he's *not* just talking about the law in the sense of the Ten Commandments and so on. The law of sin and death is the regularity of sin bringing death. That's the law of sin and death. The law that is in my members. Chapter 7. The law...that's the *regularity*, in my members. And so now he has found himself incapable of doing anything other than what the law that is in his members says. Do any of you remember the one law that defeated him? It was the last of the Ten Commandments, "*Thou shalt not covet.*" And he found he could not do that. Paul was an alpha dog going for the big things and he was resentful of others who seemed to be doing better than him. And he tried, and he tried, and he tried, but he could not defeat that one thing: covetousness. I think it's probably because covetousness is not an external action and he thought he could manage the external stuff. And by the way you want to read all of this. Read the first part of—I don't want to turn there now — but be sure at some point to look at the first part of Philippians 3 where he talks about the things he had to be proud of: an Israelite, Benjamite, circumcised, go all down the line what a Jewish person would put on their vita and he got down to the part about coveting and he couldn't do anything about it.

Now, of course, he realized that the other stuff wan't worth anything anyway — *really*. And so that's a marvelous passage because among other things he shows you the extent to what flesh is treated as good, and flesh is the natural abilities, what you can accomplish, or what can be accomplished by natural abilities. And it's not bad. Flesh is not a bad thing; it's when it gets

out of place that it becomes bad. So now he says, "*What the law could not do...*" Now law means the law in the Old Testament. "*What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh.*" The flesh had limited abilities, your natural abilities are very limited. "*God did by sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and showing sin up for what it was, defeated it in the flesh in order that the requirements of the law might be fulfilled in those of us who...believe all the right things.*" Is that what it says? "*Who walk...*"

Now obviously there's an important connection between believing the right things. We were talking about that earlier about the role of faith in integrating us through the reality. [#5 @ 47:50] So having the right beliefs is very important but the walk is where you find deliverance. Now watch this, "*...who walk according to the flesh...*" The preposition *kata*. Prepositions are slippery things. They leave a lot of room. I'm inclined we might get better the sense here if we would say *in terms of* instead of *according to* and you just experiment with that and you, at least most of you are scholars, and you check your Greek and so on so you can think about that. But I think, who walk *in terms of* the flesh—don't do that, but, *in terms of* the Spirit. So those are the ones, now, who step into a life where there is deliverance in response to the prayer at the end of chapter 7: "*Who will set me free?*" Okay, there's an answer, and that answer is what we just read, "*The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.*" What's that? Well, remember a law is a regularity, it's a regular order. And Paul is using that sense of law in addition to the sense of law—and some of your translations will capitalize law when it's referring to the Mosaic Law. So it's a regularity...now there is a regularity in Christ Jesus that defeats the law of sin and death.

Now, I want to enlarge on this next verse, "*Those who are in terms of the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh.*" (v. 5) Set their minds on the things of the flesh. That's what defines living in terms of the flesh is to have your *mind* set on those things and we're back to the two landscapes\*\* here now, okay?

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

## The Two Landscapes

[7:05]

The visible landscape\*\* and the invisible one—it isn't a perfectly accurate way of drawing the line because, for example, subatomic particles will turn out to be invisible but they at least are components of what is visible. And so visible/invisible you have to take it in a common sense way. If you're going

to live in terms of the things you can see are the things that are accessible to sense perception, then you're going to get one kind of outcome and it will be one of death because, as we have learned already, the things that are not seen are eternal and the things that are seen are temporal, okay? So now if you set the Lord always before you [Psalm 16:8], right, your mind is set on the spiritual.

Are you beginning to see how very often this shows up in scripture? And the verses I've quoted—a whole set of verses—and now I'm giving you one we haven't worked with thus far out of Romans 8, but I want you to please make the connections. "If you even be risen with Christ, etc." [**Col. 3:1**] The visible and invisible and so on. See, this is all a part of a story and the story is that the spiritual world is the real world. That's the real world in the sense that it is most fundamental. It is what the visible world depends on, okay? So, **faith** comes in now as perception of the invisible world. Faith is a kind of perception. It's the ability to make the spiritual world present to yourself in a perceptual manner and I know that's...I'm going slow because I know that's challenging. But if you read the great theologians of the past, [in] nearly all of them you'll come to something like this. One of the most helpful things, I think, that Wesley did was to bring a new understanding of faith where it is a kind of perception of reality. Now that's what then enables you to act on the spiritual world and it enables you to not divorce faith and knowledge. It is a kind of awareness of the world that is unseen. Someone had a hand up. Yes.

**Q:** [10:20] Would you equate the spiritual world is the Kingdom of God? Or would you say that there is...

**Dallas:** Well, I would want to be a little careful there because there's a lot of God's Kingdom that's created. So you have to distinguish the parts that are created from the parts that are not. Actually, nature is a part of God's Kingdom and, of course, God is a part of only in a kind of extended sense. He's the one that has the Kingdom and so you have to, I think, be careful with that. Obviously God is a part of his own Kingdom. But he's the ruling part and not the ruled part. Now, in the spiritual world there are some interesting cases of things that are not in the Kingdom of God and so "*we don't battle against flesh and blood*" as Paul says. [Ephesians 6:12] Our battle is in the spiritual realm and that's a very important part of the world which God allows not to be in his Kingdom—at least for a while if you take Kingdom as the range of God's effective will which I'm recommending to you. So this is pretty deep theology and you have to be careful with the language.



Okay, now just a little more here in **Romans 8**, [11:50]

*"Those who are according to the flesh or in terms of the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh." (v. 5)*

Now, see, that defines those who are living in terms of the flesh—the only thing they can think about is the natural abilities of human beings and all of their hopes are placed on that. And, for example, you get in some religious context—I've been in many of them—where it was obvious everyone was simply counting on the natural abilities of human beings.

We Southern Baptists, some years ago, discovered that if you use a large mellow pink envelope you'll get eleven point something more in the offering. Well, okay. But if you wind up trusting large mellow pink envelopes instead of little bitty white ones what is your faith in after all? It's in the flesh. Now flesh is not bad but if you start trusting the envelopes instead of God, then you're in real trouble. But many of our religious organizations run by utilizing people who know that if you send a certain kind of an appeal out to a certain population you will get a certain percentage back and that will translate into a certain amount of money and then you'll be able to run your show.

Okay, that's real knowledge, nothing wrong with it, unless you wind up trusting that. And then your mind is the mind of the flesh instead of the mind of the Spirit. Just, simple illustrations.

*"Those, who are according to the Spirit, they mind the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. The mind set on the flesh is hostile to God because it does not subject itself to the law of God; it is not even able to do so. So those who are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans 8:5-8)*

Now, he goes on to say, "Well, of course, you have a body." That doesn't mean you're in the flesh. Otherwise the way to get out of the flesh is to die. But what he's saying is, "It's okay, your body also can be quickened by the Spirit." And now then, the body takes on a spiritual function and that's actually its fulfillment, that's what it's made for. Now he says, to people who are very much alive, *"You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit when, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you,"* (v. 9) and then he goes on to develop that theme and I won't take any more time for it because I hope the point is now made.



## A Spiritual Person

[15:23]

What is it to be a spiritual person? When is a Christian a spiritual person? Well, it is when their life—what actually transpires in the course of their life — is dependent upon the spiritual kingdom...person...the Trinity... the Word of God, which, as we saw already [#2 @ 13:40], “The words that I speak to you, they are life.” [John 6:63] Hmm? When your life is oriented around and empowered by what is not in the natural human abilities but what is in God and his Kingdom, then you’re a spiritual person. Now, given what we’ve worked through you would say, naturally, “Well that means to live in the power of love—the life which is love.” So a spiritual person would be someone who is dominated by a reality that is beyond themselves and they have entered into the invisible domain already in the sense that they are drawing their life from that.

## What is Life?

[16:55] [\[see Video #4 40:20\]](#)

Now, what is life? Initiation. Direction. Sustenance. There will be a test, okay? Can you hold on to that? What I’m trying to do in part is not just drag you through this sort of quasi-philosophical stuff but try to give you some formulas for hanging on to it. So, what is life? Initiative. Direction. Sustenance. A spiritual person is one whose initiative, direction, and sustenance is from the spiritual world. Yes, Sir.

**Q:** [17:43] Yeah, I just took a class on the Book of Hebrews. Everything you’re saying just, you know, hits a chord there because it’s a common theme...as well...not operating on what...reality...how we can see reality...Why do you think this is still so foreign to Christianity today? Is there a certain ignorance of that book?

**Dallas:** Say that again. I wanted to make sure I got that.

**Student:** Do we know the Hebrews or the passages from Paul or why is this such a kind of foreign concept for us?

**Dallas:** [18:19] I’m being tempted. Let me respond to it briefly and then you can come back and bewail me later. Because I do want to say a little more about spirit. **The Book of Hebrews** pulls us off of our preconceived ideas about what we ought to be doing. That’s exactly what it does. And you’ll find people who say, “This is the darkest book in the Bible—all that talk about blood and stuff you know.” But others, I think, do something with the symbolism. But it actually, in my opinion, is one of the deepest theological books in the Bible. Because it really, it really starts out with “God, who in times past in diverse manners had spoken to our fathers of other prophets”

and so on. And talks about how he's upholding the world and sitting down at the right hand of God and so forth. That's just not a part of our theology. And see, the book of Hebrews is trying to draw us in to that and make that our reality. But in doing so it pulls us beyond our flesh, our natural abilities, and it says, "Look, this is the real thing." And then when you come to the great passages like Chapter 11. Now then the Q: is, "Am I in that chapter?"

And then it just challenges Chapters 12 and 13 just blow your mind, you know? [It] challenges us to run the race like Jesus did, to set aside the weights and the sins that beset us, and frankly we're just not into that. That's not our religion. That's why I say you're tempting me. When we ask that Q: we just have to say that. See, when you look back at that and at other times in church history and you say, "Why are we having a hard time with church?" Which is about all you hear. You have to realize that we are not saying what they said and doing what they did. In the times that exploded the church, in the way we talked about last time—we just don't do those things. Now, that's why I say you're tempting me because that sounds real mean but on the other hand we have to think those thoughts. Do we do what they did and do we say what they said? And, frankly, we have a system of theology and practice that isn't what they're talking about. You know, frankly what I am trying to do in these days that I have to lean on you is to get us to moving out of that. That's why I put up the things that I put up and talked about; made the theme of the days that I'm with you, the theme is **"Coming to the Place Where We Could Actually Teach People to Do the Things That Jesus Said."**

Now, that's a radical idea. That's why, as I say—and I'm still looking\*—I say in *The Spirit of the Disciplines* I don't know of a church or an organization that has a *plan* to do that. [\* - Dallas published the book 22 years prior to this presentation.] And you might well ask, "Well, why not?" Well, that's a long historical story and we have to have some knowledge of that. But then there are the more systematic and practical questions:

"Can you actually do it?"      "Should we be doing it?"

And then you have people saying, "Well, no. We shouldn't be doing that at all." We are arranging a connection that will take care of our sins in the sense of seeing to it that they're forgiven but we're not operating in a system that says, "Well, let's be delivered from sin as a practice."\* And then there are all sorts of issues—perfectionism and so on, that get floated up there and they have to be dealt with because they are real issues. So that, I think—and that's my attempt to respond to your point—but I think you're on to something big. We need to look at the whole Bible but certainly the Book of Hebrews is one of the great challenges, isn't it? And it doesn't leave

it...now, with this issue of the reality of the Kingdom of God — the spiritual reality — it doesn't leave you any wiggle room. It just says that's where it is. That's what it is. [\* - See [The Divine Conspiracy, chapter 2](#)]

And you know, our translations often try to wiggle off of this. But if you will note the way that many of our modern translations translate the opening of **[Hebrews] Chapter 11** you will see quite a switch there. The old versions say, "*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*" (v. 1) But I'll bet you many of your translations don't say that. I use the New American Standard and it has a way of helping us. It says, "*Now faith is the assurance...*" Now "assurance" is not the same as "substance" so they give us the right translation in the margin. But they help us a little bit because "assurance" is a subjective term. Faith gives you *assurance*, not *reality*. And he goes on to say, "the conviction" instead of "evidence." So these are issues of course that you struggle with as a scholar. I don't mean to be too easy with it but just to point out. You see, very often our translations record a certain slippage from a reality to a subjective stance of some sort. It's much easier to say, "*Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen,*" though actually there's some problem in distinguishing the difference between assurance and conviction when you get right down to it. There's really not a problem with substance and evidence. I'm gonna shut up on this. You asked a great Q: , great Q: . Sorry.

### **What is Spirit?**

[25:50]

Now, what is spirit? Well, try this out. [overhead transparency]

What is spirit?

Unbodily Personal Power

God is Spirit—John 4:24

And "Father of Spirits"—Hebrews 12:9

Whose Being Depends only on itself — "I AM THAT I AM." (Ex. 3:14)

### *Un-bodily Personal Power*

Spirit is un-bodily personal power. The words are all important. To say it's unbodily does not mean that it cannot be in a body but it does mean you won't find it as a bodily reality in your body. It doesn't derive from the body. The body derives from *it*. Now, not in your case, though there's an interesting connection there, but God is spirit. And, back to Hebrews, "*The things that are seen were not made of things which do appear,*" right? How does matter come into being? God *speaks* it into man. God speaking is energy. We say *ex nihilo* creation but that's not what Christians believe in.

The phrase *ex nihilo* creation comes up as a response to certain primitive doctrines that believed that the world that we see was created out of a kind of matter that was unformed. And there were various doctrines of the sort that were floating around. You read Plato's *Timeaus*, you can find a treatment of it there. *Nothing* is made from nothing. It is the power of God which is *something* that creates the physical world. Energy is not restricted to matter. Matter is a manifestation of energy.

I have to talk with you about these things and they sound too philosophical and all that and pseudo-scientific. But listen. You know that formula\*  $E=MC^2$ ? You know what that is for? That's to tell you how much energy there is in a quantity of matter. It isn't to tell you how much energy there is in the universe. [\* - #6 @ 28:30; #8 @ 55:50; *The Allure of Gentleness*, 77-79; *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, 53; [The Veritas Forum, Stanford @ 44:50](#)]

I want to talk to you a little bit about **fasting** in the morning [#8 @ 54:25] and we'll have to go back to this because fasting is an interesting phenomena in the Bible, like in **Deuteronomy 8**, that has further connotations about matter and energy. Where did all those fish come from? What happened with that water that turned into wine? You see, those are physical things in a world that is created from spiritual reality. Now then when you begin to get that then your whole approach to the physical world begins to change. It's really important. And again this is the idea that someone will say, "Well, you are your brain." No, you're not your brain. You're a person. You are unbodily personal power that has a body at your immediate disposal and you're trying to get lots of other bodies at your disposal. We'd like to have the whole physical universe at our disposal, wouldn't we? If we had the possibility, wouldn't we do it? Yes we would. And do you know where that comes from? That comes from **Genesis 1:26\***.

[\* - 1 @ 42:50; 2 @ 20:48; 6 @ 30:30; 7 @ 10:00; 10 @ 42:10]

*God is Spirit: Self-Sustaining, "I Am that I Am"* [30:35]

Okay. Now God is spirit. That doesn't mean he's *nothin'*. That gives you his nature: self-sustaining reality, the one who *is*, because he is. That's God. Everything is what it is. Popeye: "I y'am what I y'am," right? That's not the point. The point is that in spirit you have something of a radically different kind and the intent of God in approaching humanity is to make sure that they *keep that straight*. And that's why he starts where he does in the Ten Commandments. That's why he does not take a visible form in the Old Testament. He speaks. He speaks out of clouds, out of fire, what things are *formless* because he is trying to make sure that they understand that God is not physical.

And idolatry always goes in the direction of the physical. It *always* makes it God that is physical, and you know what that is for? That is so that the worshipper of the idol can control the idol. See the visible world is primarily the realm where human beings exert control, and very often in idolatrous situations if the idol doesn't give them what they want they will mistreat it, get rid of it. Yes, Sir

**Q:** [32:20] Don't we have to be careful with that, in saying that God is spirit when we say that Jesus is God? Uh, because that seems like it would be really easy to get into well, Jesus didn't have a physical body and [indistinct].

**Dallas:** Well, that's why, to put it simply, that's why we have a Trinity. Jesus is not the Trinity. Unless you live in Texas. Then, you have down there some Jesus only people and they get carried away with the logic of identity and wind up saying that Jesus is the whole deal, right? So we have a Trinity and that gives us some space to deal with Jesus as incarnate. And then, of course, Jesus himself worked from the Spirit, the Spirit was always with him, the Spirit came upon him at baptism in a special way and never left. And so now Jesus is operating in the spiritual landscape\*\* and the physical landscape. It's a good point. You have to think about those kinds of things.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

*God and the Brain*

[33:40]

Did you know that God doesn't have a brain? If you haven't thought about that you need to think about it. That's why everything is a non-brainer for him. I should've resisted that, you know. It's very important to understand that you also — your consciousness — is in the spiritual realm. Now, is it connected with your brain? *Obviously*. Is it connected with your body? *Obviously*. But you can't find it there. And if it wasn't for the fact that you have knowledge of the spiritual side of you, we wouldn't even know what the brain was for. And actually, in the classical world, it was thought to be a cooling system — looks kind of like one, I guess, all the convolutions and so on, looks like a radiator or something. It's a cooling system. We still speak...talk about people who are hot-headed. That comes out of that system — hot-headed people. They thought thinking was in the heart but then the heart got steamed up and went to the head and the head had to cool it off, and we say today, "cooler heads prevailed," don't we? We say things like that. That's the old picture.

*God is the Father of Spirits*

[35:14]

All right now. God is spirit and he's the father of spirits. He creates spirits and among those, whatever else there may be, is you and me. So now this gets into some pretty important and sticky stuff about where people come from, and, for example, what happens at conception, or later, see? Whether or not, and at what point, something is just a piece of flesh and is or is not a person and so on. So this has a lot of implications that I can't really go into here. But negatively, of course, and this language is hard to handle and I apologize for it, but negatively of course, people tend to think of the spiritual as just the non-physical. And then we have the special sense of spirit that we've been talking about where spirit is the same as the will. And in some degree, it has freedom and depends on itself so there is a spirit in man that is *not* the Holy Spirit and if you study this in the scriptures you'll see that that shows up.

**What is Spirit in Man?**

[36:45]

Now, what is the spirit in man? I think it is significant. It is the will. It is the heart, see? And that is the center that organizes everything else. And when Jesus said to the Father, "*Unto you I surrender my spirit, I yield my spirit,*" well, that is what happens at death is the center of the person goes back to God — and takes the person with him. And this is another sticky point — a lot of theological discussions I know you're engaged in, in your studies and I can't really go into them—but just use this little quotation to help us get this. [places another transparency on the overhead and reads it aloud.]

*"There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. (That is, the civilization is the gnat compared to one individual.) But it is immortals we joke with, work with, marry, snub, exploit - Immortal horrors or everlasting splendors...Next to the blessed sacrament itself, (Lewis was a high churchman) our neighbor is the holiest object presented to your senses"* CS Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

[Dr. Willard reads a Pierre Teilhard de Chardin quote on the screen]

*"We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience."*

Now, Chardin, you have to be careful with him. But what he's expressing here is important.



**Bruce:** [Class professor] [38:30] You are now suggesting that the human spirit is a metaphysical reality?

**Dallas:** I would indeed insist upon it.

**Bruce:** Not merely functional?

**Dallas:** Yeah. You want to say something about that? Okay. It is a reality that is a part of the invisible landscape\*\* that Paul is talking about. And in that sense that is the home of the soul.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

Now then, when you come to understand that, then you begin to see a lot of things like what Lewis is talking about. Why should I care about my neighbor? Why? Just because God wants me to? Does he have a reason back of that? Perhaps I should care about my neighbor because they are so incredible beings [gestures to the screen] like this is suggesting. Then maybe I'm like that. And then, go back to the verses that we've been using over and over. "*You are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.*" (Colossians 3:3) When you walk down the street you don't see that. "*But when Christ who is our life shall appear then you will also appear with him.*" (Colossians 3:4) How? *Glorious*. [pointing to the screen] Is that it? Something like that, of course, lit up by the life from above that is flowing through us. It's not lit, up then you get the horror part. Now, if you don't know this piece, *The Weight of Glory* by C. S. Lewis, have a look at it. It helps us think about things like this.

## **The Body in God's World**

[40:40]

The body now fits into this pattern because the body is fundamentally potential energy. It isn't true that that's just physics. Body is potential energy. My body is available to me that I may act. I cannot act without my body; I can even act in defiance of God. But my body is my personalized little power pack. Now, on the basis of that I can bring it to God and submit my body a living sacrifice which *is* its *reasonable* use (**Romans 12:1**)—submit my body. Now when you go back and you read **Romans 6** and all the other places where Paul discusses the body you can begin to see how this makes a coherent whole. Spirit. Body. Then we've talked about the mind and the soul and personal relationships. But the important thing for my purposes here today is to understand that your body is meant for a sacred purpose to



allow you to live in God's world, and by submitting it to him, it takes on powers which are beyond the physical (the flesh). It is quickened by the spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead. Resurrection life becomes a part of my life and then character and power grow out of that.

### **Not Experiencing Death**

[43:00]

Now, one other thing I need to fit in here because the issue of death and what it means now becomes very important. And Jesus was constantly dealing with these issues and taught about them repeatedly and we have passages like **John 11**, "*He that believeth on me shall never die and he that has died will live again.*" (v. 25-26)

So, his affirmation about death...and the other important one is at the end of **John 8** where he says that "*Those who keep my word will never see death,*" and then restates that "*will never experience death,*" (v. 51) and this is what delivers the follower of Christ from the fear of death just because they know that their life will be continuous and when their body ceases to function they will continue to exist and have a life with God.

Paul says, "*to be absent from the body*" (**II Corinthians 5:8**) — now, there's not going to be any absence from the body unless you are the kind of thing that can be absent from the body — "*is present with the Lord.*" And I don't want to get into the issues about soul sleep and so on. I mean, they're important; from a certain point of view, they don't make any difference because for the soul sleep person (which I think is not correct) but still, for that person the next thing that happens after death is you awake at the resurrection. So the continuity is what Jesus insists upon. "*He that believeth on me though he were dead, yet shall he live and he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die.*" (**John 11:25-26**) Now, it's either true or not, right? But then the problem of imagination comes in: *what is happening?* And I want to just say think of it, please, in terms of the continuity of experience. And there are a lot of experiences that people have that get recorded as they go through.

### *A Young Girl's Passing with Jesus*

[45:40]

Just again, as a way of illustration there's a story that I love told by Dan Foster who's a medical doctor down in Dallas, Texas. And he teaches in one of the Presbyterian churches there; for decades he's had a very famous class. And he tells a story out of his hospital experience about a little girl dying of cancer and the mother and others are gathered around her in the hospital and the little girl turns to her mother and says, "*Mother, who is Jesus?*" Now this was an Islamic child that had never been to Sunday school

and knew nothing about the Christian teaching on these things. And she says, *"Mother, who is Jesus?"* And mother replies, *"a very great man and a wonderful teacher."* *"Do you like him, Mother?"* *"Oh, yes. I like him a lot."* A few moments later. *"Do you see him, Mother?"* *"See who?"* *"Jesus. He's standing at the foot of the bed. Do you see his crown, Mother?"* *"I can't see it, Honey."* *"He's calling for me, Mother."* And she died.

Now, actually, these kinds of things are not rare but you don't find people talking about them because they don't know what to do with them. Now, do you think that little girl experienced death? Well, we're not granted insight into all that was going on but it sounds like she went off with somebody.

You think maybe when Jesus talked about Lazarus and how the angels came and took him away to Abraham's bosom, you think that Lazarus was experiencing death? He probably didn't know he was dead until sometime later and then he figured it out, "I must be dead. Hmm."

Now, I'm just talking about that because it is really hard to give substantial meaning to a spiritual being. And what I want to say to you is the spiritual world is the real world and you are a spiritual being that can choose to follow Jesus and learn to live in that world now. And you can live beyond fear of death because of your assurance from your life with him. But I'm trying to help your imagination a little bit just by talking about what it might *be* like...what it might be like. Now, again, I could tell you many stories about this — real-life stories — but I have learned that you already know these stories. And that if a group like this is given a chance to talk about them, then you will have to go all night, see?

But if the self is a spiritual substance — substantial — then it all makes sense. And if you understand God in the way we've been talking about the spiritual realm, then of course, then the body will fit into this, and even the resurrection of the body. You have to enlarge your understanding of matter\* for that to make sense. [\* - see Willard, *The Allure of Gentleness*, 77-79]

But the things that we teach on these issues are absolutely fundamental to my project in these hours of getting you to think how you could teach someone to do what Jesus said. Because at least one of the most fundamental issues in getting people to do that is their understanding of who they are.

**~ ~ ~ End of Session 6 @ 50:20\* ~ ~ ~**

**Session 7 — "Gospel, Great Commission"**  
*"Renovation of the Heart"*



[1:02:12]

**Opening Words of Gratitude** - Well, it's wonderful to be here with you and share in your devotion and watch your face and hear your voices. It's a wonderful thing to be a part of the worshipping community of Christ.

**Session Introduction** - [00:35] Now, just to keep the thread continuous remember that my hope in this time together with you is to strengthen you and engage you in what I call the Great Omission of the Great Commission except now it's going to be the Great Commission of the Great Commission. And that, as the words, *"Teach them to do everything that I have commanded you."* (**Mathew 28:20**) And I have been trying to lay a foundation and now gradually we will move more and more, especially today and tomorrow, into the more specific and practical things.

### **The Vision**

But frankly, the vision is fundamental. The vision is what enables the intention to be formed, and to be clear, and to be steady. Most of the wavering that you see in *human* life — not just the spiritual life — but all of the good things that people propose to do and never get around to doing them. Somehow that is rooted in the failure of vision. And you have to have the vision right. And the vision is basically the gospel, it's what Jesus preached, which is life now in the Kingdom of God. Trusting him, but not just what he did, nor what he says, but as your living Lord, now, walking beside you, and you as his disciple. That's how it works. And, of course, being a disciple and building a fledgling community of disciples is how you move to the point of teaching people to do everything that he said.

So, we want to get that out of the category of something dreadful that people are actually quite hopeless about.

\* Fuller Seminary student from Canada - [3:05] One of the men who was in our Fuller program a few years ago wrote this: (He was a Canadian and at one of the Canadian denominations), "The problem we face here is the recruiting or electing of leadership in our congregations. I have never in twenty-seven years of ministry seen people ask into leadership within our denomination because of their Christian maturity or because they are people who have set a plan for their own spiritual growth and followed it. When I have sat with a nominating committee the decision has been based on two criteria:

1.) Does the person attend worship regularly, that does not necessarily mean weekly (those are his words).

2.) Do you think that they would be open to being a part of the ministry? This is called the warm body method."

And he wrote a wonderful paper, and had a lot of the good things in it, and he goes on to reflect on how things go especially in the ministry as far as taking care of their own spiritual vitality and growth. And he tells about how, after going back from the seminar and leadership in his church, he said — and he's practicing the stuff — but he says, "*An interesting aside, last year my congregation's outreach ministry team decided to arrange for a Pastor's Day apart. We arranged with a local retreat center to pay the expenses for this and then offered it to the ministers in our presbytery for free for one year. No one took advantage of it. Yet, in our denomination stress and stress-related disabilities are the number one reason for clergy being put on disability leave.*"

Now, that comes from an unfortunate vision. No one intends to break down. No one intends to go into moral default, or whatever it is they might go into. But their vision of who they are and what's going on with them in their world is defective. And now I've been trying to build, piece by piece, some parts of a vision for *you*, and of who you are, and we had spent a good deal of yesterday on the spiritual side, trying to help us understand our basic nature as spiritual beings.

### **Who are you and why are you here?**

[6:30]

Now, I want to sum that up with a little thing here. [places a transparency on the overhead] I hope you can see that. I repeat, if you're not able to see some of these things and you want what's on 'em, they're here for you to use.

[Reading the title of the transparency] "Who are you and why are you here?" Now, that's the deepest Q: you will ever ask yourself. And if you don't ask yourself you will answer it anyway. You will answer it inch by inch, move by move. You know the words from Isaiah, "*All we like sheep have gone astray.*" [Isaiah 53:6] How does a sheep go astray? One nibble at a time, one nibble at a time. That's how a sheep goes astray. And they look up and they don't know where they are, or they don't look up and find that they're being eaten by something. And that's a very profound way of putting it from people who knew how sheep lived and saw the similarity.

So, now, I want...you know everything I say is for you to try on. And so try this on: [reading from transparency]

***"You are a never ceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's great universe."***

Now. Can you change the pronoun there and and say "I"? Take a moment. *I am* an unceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's great universe. Now, if you don't want to do it, don't do it. But could we say that together using "I"? Could we say that together? [everyone in the room says in unison] *"I am an unceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's great universe."*

Maybe you could take a bar of soap and write that on your mirror. So that when you get up in the morning. And maybe you could write under it "I am the light of the world." That'll scare you awake. But you remember that's what Jesus said. You were put down in time and space in a particular place that is unique to you, and no one else will ever be in that place. And in that place, if you aren't the light, there will not be any light. Now, of course, Jesus is the light of the world. And the light that is in you is him. But *you* matter, *you* count. Your position — following our discussions of **Genesis 1:26\*** — your position in time and space is *your* place to be responsible. It is to have dominion, creative responsibility for good, under God. And that's what your life is about.

[\* - 1 @ 42:50; 2 @ 20:48; 6 @ 30:30; 7 @ 10:00; 10 @ 42:10]

And so now you are spiritual in substance, you are never ceasing in duration, you are ruling or creative governance in destiny, your destiny starts here. Someone find **Revelation 22:5**... Someone got it?

Student: *"There will be no more night?"*

Dallas: Well, keep going.

Student: *"They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever."*

Dallas: And they will *what*?

Student: Reign.

Dallas: *What*?

Student: Reign!

Dallas: Reign. Is anyone in this room going to be doing that? Anyone here? That's your destiny. And that's why I said to you — This life is training for reigning. And on the visible landscape — remember the two landscapes\* — the visible landscape you are likely to be tricked into reigning on your own. And then you are apt to group up with others to see if you can't reign better together and reign over others and the whole world becomes a mess.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

## Eternal Life

[12:20]

So, what is eternal life? Well, Jesus says, *"This is eternal life, that they would know you the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent."* (**John 17:3**) Now, you want to read that verse in the context of all the other things that we're talking about. You want to understand that eternal life is not something that happens to you after you die whether you want it or not. Eternity is running right now. Eternal life is a kind of life. And you can make your life eternal by interacting, by God's grace, with his life. And your life becomes a part of his life. Now, I don't have time to go back over or add other scriptures and so on but you want to keep in mind this general picture. We will go to 2nd Peter, the first chapter before we're done here and spend some time in how that's put together in that passage.

*"They will reign forever and ever. Then shall the righteous shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father."* (**Matthew 13:43**)

Well, you may say, "That's not how I feel this morning." But that's why it's important for us to make sure that we think these thoughts, and we're going to be talking more and more about how we can live there constantly.

Now, because that's true, lookie here. [points to writing on the white board and reads it] *"For anyone who is alive in the kingdom of the heavens this world is a perfectly safe place to be."* And that is what Jesus taught, you know. It's what Paul taught. This is a standard teaching, anyone who is alive, the **23rd Psalm**, *"The Lord is my shepherd, I will lack nothing."* So, Jesus's teachings in **Matthew 6**...you don't...we sing about this. But I think we don't teach much about it. **Verse 25**: *"For this reason..."* Well, he's been talking about laying up treasures for yourself in Heaven, and remember Heaven is not just later, he says, *"For this reason I say to you do not be anxious for your life as to what you will eat, or what you will drink, nor for your body as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food and the*



*body more than clothing?"* And the answer is, well it is, and if you want to know what more it is, then, go back to the screen that we just put up there. "Look at the birds" — here come the birds — the birds of the heavens. Now your translation may want to help you out there and say "air" and it's right and it's wrong. It's right because that *is* the heavens. It's wrong because it suggests it's just air. And you see the same sort of interesting play on words in the vision of Peter on the rooftop — the thing that came down out of the heavens. And the struggle to translate that puts Heaven somewhere else. But when we say with Paul, "*Set your mind upon things above*" (Colossians 3:1), we're not talking about what's the other side of the moon. Because God and His Kingdom are here and the basic gospel is, "**Repent,**" that is, stop thinking the way you've been thinking and think about how you've been thinking and think it out again on the light of the fact that the Kingdom of God is here, right here. And Jesus, of course, taught about that repeatedly. Folks often think, "No. The kingdom of Heaven is coming with a great commotion," and one time they were asking him in **Luke 17**, "How is this going to be?" And in effect, he said, "Forget about all of that. The Kingdom of God is in your midst—in your midst—and it's right where you are." And there's some mistranslation there that makes it "within you." That's okay, too. But that's not the main point. And if you get it just within you, you haven't got it because it's not just within you, it's all around you.

*"Look at the birds. They don't sow, they don't reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"* (v. 26)

You ever try to price anyone in birds? A cockatoo, a spotted owl, and a sparrow. Jesus is teaching, "*If God arrays the grass of the field which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown in the furnace, will he not much more do so for you, O men of little faith?"* (v. 30) The word there, *oligopistoi* I hope you might study as you do your scholarly work. It's Greek for "knot-head" and it shows up repeatedly in the Gospels — *oligopistoi*. You don't really get it in "*O men of little faith,*" no.

So don't be anxious. Why? Well, because of who you are and why you're here.

So, that's the basic vision now that we want to keep before you. And we acknowledge that the whole person that we've talked about, all the dimensions of the self, are loaded with stuff that is not in accord with that. And so the actions that come out of the person do not reflect the reality of who you are, and why you're here, and of God's Kingdom. And now then, that's where the problem comes in that Jesus comes into the world to deal with. Of course, God was dealing with it much longer than that, long before



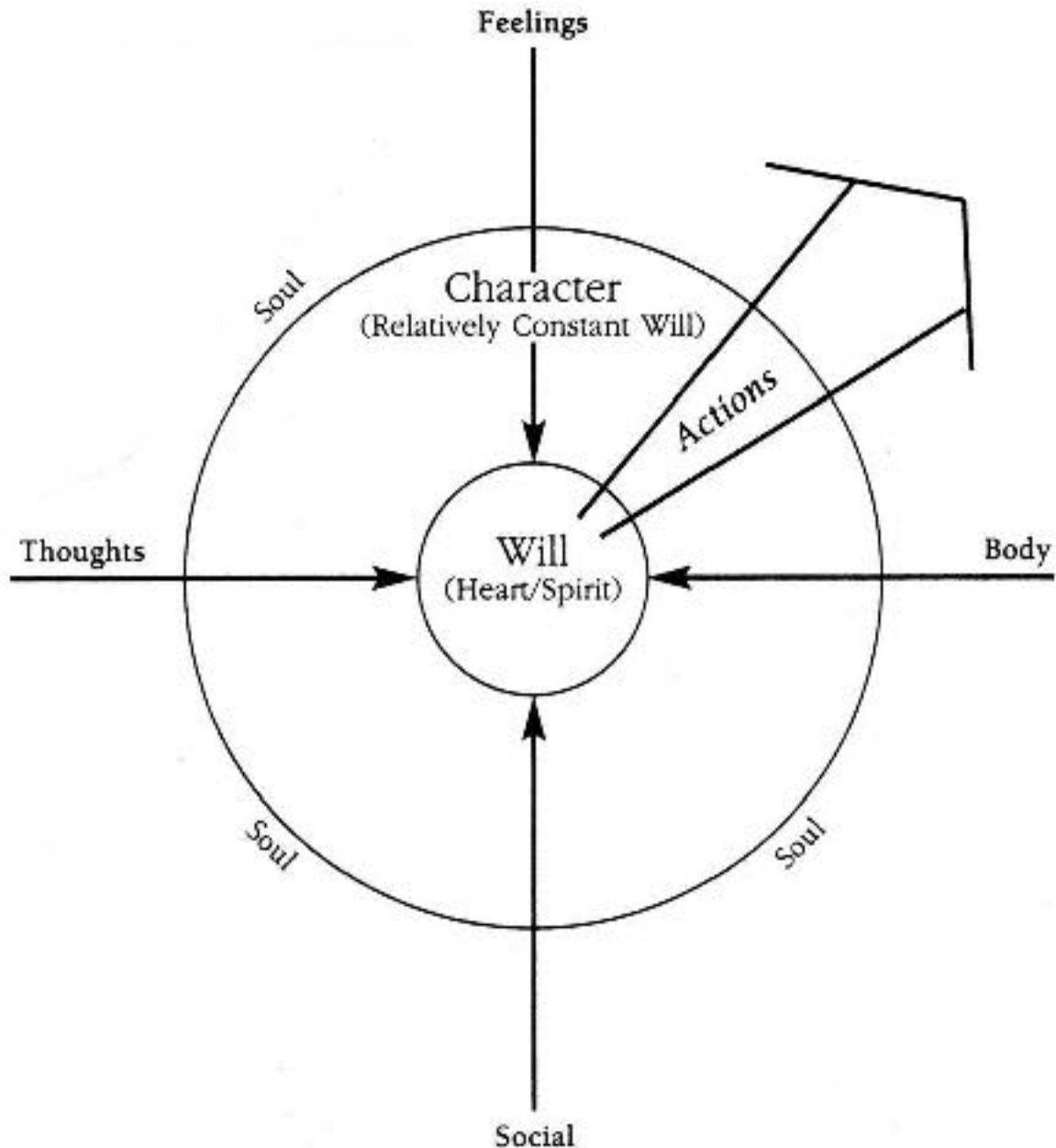
that, and the basic message is not new with Jesus. What is new is how it is present, and then how Jesus takes it and sets it *beyond* ethnic considerations. It's not just a Jewish thing, and he goes back and recovers the Abrahamic Covenant which was a covenant with Abraham for the sake of the whole world. And he does his work carefully with his disciples. He takes them on a little spiritual formation jaunt for about three years — and that's how you want to think about what was happening there. And as they went through this process they *finally* got to the point where he could go to the Cross, and let them handle that, and the Holy Spirit could come upon them, and then the whole thing is blown apart and they start thinking, as you go make disciples of Jews? No. Of all kinds of people. "Nations" there is more like what we would say of all ethnic groups or all stratas of society. And these folks, no doubt, when they heard him say, "Go to all nations," they — because they were quite cynical and had a good sense of humor I'm sure — no doubt, leaned back on a rock and said, "*Yes. In the light of our recent successes in Jerusalem we're ready for Athens and Rome.*" But, of course, they *had* been brought to the point to where they could at least participate in what was going to happen and so they started walking backward from Jerusalem, into Judea, and into Samaria and into the uttermost parts of the earth.

And here we are in one of the uttermost parts of the earth. Right here, in "The Hideaway". This is outermost parts of the earth. And then the Commission comes to *us* and this is our Jerusalem, our Judea, our Samaria. And if you're Korean, your Jerusalem is in Seoul perhaps, and perhaps Peru is the uttermost parts of the earth and you have this wonderful plan through which the Abrahamic Covenant, "*that in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*" (**Genesis 28:14**) See, that's what you want to understand when you read the Great Commission. That's what that is and when you look at Pentecost, you want to remember Babel. Don't do Pentecost without Babel. That's what basically happens as God moves out in his world to accomplish his purposes.

**Renovation of the Heart** (p. 38) Diagram

[24:20]

Okay. So now I just remind you of one other diagram that you had. This is, of course, in *Renovation of the Heart*. But this will conclude our summary for the morning. [places a transparency on the overhead]



So now, Christ comes to us in the gospel and in his person and he finds us, this complicated system, out of which actions of all kinds, mostly bad perhaps in some settings, come. And his prophetic decision that he was going to establish a new covenant in which the law of God would be written

on the heart. (**Jeremiah 31:33**) Now, our brother who was talking about **Hebrews**, where are you? There you are. See, that's one of the stunning things that comes back up in **Hebrews (8:10)**, is under the New Covenant, that's what happens. The law of God is being written on the heart. Now, that is one description of the outcome of spiritual formation in Christ, is the law of God is written on the heart. But when we start, we have all these dimensions our thoughts, emotions, body, emotions, social, the soul, trying to put all this together—and them all running in different directions. And the actions that come out are chaotic, self-contradictory, weak so that it's a major accomplishment at a human level to have anything that looks like a decent life. And if you live in some parts of the earth you can't. Think of yourself living in Gaza now. Or in many other parts of the earth where this social dimension is simply crushing you.

So now, how do we get a hold of this? And, of course, the start is when the light of God's word comes in and says, "There's a lot of good news. God loves you. God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life." And do you know? That's true. And if you get a hold of that that'll do something for you and I'm just sort of filling out the blanks a little bit and what I'm saying about who you are and why you're here.

### **The Gospel of the Beatitudes**

[27:15]

But it's really true. God is actually good and he's going to bring something real good out of it all and we can be a part of that. And it doesn't matter ultimately how bad things may be, there's hope for everyone, and that's the gospel of the Beatitudes—that's the gospel to the Beatitudes. You want to get the gospel of the Beatitudes, then you write a set of Beatitudes for today, for you where you are, and that would be an excellent exercise for you.

If you were writing Beatitudes in light of Jesus and the Kingdom, who would you put on the list? You might want to spend some time today at noon thinking out a set of Beatitudes that would proclaim the gospel according to you. Could you do that? Who would you put first on the list, blessed? Something to think about, isn't it? The key idea is simply find someone who's hopeless. They're the first. And if you like fun you can do the silly ones: blessed are the bald. You go to the television, leave it on for a few moments, you'll have a whole list of beatitudes. Just invert what's on there, just invert it. You can never be too thin or too rich it says. Oh, really?

So, now then, our Q: that we will be working more closely with the rest of our time is, "How does this develop?"

## Q & A On Suffering

**Q:** [29:40] Do you see how a theology of suffering would go hand in hand with this?

**Dallas:** Sure. Absolutely. A theology of suffering. You better have one anyway. But you won't get it right unless you do it with this. But when you write your beatitude, don't say blessed are the suffering because they're suffering. Where is their blessing? What is it that can make those who suffer blessed? Life in the kingdom of God! Right? That's it. That's the good news. Sometimes, if you're living there, you may be able to look back and say, "Thank God for the suffering." That may be true because you may be able to see that if it hadn't been for the suffering you wouldn't have found the Kingdom. It isn't true that those who suffer are blessed unless they find the Kingdom. It isn't true. Yes, Ma'am.

**Q:** [31:15] Would you agree that it would be easier for those who suffer?

**Dallas:** No, I wouldn't. It's probably harder for people who don't suffer maybe in some circumstances, but suffering for some people just embitter them and turn them against God. It's not easy. It's not a comparative thing and this is the same way with poverty. I've had people repeatedly come to me and say, "Well, Jesus taught the rich young ruler that it's easier for poor people to enter the Kingdom of Heaven than rich people." Well, you read the passage [**Luke 18:18-30**] and see if he says that. I really challenge you on that point because this is a big hang-up. So study that passage and see if he says it is easier for poor people to enter the Kingdom than it is for rich people. You find a lot of poor people that are more hung up on riches than rich people. Well, I've written a lot on that, [[The Spirit of the Disciplines, chapter 10](#)] you may have read some of it. And, sorry to be so emphatic there, but you can reject it all.

Student: Preach it! Dallas: Hmm? Student: I said, preach it!

**Today's Q: — How does this develop?** [32:45]

Okay. Now then, finally we're up to today. Now, thinking about these aspects [points to the screen] I won't go back to the big diagram. And remember those diagrams are in *Renovation of the Heart* — you have them so you don't need to worry about getting them down. Now the Q: is the human side of holiness, right? And that brings us back now to the overall theme of these days together, the human side of holiness. And basically what we're saying here is we got to do something. It won't be imposed upon us.

Holiness grows in response to intelligent effort on our part interacting with Grace.

### Grace Defined

[33:40]

Remember Grace? What is Grace? This is a test. Who can tell me what Grace is?

Student: God moving.

Dallas: Yes, God moving. Someone else?

Student: God acting.

Dallas: God acting...in *your* life, *my* life, to accomplish what I cannot accomplish on my own. Grace is God acting in my life to accomplish what I cannot accomplish on my own. Well, forgiveness is something I can't accomplish on my own, right? That's pretty big. Life from above is bigger than forgiveness. I can't accomplish that on my own. I can't birth myself—new birth myself from above. And that comes down to particular things. I can't raise the funds I need for my ministry on my own — unless I have large pink envelopes. [#6 @ 12:30] So it's really important now to seize that idea: we've gotta do something. Not to earn anything, okay? That's a different issue. Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning. You have never seen people active like people who have been caught on fire by grace. You have never seen anything like it.

Paul sometimes gets steamed up about how he was kind of pushed aside as an apostle. You may remember in the **15th chapter of I Corinthians** he's giving the fullness of the gospel there in the first verses. You want to make sure you read it all and don't stop too soon. Read it all. And when he talks about how this gospel had been committed to him and how he was the least of all saints, or at least of all the Apostles, and then suddenly there comes out of his pen, "...yet I accomplished more than all the rest of 'em did." (v. 10) Hoo, the ol' alpha dog is barking. Then he catches himself, remember? Oops! "Yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me", see? Well, he knew that was *true* but did he ever do something. I'll tell you, he did something. And we must talk about that more as we go into the disciplines, and ask what places there are in our life to his statement that, "*I buffet my body and keep it under.*" (**I Corinthians 9:27**) What place does buffeting our body have in our life? And it's easy to misunderstand that. So we have to talk about that. But we have to do something.

## The Mind and the Body

[37:18]

Now, Your thoughts are primarily what will give emotions and direction to your will. What you think is going to elicit emotions and give direction. Your thoughts are your first place of freedom and choice. That’s not absolute by any means because you have trouble with your thoughts. Ignorance is a problem. That’s a thought problem. It prevails in the spiritual realms as well as all the other realms of life. In that case, you just don’t have the right thought or you’ve got one that is wrong.

Now interestingly, the **thoughts** primarily begin to redirect the **body**. All of the disciplines are bodily behaviors. It also happens that most of the actions that reveal our character are embedded in our bodies ready to go. And it also happens that by relocating our bodies, we can begin to change our thoughts, emotions and our social contexts, even what is going on in our souls, by relocating our bodies.

You see in the wisdom of the people who are running the show here is they relocated your bodies. What are retreats? Well, retreats are “spiritual charges”. We ought to rename them “charges”. They are also retreats, aren’t they? When you go on a retreat, you relocate your body, what does it do to these other aspects? Does it do anything to the others? Think of the social aspect of being here with one another.

Like when we do the two-week retreat down in California, you are able to slip up on people and they are doing disciplines and they don’t even know it. But the fellowship that happens...I mean one of the common remarks when they leave is, “Why can’t church be like this?” See, that’s social. And it came in part with what you did with your body.

And now, since you came out here, has anything happened to your emotions? Well, not necessarily, not automatically, but probably. I must say, looking at the mountain over there with the sun shining on it in the morning brought some images and thoughts, some change and feelings, I don’t know, maybe some other things. Someone was saying they slept outside last night. I have a hard time taking that in. They say when you are freezing to death, you go to sleep. I don’t think that’s what they had in mind.

What I am trying to impress upon you in this little stretch is the mind and the body is the primary focus, the initial place that you go to work with transformation. You find the things to do. You watch Jesus. You notice he took 40 days in the wilderness and each of us might use one or two.

**Q:** [42:23] - I was wondering, there are some who would say the most important part of changing negative behavior and actions is the social context. What I'm wondering is that because you relocate the body that changes the social or would you say that it's not...

**Dallas:** Well, the Q: I'm trying to address is, "Where you get ahold of it?" I will guarantee you can't do much with the social aspect unless you do something with the body, if it's only a matter of taking it to church. Now, actually, church could do a lot for the mind and the body, it could. Sometimes it doesn't but that's another story. I think probably the people who think that the social area is the place to begin are not thinking in terms of spiritual transformation. They're thinking more in terms of, maybe, what we might call issues in mental health, or, because the social plays a huge role in that, but also the body — just action. But you know, I'm happy for anyone do it any way or anyway they want to. I just look at the outcome, what comes out of it. Does the social deal with the transformation at the center [pointing to screen] and the reformation of character? It has to be included. And that's why, for example, things like fellowship, and confession, and submission, are a part of any adequate list of disciplines. You have to have a social dimension. And, of course, there's a tremendous social dimension to worship also. And that is partly related to the fact of what we're trying to work toward is loving our neighbor as ourselves as well as loving God with our heart, soul, mind, and strength. And social is very important. And, if someone wants to suggest anything, like drugs. I don't have drugs up here. They have a use. But then the Q: is, "What do you get out of it?" So, you look at any proposals about what will do the job. **You keep in mind what the job is that is to be done, which is the transformation of the character into Christlikeness.**

Now, if the outcome is just to keep your sanity, well that's good, but that's not quite what we're talking about. We want people to keep their sanity. We want to help them but actually you need to have a little higher aim to do very much with that because the end of life is not just to be sane. So, that's an important point and I know that when you start to work with people you start to hear alternative suggestions and we want to say you certainly don't neglect the social, it's simply a Q: of how you can get ahold of it.

## **Character**

[46:00]

Now, just a word about character, just a reminder, we said this before but—and it's in the books and all of that—but, character is basically what the person does without thinking. It is partly revealed in what they do *after* they act without thinking. Like Peter's character was revealed by the fact that



after he denied Christ he went out and wept bitterly, right? See, that is character. For example, in the law courts, very often the judge sends down a sentence or verdict on the basis of whether or not the person who is on trial shows remorse. Now, hang with me on this because I... You know, when we were talking about these abstract concepts you just need very concrete things to hang them on — and that is true, isn't it? Now I ask you, what is the judge making a judgment about when he sentences the person to twice what he might otherwise because he sees no remorse in the person? What is he making a judgment about?

Students: Character.

Dallas: Character! Among other things that's a judgment about what the person is likely to do in the future. Why? Well, that's what character is. See, character is the formation of the overall person, not just a part, because character deals with the whole. That's why, "So well, I mean well..." "Okay, that's not quite enough. Let's find out what your character is." So, are we okay on that? Now, we are talking about the change of the overall person that goes with what we said earlier, that when we're talking about those circles, the unit of analysis is the whole thing—that's the person. The whole person is what you love with, not your feelings. Am I making any sense at all?

Okay. All right. Let me stop a moment and see, do you have questions or comments at this point. Yes, Ma'am.

**Q:** [48:35] I have a hard time divorcing what we do, our action, from a thought. You are not saying that they are divorced from one another?

**Dallas:** You don't want to divorce them but you also want to recognize that you often act without thinking. Where does that come from, see? Now, one of the reasons I want you to read William James's\* two little chapters is to begin to get you to seeing how this works — and that it is a good thing, but can be a bad thing. So, now there's thought in there *somewhere*. But one of the beauties of the human being is that they can perform incredibly complex things good or evil without thinking. And, like, the person you don't want to be riding with is someone who has to think about everything they do. You don't want to be riding with that person. It won't be a happy event. And that's what I want to impress on you — that's *natural*, that's *good*, and that's *right*. Okay. I mean, you watch someone who has learned, as a singer, they learned thirteen operas. And you say, "How in the world can they *do* that?" Well, they don't have that problem because they actually do it. And then you come to understand the sort of stuff that William James\* is talking about in his chapter, "Oh. That's how it works."

[\* - William James - see Session 3 @ 40:50; #7 @ 49:15; #8 @ 11:10-12:55, 24:30, 31:25, 1:02:55; #10 @ 44:45, #12 @ 52:00]

Now, they still have to have a little guy down here above the orchestra pit who prompts them. You see, the prompt is just to sort of get the thing going again, and then he goes. And that's an expression of character.

One reason why we admire people in the arts, and in sports, and in other areas, is because in order to succeed well within those areas you have to have developed your character along certain lines. A person without character will not make an excellent musician. It's interesting, on the campus at USC we have a lot of really good musicians. You can tell them when they walk into the classroom. Because the discipline that they live, shapes their body — and their actions. Now, they're not all *good*, even sometimes they're good musicians, but they're not good people. One remembers Wagner, for Heaven's sakes. And so moral goodness is not the same thing as character generally, because you can have bad character, right? And bad character actually is just as complicated as a good character, maybe a little more so. The really bad things have no character at all. What's that *Hee Haw* song, "If it weren't for bad luck, I'd have no luck at all." Some people, if they didn't have bad character they'd have no character at all, and that'd be *worse*. Probably better for some people around them. But to have no character is just to be *jello*.

Okay. So now character is big. We want to understand that it comes from the whole person, it's a matter of the whole person, [points at screen] it comes out of the way these parts interact as the will is formed into habit and located largely in the body. Yes.

**Q:** [52:57] When someone does something and you know the expression, "that was really out of character", is it kind of not possible to act out character?

**Dallas:** Yes. When what's his name bit off Holyfield's ear, ["Mike Tyson" from a student], do you remember what he said? He said in effect, that was out of character. But everyone knew it wasn't. It's actually *in* character but we don't want to own it. That's a very perceptive point. Yes, Sir.

**Q:** [53:48] Through some of our work stuff and training, they came up with this: *Sow a thought, reap a choice. Sow a choice, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character.*

**Dallas:** Pretty good. Pretty good. It's a little more complicated than that and we need to go into the details but that's the way it goes. What comes first on the list?

**Student:** Sow a thought.

**Dallas:** [Pointing to the screen] What do you get next?

**Student:** Choice.

**Dallas:** Can you put that on this? Can you put that on that diagram?

**Q:** [54:30] I'm just thinking about the genocide when Christians were killing Christians and how that whole character thing played out there with their bodies, you know, killing their Christian neighbors. Were they people who just had not developed the character to withstand something like that?

**Dallas:** You're speaking about a situation like Rwanda and this is especially interesting because many of these people have been — they were third generation Christians. Now where was that stuff that came out of them? Did it fall upon them from the heavens? No. It was in their thoughts and their emotions and in their bodies. And unfortunately the version of Christianity they got did nothing about it. That's a very revealing situation. And generally speaking, in the face of great evils, where people either participate or stand by, that is a failure of character. It goes right into who they are.

The cases of having the prisoners form a string quartet or an orchestra in the concentration camp — where did that come from? That goes very deep into the character of the people who were running the show. And often the remark is made, "How could such highly educated people have done such a thing?" Well, there's education and then there's education and you have to look at the kinds of things we're talking about here. Because remember, everyone gets a spiritual formation. Everyone does. Hitler got one. You have some choice about which one you get. Hopefully because you're in a social situation where you have *people* who are able to bring that to light. Yes.

**Q:** [56:53] Where does something like groupthink comes in?

**Dallas:** Groupthink comes in by people who are in a social situation [walking over to the screen and pointing to the diagram] where they have resigned their *will* to the group. Usually, because they fear the opinions of others and they're unwilling to face opposition. You know, this is an interesting point because for a while, some years ago, this was recognized as a problem. It is no longer recognized as a problem in our country in the way it was for a while.

Independence of thought, which is the opposite of groupthink, is a deeply characterological phenomenon — to be genuinely independent of thought. There's a wonderful verse in Leviticus, "*Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.*" (**Exodus 23:2**) You know that verse? "*Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.*" That's addressing groupthink. Groupthink is a primary repository of sin.

**Q:** [58:40] This triggers a memory of mine many years ago when I was a student and students were rioting. I remember walking up to the edge one of these and feeling myself being pulled, and I walked away. The fact that I could be pulled and then could be caught up in some mob psychology, what does that say about me?

**Dallas:** [pointing to the screen] That says that the social dimension is an essential part of the human being, that's what that says. "No man is an island," as the poem goes, and that's just simply a truth. It's a New Testament truth. It's a recognition of the social nature of human beings. That's why we have a Trinity. "God is in himself a sweet society..."

**Q:** [1:00:00] Taking a wider view of creation and Romans 8 of all creation and God subjecting them to the futility of their minds, that is in a macrocosm of what our bodies are in a microcosm. Would you say that in the futility of our bodies that struggles in preparation for that reigning to come for the large picture?

**Dallas:** That's right. The metaphysical term for it is *organisystem* and its opposite is *atomism*. And atomism is the idea that things are little units that are independent of each other and what happens with one makes no difference to what happens to the other. They can kind of knock one another around but they don't have any inherent characteristic involving them with others. And modern technology as a manifestation of the will of man to domination is inherently atomistic and it creeps over into people in the social attitude that people have like, you know, "It's nothing to you if I don't wear my helmet when I ride my motorcycle." That means, "I'm free to do what I want. I'm free to do what I want. The fact that you have to pay for the hospital doesn't touch me."

So, these are very deep and important issues and thinking about how you go about working with this. Now, the point — don't want you to lose the point — is that the way you get a hold of this process is in thought and body...and are we going on break now? We're going to do body when we come back.

~ ~ ~ End of Session 7 @ 1:02:12\* ~ ~ ~

**Session 8 – ["Transformation of the Body & Habits"](#)**  [1:04:31]

Let's start again, please. "*Tempest will fidget on down the road*" and we'll be out of it.

Okay, now, just to reaffirm my last point, and this is not a law but...

...if you want to get a hold of this whole process of transformation you work primarily with your body and your mind.

Now there'll be other things that come up and in some cases you have people who can't do *anything*. That's why disciplines are not the answer to everything. Because you find some people who simply can't get ahold of it anyway. And the extreme case of that is possession. There is such a thing as possession. And maybe a few degrees of it this way. That's why it's important to have ministers and teachers and friends who knew what that is.

[Passing back a book to a student] Thank you so much for that book. That's a wonderful book.

So, make sure you got that. Now, you can reject it — anything I emphasize like that — *you* have to decide whether or not it's true, and whether or not you're going to do anything about it. I have abandoned trying to get anyone to do anything. It's not my business. So, try to think about that now— and then, the issue of character. You see, when [Mike] Tyson said [[#7 @ 53:00](#)], "I just blew it." Well, that's his character. He was trying to say that wasn't me. That was him all right. See, "just blowing it" is a feature of character. Now, I wanted to add to that, that in *all* of this the human being *alone* is not going to be able to turn into some sort of grand moral mechanism that never does anything wrong. Let's just put that aside. Don't worry about that. We're not talking about being perfect, we're talking about doing a lot better. And you know the bumper sticker "Christians aren't perfect, they're just forgiven." That's just right up there with Tyson. Because there's an awful lot of distance between being just forgiven and being perfect. And we can go there, and it's really good to be there, and that's where Jesus wants us to be with him. Yes.

**Q:** [3:14] The sense of restraining wills and habits, where Tyson, for instance, he says, "It's not me," there's a part of me that nurtures that idea of biting someone's ear off. And then there's another part that works to restrain it. So, when one goes away, the part that is always there moves forward which is very different have from habits that harbor bitterness...

**Dallas:** That's right. And actually let's say a good word for Mike. I mean that was better than saying, "Yes. And the next time I'll bite his other ear off," right? That would have been worse, wouldn't it? Because that would have revealed still a different character.

Okay. So now, these are important things to think about because you remember one of the things they they have in **Romans 7** is, "*It was not me, it was the sin that dwells in me.*" Now, that *can* be a realistic approach to dealing with the problem which is what it is in **Romans 7 & 8** because he goes on to deal with the problem in Romans 8, and actually he was dealing with it in Romans 6 before he got to 7. And it's a wonderful development to see how that works.

Now, we need to go back and think about the body some more so let me put up a little dean fod here [transparency].

**My Body Is** [Overhead transparency] [4:45]

Potential Energy Available to Me That I May Act

Even in defiance of God, to become a person with a kingdom and specifically the particular person I shall be for eternity.

My Personalized "Power Pack"

As Flesh, my body carries the "natural" abilities that enable human beings to act and even to act (relatively speaking) without God

To have that choice or alternative.

Our body takes on a life of its own...As It Is Supposed To!

But, unfortunately, in our fallen world, it takes on a system of tendencies away from or against God.

Illustrated, Biblically by Peter's denials:

Physical - Isolation, weariness, death

Emotional - fear, anger, shame

Intellectual - rationalizing, theorizing, distorting

The Body is inseparable in its functioning from the context of the surrounding world and its contents. (**I John 2:16**)

So, we start. We said some of this already, but let's do it again. What is the body? It is potential energy that is immediately available to me. Okay. See that finger? [His finger.] I can move that. And I don't have to use something else to move it, right? Now, the radio on my car I cannot move like I can move my finger. Probably there's going to be something like that pretty soon. Because increasingly, mind-brain reading is going to be—which is still—it's your brain, right? Now they have these computer programs where people can type words by moving their eyes and the computer picks up what to do. You see how that ties into this? Because you see that means now you can move bodies that are not your own by thinking. And that's a big step. Much that we have in medicine restoring people or extending their abilities and so on are simple ways of accessing bodies that are not our body, *without* our body. Now, until something happens you can move or control much of your body without a body. I could take this hand and move this finger. Now, the important thing to understand is that your body is directly accessible to your will and that's how you extend your will out into the world. So because you can use the body directly it has potential energy that is available to you to act, then you can use your body to activate other bodies. And that, in short is the story of technology from fire and the wheel up to today.

### **Our Bodies as Our Kingdom Action**

[7:25]

Okay? Now, we can do this—we can use this body even in defiance to God. In order to be a person I have to have a kingdom and God has given me a body in order that I might have a kingdom. That's how that works. Persons require a kingdom and human persons require a body to have the kingdom. And because they have the body they can defy God. They have enough energy in their body to do that. And, of course, the *particular* body that I have enters into my identity, forever. Because what I will be after my death is defined by who I was before my death. And that is defined in terms of the body that I had. And that's a part of my personality—it has never, never escaped. That's one reason why it's so hard to make a go of reincarnation. Because reincarnation suggests that you have an identity separate from your body. So that you can sort of change bodies like you change coats. So I don't want to take all that on right now, but it does turn out to be important. Because, in fact, for various reasons reincarnation is asserting itself as an interesting issue for Evangelical theology— isn't that true? That's related to universalism—the idea that if you just go around enough times you'll get it right eventually. Not really a correct view of human personality.

Now, as flesh, my body carries the natural abilities that enable human beings to act. And that goes up to things like devising large mellow pink envelopes [#6 @ 12:30] and feeling that, "I want to put more in that



envelope." That's flesh. That's natural. Nothing wrong with it, okay? Flesh is not in itself bad, not in itself bad—only when it is un- subordinated to God is it bad. Are we doing okay up to that point? Alright.

### **The Body's Meanings**

[10:30]

Our body takes on a life of its own and that's what it's supposed to do. That means you don't have to think about things in order to do them. Your body is not just a piece of meat. It is full of meanings, full of meanings, for you and for others. Meanings are things that carry you in a direction.

The [William] James\* passage is a nice discussion about how a process moves with sensations. Because the sensations take on meanings as to what is next, so that you don't have to think about the next move. You remember that structure? So I think that's one of the most important things to get out of the reading and I want to go back and look at some of the passages in that in a moment — basically the idea is, a human being's body is built in such a way that it can just pile up almost endless sequences of sensations and actions that have meaning that lead over into the next thing. And that's illustrated in many, many ways, and he's such a good writer and he did a good job of that.

But now, unfortunately, it has *bad* meanings too. So, the idea of the sin which is in my members that Paul talks about — he was already where James was, except he didn't understand the physiology of the body. [William] James\* was a physiologist first, that was his first career, as a physiologist, and he moved on to psychology next, and finally philosophy—all within the faculty of Harvard University. So, he's doing it in terms of physiology. But Paul knew the *fact*, see? He just didn't know how to analyze it. He knew the fact. And the body, unfortunately, is able to run on its own in the wrong direction. Not only in the wrong direction—contrary to our intentions. Now that's where you need—in order to understand what goes wrong and what goes right—that's where you *need* to get the complexity of the self, the human self, you need to have some understanding in it and that will help you seek more deeply *that* disciplines work and how they work.

[\* - William James - see Sessions 3 @ 40:50; #7 @ 49:15; #8 @ 11:10-12:55, 24:30, 31:25, 1:02:55; #10 @ 44:45, #12 @ 52:00]

### **The World's System and Three Weapons** [13:35]

So there is a system of tendencies away for...away *from* — should be from, instead of for—or against God. Now, the general name for that system in scripture is *world*. So you have three enemies laid out in **Ephesians 2**: the

world, the flesh, and the devil. Those are the big three. And in the early Church, and many times, you had to explicitly forswear them and say, "I will stand against them—the world, the flesh, and the devil." The world is organized flesh—socially organized, historically developed, flesh. That's the world as used in Ephesians 2 and elsewhere. Of course, there are other meanings of world and I'm sure you know that. John says there are three things in the world: the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. (**I John 2:16**) Now, you have to understand that he's talking about those as ongoing processes that are just working away all the time. Lust is, of course, desire, and desire is essentially chaotic and disintegrating, and we have a lot of them. And one reason why you can't run your life on desire is because you *do* have a lot of them, and they conflict. And if you try to run your life on desire you will be in a mess, quickly.

Lust of the flesh, basically, physical desires.

Lust of the eyes, basically, appearance, style...there's a little bit of power in that...you want a room with a view, and you want to look good, and so on—that's the lust of the eyes.

And the pride of life is exultation over others, comparison in the...resentment...manipulation, that's...and 'ol John looks at the world and says, "That's it, folks. If you want to be the friend of the world, you can't be the friend of God." That's what he said. And that's because this mess [pointing a thumb over his shoulder at the screen] is running in the wrong direction, see?

### **The Illustration of Peter**

[16:15]

Peter's case is always illustrative, and you see in his case what Paul was talking about when he said "the sin that is in my members," (**Romans 7:23**) and it was in Peter's members. Jesus knew that, and he had to give Peter a little lesson in psychology. And so he took Satan's desire to sift Peter like wheat and got the jump on Satan and told Peter what was going to happen, so that *when* it happened he would know *what* had happened and he would be able to *learn* from it. Jesus was always teaching.

When he says to the guys asleep in the garden. (**Matthew 26:41**) You know, he says, "*The spirit is willing...spirit, but the flesh is weak.*" Where was the problem? It wasn't in the spirit. These guys were well-meaning; they intended to do what was right and Jesus is *teaching* them where the problem *is*. And then that's set down, in the scriptures, so that we can also learn from this. He wasn't scolding them. I think often that's the way that's read, he was scolding them, you know? He wasn't saying something like, you

know, "If you had the brains God gave a goose you would stay awake." He's teaching, and then that's recorded for our benefit. And I don't have time to go into that passage now, but it's a very important and good one for you to study and to think about. And do understand he honored their intentions. He didn't Q: it. He just said, "Guys, there's more to it than that, there's more to it than that."

Now then, you go into Peter's situation in the denials (**Luke 22:54-62**) with the understanding that we're working through here and you can understand exactly why it happened. What was Peter standing in? He was standing in the world. It was all around him: the social consciousness of the servants and everyone...and the study of what happened to Jesus in that setting is so instructive, indeed. I mean, a person in that position is one who the people who always get beaten up can go beat somebody up—and the servants slapped him, and mistreated him—the ones always on the other end, now they had a chance to do that to somebody. That's the world. That's a revelation of the nature of the world and it's not of God.

So, you have the various factors you can find in Peter. No doubt he was confused, he was isolated from others, he was weary, he was very conscious of death, fear, anger, shame. No doubt rationalizing. He could easily have said, "I just blew it," see? But his character wasn't that. So now, I'm hoping you can analyze that and then take that to other situations you know where it looks very like a crucifixion is going on, where people are standing up or not standing up, and analyze and come to understand...and, of course, we look at ourselves: "*Why do I behave the way I do?*"

**Q:** [20:28] also a satanic element and I'm wondering what element of person the demonic forces got into?

**Dallas:** Primarily the mind.

**Same Student:** So what would that look like for this situation with Peter? What kind of things do you think were happening?

**Dallas:** Well, primarily confusion. He didn't know *what* was happening.

**Same Student:** And what would be the best way to...

**Dallas:** Remember Jesus...remember now, this doesn't...like, you always have to see the continuity. After Peter confessed that Jesus was the Messiah what happened? Jesus said, "You know, I'm going unto Jerusalem [and] they're going to kill me," and Peter... now, you have to fill in the blanks on Peter on that event. You can almost see him standing over here by a tree

saying, "Jesus, I want to talk to you. That's not for you. That's not the way it works." Now, you see you have to have *that* in mind when you go to his denials. See, the way he was thinking — Satan's work is primarily on ideas, okay? Primarily on ideas. That's true in general. That's how he works on institutions like education and the Church because he knows that if he can get the ideas going he can take a nap and things will go in his direction.

[22:05] And that's why your ministry as a teacher, and a writer, and a speaker is so important. You are idea people. You're not emotion people, okay? Please understand that. You are idea people. The emotions come and go, they have some importance, but even in worship — worship isn't emoting. Worship is knowing God, setting him before you, contemplating him, and then emotion comes out of that.

So, that's an important Q: . Peter was...I mean, the biggest fact about Peter was he was confused and he didn't know what was going *on*. And he probably thought when he said, "I'll die for you," that he would kill somebody. But now comes a little girl. "Hey, you're one of them." "No I'm not one of them." What's he gonna do, kill her? No. And his confusion undermines his intentions, and then the emotions of fear and social rejection and so on come in, and that's where you get his denial. Now, he didn't know that was going to happen to him. He thought all he had to do was just decide, but it wasn't. That's what Jesus said and that's why Jesus set him up and taught him the way he did. And Peter had a hard time later with keeping straight on things.

### **The Body is Fundamentally Social**

[24:15]

Now, just this last point because the body is fundamentally social. It's the meaning, that is in the body's positions and motions, and that are read in others around them that function especially as triggers for actions that we later bewail ourselves about. We have to learn to play to the audience of one. That's the only thing that can stabilize the individual in the social context: I stand before God, the audience of one. Now, that goes back, of course, to the thoughts and the body.

Well, there's a lot more we can say about that but we can't because we have to do something else. I do want to recommend to you that you carefully study Chapter 15 in William Law. [A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life.] It's ostensibly about why we should sing Psalms. But it's really about the connection between the soul and the body, and you can read "person" in "the body" if you wish. It is one of the best things ever written on the understanding of what makes spiritual disciplines matter. It isn't *just* about Psalms, but it *is* about singing psalms, about singing. And the point of it is

that what we *do* with our body influences what we have in our spiritual side, our soul, if you wish. He uses "soul" as simply a general term for all that's not the body. That's one use that "spiritual" has and it is the best treatment in the literature of this.

I don't have your version unfortunately but I would like to just read a few lines here. He says,

*"As the devotion of the heart naturally breaks out into outward acts of prayer, so outward acts of prayer are natural means of raising the devotion of the heart. It is thus in all states and tempers of the mind: as the inward state of the mind produces out actions suitable to it, so those outward actions have the like power of raising an inward state of mind suitable to them."*

You ever read an old book called *From Person to Praise*? Sometime, look it up in the library. There was a period, three or so decades ago, where people rediscovered that *praise* would actually do you good! And, of course, this is the same thought here.

*"Therefore, if you would know the reason and necessity of singing psalms, you must consider the reason and necessity of praising and rejoicing in God because singing psalms is as much the true exercise and support of the spirit of thanksgiving as prayer is the true exercise and support of the spirit of devotion. The union of soul and body is not a mixture of their substances as we see bodies united and mixed together, but consists solely in the mutual power that they have of acting upon one another."*

That's the union of the soul and the body.

William Law was a person who understood that they are two substances, they're not one, and yet they are interactive. And in a manner that is appropriate to the subject matter then he describes how that works:

*"The soul has no thought or passion but the body is concerned in it. The body has no action or motion but what in some degree affects the soul."*

And so, the other disciplines also related to the union of the body and the soul have that same character of interaction. Well, he goes on to elaborate on how this affects things like being surrendered to the will of God and so on. He has a wonderful passage here:

*"Would you know who is the greatest saint in the world? It is not the one who prays most, or fasts most. It is not he who gives most alms or most eminent for temperance. But it is he who is always thankful to God, who*

*wills everything that God wills, who receives all that God does, everything, as an instance of God's goodness and has a heart always ready to praise God for it. All prayer and devotion, fasting and repentance, meditations and retirement, all sacraments and ordinances are about so many means to render the soul thus divine and conformable to the will of God; fulfill it with thankfulness and so on... You need not now therefore wonder why I lay so much stress on singing a Psalm..." (The Psalms were the original praise songs.) "...since you see it is to form your spirit to such joy and thankfulness to God. This is the highest perfection of the divine and holy light."*

So I hope you will really look at Chapter 15 and you learn a lot about what you need to know about the role of the body.

### **William James on "Habits"**

[31:20]

Now then, a little bit on [William] James\*, and then we must talk about fasting. So, if you take your reading, I just want to point out a few things. And as I said, James was originally a physiologist and he approaches the entire matter of habit from a physiological point of view. But you want to realize that for him, the body, and especially the nerves, are not just matter, they are living substance, and while all matter yields to habit, the substance of the nervous system in his view — which he was very familiar with at the level that you *could* be familiar with it at his time — that level, that nervous system has a special property, which he calls on page 151 "*plasticity*" — plasticity, you see that as an italicized word—"Plasticity then, in the wide sense of the word means the possession of a structure, weak enough to yield to an influence, but strong enough not to yield all at once." And so he says, "Organic matter especially nervous tissue, seems endowed with a very extraordinary degree of plasticity of this sort." Now, the English of all that is simply that it undergoes a process which it *retains* and it doesn't just *disappear*. But it changes anyway that you have an after effect. So the italicized language there on 151, "*that the phenomenon of habit in living beings are due to the plasticity of the organic material of which their bodies are composed.*"

Now, from the point of view of what *we're* teaching here, that's a way of explaining the role of the body in the spiritual life. The body takes on meanings which are tendencies from the experiences that he goes through. And then he goes on to illustrate this in the following paragraphs in terms of things that are made out of metal or paper, or cloth, and how they too, retain a certain substance but change so that they are not the same, and they don't *act* the same. A simple illustration he gives is folding a piece of paper. If you fold a piece of paper once, you open it up, and try to fold it in a different place close to the fold that you made, you'll find it's difficult. You've



no doubt folded a letter in the wrong place so it wouldn't go into the envelope, and then you had to fold it again, and sometimes it's quite a proposition to get it folded in the right place because it's already been folded. Well that is an illustration in non-living matter of what James calls a habit.

So now, in the *nerves* (at the bottom of 152), you see the paragraph there, the italicized heading: *Habits Are Due to Pathways Through the Nervous System*. Whenever you have a sensation or an experience that establishes, in some measure, a pathway which is easier for the following experiences to go down than making a *new* pathway. And, nervous matter, as he calls it — it's not nervous, but it makes you nervous — is especially given to this trait of picking up patterns. On 153, a third of the way down: "*The most complex habits,*" you see that language? "*The most complex habits as we shall presently see more fully, are from the same point of view nothing but concatenated,*" sort of piled one upon another, "*discharges of the nerve centers due to the presence there of systems of reflex paths so organized as to wake each other up successively.*"

So now, the effects of this right at the bottom of page 153, "*Habit simplifies our movements, makes them accurate and diminishes fatigue*" and he goes on to illustrate that. Then on the next page 154, the bottom of that page, "*Habits diminish the conscious attention with which our acts are performed.*" And that's one of the main things, is that *you don't have to pay attention to all the stuff that you would have had to if you didn't have a habit.*

Now, again, you see that's good and that's bad. If you have a habit of not looking over your shoulder before you change lanes, it's not good. Unless you've made some other effective arrangements, of course.

So now then, he gives us the little picture of what happens in a process and he describes this on the bottom of 154 and 155, right at the bottom, he gives you a general description here, "*If an act requires a chain A, B, C, D through G, then in the first performance of the action the conscious will must choose each of these events from a number of wrong alternatives that tend to present themselves. But habit soon brings it about that each event calls up its own appropriate successor without any alternative offering itself and without any reference to the conscious will.*"

Now if you have as an adult learned a second language, or if you, for example, are a pianist or a musician, you know exactly what this means. Because the whole effect of practice and training is to establish these successions where you don't have to think about the links in the chain, and then he presents that graphically on page 156.



Now the outcome here on page 157, the paragraph opening there: *"Habits depend on sensations not attended to."* He's using the word sensations in a rather generous manner. But really, he's talking about any kind of mental event—you could feel it or not. But habit runs on in events that you're not conscious of. In some cases you could be, but in most cases you're thankful not to be because you've got other things to think about. And the result of that is it frees us up. On page 158, you have an italicized sentence there towards the top, *"The simultaneous combination of movements is thus in the first instance conditioned by the facility with which in us alongside of intellectual processes, processes of inattentive feeling may still go on."*

Now, see, if you've got the idea here then you can put Peter's denials right on this and then the positive things you see someone, a pianist playing some incredible piece of music, Beethoven's "Appassionata" sonata is a good illustration, you look at them and you think, "How can they do that?" Well, I knew a pianist once who said, *"If I don't practice for one day my teacher knows it. But if I don't practice for two days, I know it. And if I don't practice for three days everybody knows it."* Because even though these processes do...they have to be sustained. But not *directly*, you do it by practice. James has a wonderful thing to say about that further on here.

### **James - The Ethical and Pedagogical Importance of Habits [41:20]**

But now just a word or two about the ethical and pedagogical importance—this is on 158. And what he's talking about here, now, is how does this affect the general field of moral education as well as other forms of education.

There's some nice remarks here on 58 and 59 about how society runs on habit—again, it's not all good, because, as he comments, a person brought up in certain circumstances may be limited to that position in society forever simply because their habits won't let them move.

\* He tells fascinating stories here about the tiger, for example, that is being carried on a train and have a train wreck and the cage is open, and the tiger comes out, and looks around a little bit and just goes back in.

\* And, you know, you can train an elephant to a stake, and it will stay there, even if the chain is not on it.

\* The chickens are used to a fence, they'll walk right up to it and turn around and go the other way when the fence is not there. And, it's very touching to think about these kinds of things. But here's a nice discussion of this on board for human beings, mainly, on pages 158 and 159.

So now, on page 160 he begins to reap the fruits of the discussion with his statement at the top of the page,

*"The great thing in all education is to make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy, to fund and capitalize our acquisitions and live at ease upon the interest of the fund."*

He's a grand 'ol writer, he had a way of using allusions that just... So you get the right habits and you just live on the interest — and it's...there's so much truth to that, negatively as well as positively. Then he quotes from a man named Bain, who was a psychologist and philosopher contemporary to him, a number of points about two-thirds of the way down on 160.

Maxim #1 — *"In the acquisition of a new habit or leaving off an old one, we must take care to launch ourselves with as strong and decided an initiative as possible."* What I want you to be thing about what you do in disciplines as we go over this. A discipline usually takes a fairly radical amount of novelty, and it's important that it do so. You'll find many people who have done well as followers of Christ at their conversion they often entered into an intensive period of solitude and Bible study and other things that many have been relevant.

Maxim #2 — *"Never suffer an exception to occur 'till the new habit is securely rooted in your life."* And, of course, again, you have to be able to do that—not everyone can do that. But he's talking about people who are basically sane and whole and want to do better. And that is one of the things you do. You don't tolerate exceptions.

Now, for people who are not in the strong position, for example, in smoking or whatever they're taking — coffee (my drug of choice), you want to get off of it, get off of it. And he has some discussions here about the tapering off method and all of that. But basically, if you revert, you just re-established the pattern. Your brain says, "Okay, I know that one and we're going to do that again," and so it's important that you not give in. And I know people who have quit heroin cold turkey because they basically follow James's and professor Bain's response. And you say, "Well, it's hard." Oh, yeah, what else is new? It's hard. But if you want to change your habits, you do it. And when you know the history of the Christian people, you see how often this is practiced, and it was especially true in the orders such as Benedictine and other orders.

Maxim #3 — Next on page 162 a third maxim may be added to the preceding pair:

*"Seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution you make, and on every emotional prompting you may experience in the direction of the habits you aspire to gain."*

Now, in a minute we're going to turn to fasting and talk about that. But it applies to every discipline. Discipline is a matter of taking the opportunities that life offers you to establish new habits. And you have some liberty in selecting those, but that is really essential and you will find that, for example, silence is something you can practice, and in many forms. And it's very important for those of us people, like you all, and me, who fundamentally are "Word People". That's what we do is words—one context or another. It's not bad, on the other hand it can be bad. You read [the epistle of] James and you find out the tongue is a fire. So, you can practice silence in many ways.

\* For example, one of the ways that, again, people such as you or I can practice, is not having the last word. We can practice that at church, we can practice that in our family, and it's a marvelous discipline. Other people will be frightened and disoriented around us if we don't do that, but they'll get some help from it, too. So you take every occasion that is reasonable and one of the important things about fasting is it's very frequently that you have the occasion where you can practice it.

Now, on page 156 he is talking about effort that goes into it and he's — I want to make this bridge to the chapter on "will" that we will do tomorrow — so please, if you would remember to bring that with you tomorrow. But he says here on page 164, six lines in, "*Attention and effort are, as we shall see later, but two names for the same psychic fact.*"

Fascinating. *Extremely* important. When you start too fast, if you're not already use to it, the first thing you will do is spend all your time thinking about food. Baaaaad idea. "*To what brain process they correspond, we don't know now,*" he said that. "*The strongest reason for believing that they do depend on brain processes at all, and are not pure acts of spirit, is just this fact, that they seem in some degree subject to the law of habit...*" and now he says "*...which is a material law.*"

I want to say to you this is one point on which I hope you will think, if not disagree, with James. All of reality is subject to habit — thoughts, emotions — and they are not subject to habit just because they are connected with the brain. They are realities in their own right and it's especially important to know that they also respond to habit. Like my students at USC now, and I suspect everywhere else, can hardly read a book by William Law. And if they try to read something by Jonathan Edwards they're dead because their

habits are to do little bitty bites, and now we have a sentence that goes a page and a half. But that's habit because the people who read Jonathan Edwards had no problem. They weren't watching TV and so forth, that helps. But their habits— they were mental habits, they're emotional habits, and so, just put a little Q: mark by that comment about the brain there. The brain is obviously important but not because the non-physical doesn't have habits.

Now, one of my very favorite statements from James on discipline is in the next sentences, there. He says, "As a final practical maxim, relative to these habits of the will, we may then offer something like this: keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise every day. That is, be systematically ascetic or heroic." (Don't be thrown off by that word ascetic, just read heroic.) "In little unnecessary points do every day or two something for no other reason than that you would rather not do it." (That is an absolute jewel.) "So that when the hour of dire need draws nigh you may find yourself not unnerved and untrained to stand the test. Asceticism of this sort is like the insurance which a man pays on his house and his goods. The tax does him no good at the time and probably may never bring him a return. But if the fire does come his having paid it will be his salvation from ruin. So, with a man who has daily inured himself to habits of concentrated attention, energetic volition, and self-denial in unnecessary things, he will stand like a tower when everything rocks around him and when his softer, fellow mortals, are winnowed like chaff in the blast."

Now, we've been looking at *wisdom*, not law. This is not righteousness. This is for people who want to, in a practical way, change their character. And when we are teaching we want to remember this. You probably can't use this in a sermon, but you need to have it in mind, and some of it can be conveyed to *some* people that you're teaching. And it's absolutely essential in the face of all the plaintiff statements, "I can't! I can't!" Well, there's grace, and there's effort and you *can*. It's a matter of finding out how to do it and putting into practice the things that would change.

### **A Few Words on Fasting**

[54:25]

Okay now, a few words on fasting—most importantly, what *is* fasting? It isn't just not eating, that is the negative side of it and you have to do that, to get to what it really is. Fasting is practicing dependence upon God. It is practicing dependence upon God. That is why I gave you a couple passages on that because it ought to have something to do with the Bible.

**Deuteronomy 8:3** and **Psalms 35:15**. Okay? If you don't understand what fasting is you won't understand these verses.

Deuteronomy 8 is the story of the Israelites in the wilderness, it says... It's a wonderful chapter, and I have a hard time not getting sidetracked here, but let's talk about fasting. Verse 2, *"You shall remember all the way the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years that he might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandment."* Keeping the commandment depends on something. How would being humbled get you there? You see the Q: ? Keeping the commandment depends on something. What does it depend upon? Well, being humble. Why? Because being humbled is to be dependent upon God. It's to be dependent upon God. That is what humility is. If you read your Andrew Murray you know how he develops that, over and over, it's to be dependent upon God. Now, how did that work? *"He humbled you and let you be hungry and fed you with manna which you did not know."* You know what the word "manna" means? It means, "What is it?" So, "Junior, go out and gather another pot of what is it. Yes, we'll have some what is it soup." Manna is congealed Word of God. Potatoes also are congealed Word of God. Word of God is the substance which you consume when you fast. Now, it may take a little longer than one meal to get into this, but one meal is a good start. *"That he might make you to understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of God."* What proceeds out of the mouth of God? Words of God. In some forms, it's potatoes. But it doesn't have to have any material form at all, and thus, what you are finding out when you fast. Because when you fast you are taking in substance from the invisible landscape.

You'll notice here, verse 4, *"Your clothing did not wear out on you nor did your foot swell,"* that is, it didn't wear out your shoes, "for forty years." What's that got to do with anything? Now, think  $E=MC^2^*$ , okay? You have that? You know that? You want to write it down in your notes, so that you can think about this when you pray. [writes the equation,  $E=MC^2^*$  on the board] Okay? The energy, in a unit of matter, is equal to the number assigned to it, times the square of the speed of light. Where did Jesus get all those fish? He had the E and knew how to make the M. The M doesn't exhaust the E. In fact, the physical universe is a little bitty thing in a great big God. Not the other way around, a little bitty God floating around in a great big physical universe. So now, when you sing that song we sung this morning to start out about the greatness of God, make sure you're sort of getting up there, okay? When you fast, you learn the reality of this to your body and that aligns you with what God is doing, and what God is doing is *what?* What would you say that was? What God is... What is the kingdom of God? It's what God is doing. Now then, you come to know it, and be aligned with it, in an experiential way that shows up in your life, shows up in your

life. [\* - #6 @ 28:30; #8 @ 55:50; *The Allure of Gentleness*, 77-79; *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, 53; [The Veritas Forum, Stanford](#) @ 44:50]

And I've had many many generations of ministers go through my seminars and write back, "something different is happening." I suggested to a group of ministers once that they might fast before they preached. One of them wrote me a letter and said, "My lady that takes care of the tape says, 'I don't know what you're doing, but keep doing it, because the tape ministry has doubled and tripled!'" Now see, that's characteristic because this isn't something you can control. You can align yourself with it, but the effects are from another world. Incidentally, by the way, it will teach you how to remain sweet and strong when you don't get what you want. Would that be a plus?

**Q:** [1:02:10} It goes against Mom's good counsel to eat a good breakfast?

**Dallas:** No. This just tells you a little more about what breakfast is. And you will learn—you have to grow in this, okay? Because your mind has to get straightened out and all of that. You will learn that you will not be hungry. You'll feel differently, but you won't be hungry, after you learn. Now that's habit, you know. When you start, "Oh, I'm hungry, I'm gonna die!" But in James's language what happens is you simply develop a new train of sensations, and I would add in the spirit, in a way that James doesn't, but he was not opposed to that by any means. I suspect you'll have to deal with him in Heaven. He's a fascinating person to get to know if you don't know William James\*, you'll find it really interesting to know him. But it...see it has all of these...just remember a discipline is what you do to enable you to do what you can't do by effort. Now we have to come back tomorrow and spend time specifically on discipline, what it is, 'cause we have to go away from here with the concept clear and not just a list of things that we don't understand. But that's the basic idea. And now I say it because I want you to see that's what fasting is. Fasting is something that's in your power, though when you start you may think it's not—it is—that enables you to do what you can't do by direct effort—and among those things is, being sweet and strong when you don't get what you want. That's an aspect of the Cross. But that only works because in fasting you are actually feasting on the invisible landscape\*\*.

[\* - William James - see Sessions 3 @ 40:50; #7 @ 49:15; #8 @ 11:10-12:55, 24:30, 31:25, 1:02:55; #10 @ 44:45, #12 @ 52:00]

\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

~ ~ ~ **End of Session 8 @ 1:04:31** ~ ~ ~



**Session 9 – “Fruit of the Spirit, Discipleship, Disciplines”** [1:07:53]  
[“Peace, Joy, Hope, Faith & Love; 3 Aspects of Discipleship”]  
[Dallas reading a Beatitude someone wrote and asking for others]



“Blessed are the old for theirs is abundant life and joy in the kingdom of Heaven today and forever,” right. Blessed are the old. One of the saddest things that I have to deal with is faithful servants of the Lord who have grown old and think their life is at an end and they become depressed and discouraged—they feel useless. That’s a very unfortunate vision of what their life is about. But there it is, and, again, it comes from a failure to understand the gospel. They have got a gospel that does not provide them an adequate view of who they are, why they are here, and where they’re going. And, of course, the whole cultural system is set against it. I mean, you have to have something really going for you if you’re not to be overwhelmed by the *negative* attitude toward being old that is surrounding you all the time. That’s a good beatitude. Anyone have another one they’d like to share with us?

**Student:** Blessed are those without health insurance. Because they shall be cared for.

**Dallas:** That’s a good one. You’re not blessed because they don’t have it, but they’re blessed because they’ve got something else. And now, you always have to be careful with people who hear these things because they’re saying, “Well, you don’t need to do anything about people in need. Blessed are the poor, so if they’re blessed, why bother with ‘em?” It’s not exactly the message.

**Developing Christian Character**

[0:02:40]

Okay. Now, I want to...we’ve been talking about the body, [[#8 - “Transformation of the Mind & Body”](#)] and I want to now shift back to talk more about the concept of discipline and what it means in terms of our development. I want to talk about the Fruit of the Spirit as we refer to them because they are so essential in developing Christian character. The Fruit of the Spirit constitutes the framework and foundation of holy character: love, joy, peace, hope, faith, life—not as efforts nor as acts but pervasive conditions of the entire person. So this is what we’re aiming at. We’re not aiming at behavior modification. There will be some of that, but that is an outcome, that is an *effect*, not a cause. And we have to watch ourselves in our groups and [as] individuals and not get so anxious about modifying behavior that we don’t get to the substance of character, human character. Character consists of the deep habits of the *whole* personality that we can



benefit from looking at James on. Character *is* habit and it can be modified. And, now, the primary things [you] have to do when you're changing habits, is to keep on thinking in terms of joy, and peace, and hope, and faith, and light. Now, you know there's a string of fruit of the Spirit but you will realize if you study this that some of them, some parts of the fruit— and there's just one—are more important than the others.

## Peace

[5:00]

And, actually, the first thing that you need to get people into is peace. Peace. And that is why Romans 5 starts out with, "*Being justified by faith we have peace with God*" because that's the primary war. Now, once you get peace with God, then the war will break out in *you* because now you're gonna have to come to terms with all that stuff that's in you that's at peace with God. God has forgiven you, and you are no longer at war with him. But you have a complex system of personal and social things that are not aligned with him. And so now the problem is — and I would just suggest...again now...look, we're in an area where we can disagree about how you go about this, so I'm just, I'm just telling you, if you, if you want to begin to help people, you have to start with peace.

What is peace? How would you define it?

I would say...I'm not going to keep on saying this. But I mean I put these things out with the assumption that you are going to take 'em and work on 'em and the wording you may come up with, well, may not be quite... But what I find generally is people have no wording to start with and so you can just think of what I give you as something to start with, okay?

So, I would say peace is essentially *rest in goodness*. Peace, is rest in goodness—not bad to say "soul rest" because the soul is, as I have indicated in a certain respect, the most fundamental part of personality. Jesus said,

*"Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart and you will find rest unto your soul."* (**Matthew 11:28-30**)

That means it will be deep rest and it will hit your body. It will hit all of your...it will hit your thoughts, they'll stop chasing one another around like a dog chasing its tail. You will come to emotional rest and you will be at peace with others. It's not an accident that the **Book of Hebrews**, again, says, "*Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*" (12:14)

Now, there’s a lot of non-peace out there and you’ve got a lot of non-peaceable people—people who are not resting in goodness, so that’s a challenge. So, you “follow peace with all men so far as lies within you.”

**(Romans 12:18)** But to be at peace with others, to not live in a confrontational posture, especially with those who are nearest to you, is a great attainment and it’s the foundation of much that we want to see in terms of doing the things that Jesus said to do.

**Hebrews 4** talks about “*the rest of God*”. We enter into a rest. We may *not*, as Hebrews 4 indicates. It’s something we have to make *sure* that we enter into the rest of God — the rest that God has provided.

It talks about sabbath in connection with rest and that’s essentially the point of the sabbath, is to cease from your own deeds. Now, in order to do that you have to have come to a place where you are beginning to trust God because otherwise you will keep hacking away at things and the Sabbath is designed to put an end to that for a brief while. Sabbath really means that you rest in the goodness of God, you trust Him, and you know perhaps that there are many sabbath’s discussed in the scriptures. There is a sabbath year and the whole point of the sabbath year was to trust God—to let his provision be there to provide for *you*. Now, working that out in a contemporary society structured the way *we* are, where we don’t do food, we do money. And how do you take a sabbath from making money? See, that’s a different kind of an issue. But really, the point is to help us come to grips with our dependence on God however that works out, and it’s not so much the money as where it comes from that we have to think about. But peace means a rest in goodness — that the goodness is there; it is God’s provision — and I don’t particularly know where it comes from perhaps, but I can rest in it.

## Joy

[11:50]

Now, if you are peace you very likely will have joy. It’s very difficult to think of the elements of the Fruit of the Spirit as independent of one another. You might readily think that a joyless peace would not be much of a peace, and joy without peace is probably something closer to hysteria. So you need to think of these things together as we discuss them.

Joy (def.) is a pervasive and firmly established sense of well-being

Peace is rest in goodness. It has to do fundamentally with a posture of the will. Joy is not so much a posture of will, it is a *condition* of the person with a certain feeling tone.

Joy is not a feeling. None of the Fruit of the Spirit are feelings, and we really need to know that. And if we don't know that we will wind up trying to cultivate a *feeling* instead of cultivating a condition. A feeling is different from a condition. The Fruit of the Spirit involves a number of different conditions and I would say with Joy — a pervasive and firmly established sense of well-being. Now, obviously that would go with rest and goodness, okay?

So now, if we're going to teach people how to do what Jesus said, this is what we look at. And I'm hoping that you immediately see what a difference this would make, just with these two things, and we want to go through a few more of them, here, what a difference that would make in action. And Jesus' joy, you know, he said to his people when he was getting ready to leave them, "*My joy I give unto you and I'm giving it to you in a way that your joy might be full.*" (**John 15:11**)

When is your joy full? When you can't...don't have a place for any more. Your joy should be full and when he said, "I'm giving you my joy", I'm sure that was not something that they fully comprehended. But, I think we should assume that they knew him to be a joyous person. And later on, looking back, they say, "*For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of God.*" (**Hebrews 12:2**)

Paul, in his discussion of the treasure and the vessel says, "*sorrowful yet always rejoicing.*" (**II Corinthians 6:10**) Joy is consistent with pain. Joy is consistent with suffering. Pleasure isn't. Pleasure is a feeling. Joy is a condition. There are some feelings associated with it, as with peace. But again, these are conditions of the self not feelings.

## Hope

[16:05]

Peace. Joy. Hope. What am I saying? This is what we aim at. We're aiming at bringing people into a place of peace, joy, and hope.

**Q:** [16:25] Where does cynicism play into that? Is cynicism defeat?

**Dallas:** Cynicism is a defense against deadness. Because the cynic in cynicism experiences movement. What is the cynic saying? The cynic is claiming a certain kind of superiority over what they are cynical about. They say, "Oh, this may take you dummies in but *I* know what it is." And then they will tell you what it is. So, cynicism is actually a defense against hopelessness. And, of course, if it were all pervasive, it would kill you because you would be cynical of food and you wouldn't want to eat it and

you..."Aw food that's...what is that? That's not anything good. Really there's nothing good. It's all appearance and I see that."

## Faith

[17:45]

Well, we need to mention also Faith and Love, I didn't mention them first because I think it is important to understand that in the structure of the person that we're working on we need to aim at where people are and they are normally in a situation where they don't the peace and joy and hope. Now, it may be the root of the problem is faith, but probably not. Faith is big but "*if I have faith so as to move mountains and have not love, I'm nothing.*" (**I Corinthians 13:1**) So how faith enters here is something that I'm not sure how to express, but let's understand what faith is.

Faith (def.) readiness to act as if the goodness presupposed in hope is real and reliable. And here, there's a lot of scripture we could work with but you begin with faith by hearing a good word.

**Q:** Would you re-say what faith is?

**Dallas:** I'll try. *Faith is readiness to act.* And maybe you can just pause *there* for a moment 'cause that's generic faith. That's the kind of faith I said yesterday you have in those chairs [[#4 @ 29:30](#)] — you're ready to act as if something were true. But more specifically, it is readiness to act as if the goodness presupposed in hope is real and reliable. It's *there* and you can count on it. And so now, you start out, you hear the good news of God, God loves the world, God is good, and that suggests a little hope. But you only come to know the goodness you're hoping for by acting on it. Faith is not opposed to knowledge, it is something that leads to knowledge on the one hand and something that rests on knowledge on the other. But it does presuppose the readiness to act as if the goodness that you're hoping in is true. And that's a matter of degree.

The man who brings his tormented son to Jesus. (**Mark 9:17-27**) Well, he had some hope or he wouldn't have done that. It may have been nine-tenths desperation, but he brought because he thought there was something good here. And so he comes to Jesus and then Jesus challenges his faith and his response is, "*I believe. Help Thou mine unbelief,*" (v. 24) and you know, that's where you want to say hallelujah. I mean, you don't have to be perfect in faith. As you go—step forward— your faith grows and you're able to know more of the goodness that you come to hope in.

Now, I will list last, here—and here, I'm listing things we're trying to move people *into* as a basis for behavior modification if you wish. So we don't

aim...we know the modification will happen. It will happen. But we know that you have to *change* things in order for it to come to pass. And then, of course, that's where we get into *how* and that's where we start thinking about the body and the mind and how they interact and we'll have more to say about that later.

## Love

[22:30]

So the final thing I list is simply Love. I don't list it first because Love is actually, I think, a kind of comprehensive thing that includes much of the others. I think **1 Corinthians 13** tells you that story. I mean, Paul, in 1 Corinthians 13 just talks about love but then when you get to looking at it you find almost everything else there. I think that's because love can only be supported in terms of these other elements and then, of course, it turns out to be a huge support in its own right. But love, now, as I have said before\*, Love (def.) is engagement of the will for what is good. Goes beyond Faith, but, Faith works by Love. How does faith work by love? Well, Faith is readiness to act as if the goodness presupposed in Hope is real. Now then, when we get to Love we're not just ready, we're acting. Love is engagement of the will for what is good. You love something if you *seek its good* and we've talked a good bit about that already,\* so I won't spend much time on that. [\* "Love seeks what is good" - #4 @ 17:40]

## The Fruit of the Spirit

[23:50]

Now, the remaining elements in the Fruit of the Spirit that are listed—I think there are nine of them all together in **Galatians 5:22-23**, long-suffering, kindness, and so on—I think they are more or less consequences of the five things that I've listed here [Peace, Hope, Joy, Faith, Love]. But it's also to be said that they turn around and reinforce them. And it's so important to understand that there is one Fruit of the Spirit. It consists of a complex of conditions that reinforce one another. Some, however, are more important than others and the five that I've mentioned, I think, are the most important ones.

## Our Hopeless Modern Thought & Life

[24:40]

But, for example, if you can imagine it, I think it's hard, but if you could imagine someone having Peace, Joy, Hope, Faith, Love, but no self-control. Can you imagine that? No. That's about as bad as having Joy without Hope. What's that? Well, actually, that is an interesting description of most of modern thought and life, is the attempt to have joy when there's no basis in hope. And if you look at the changes in modern art in the 1800s and the 1900s and watch how the novel, for example, about 1920 suddenly becomes

a different type of thing and ask yourself what has happened, you realized what happened was hope disappeared. Hope disappears roughly with the First World War and when you know what happened then, you will understand why that became a literary phenomena and similar things had happened in painting and in music a little bit earlier, but they basically go together. And beauty disappears from art and you have lengthy philosophical discussions about whether or not art has anything to do with beauty. Well, Beauty (def.) is goodness made sensibly present. Beauty always elicits hope in goodness. Try to be depressed and look carefully at a beautiful rose. Just try it. And why do we put flowers in depressing situations? So, you live in a culture where beauty has been dismembered and dismissed. You've lost something.

Now, of course, common sense often sustains beauty beyond the eggheads and that's just natural human nature expressing itself. But, beauty actually turns out to be a very important spiritual discipline and that is because it is goodness made manifest to the senses. Now, as people become more and more hopeless, then what is presented in the arts is not beauty, but often very terrifying things. I don't know if any of you know the painting of Francisco Goya. They're a good illustration, or Picasso's "Guernica" - the picture of the bombing of a Spanish village. But, you see as hope disappears from the world, then the capacity to have faith and love is replaced by the willingness to present what is terrible and to use the arts just for that. Now, I'm not saying you shouldn't do that. I do believe firmly the ugly is an aesthetic category. But you want to try to keep life generally, including the arts, in the framework of these five things that I've been mentioning.

Okay, well I hope that will help you think about what we're aiming at when we do discipleship and then we speak the gospel and when we live what we do we are primarily aiming at living in these five things that I've mentioned. And if you lose that, you'll wind up with a joyous religion with no peace, fake hopes, not much faith, and no love at all. Ingrid, please speak.

**Q:** [29:43] I just have a personal comment. What you are saying is so common...I watch with great grief as Christian parents discourage children from being in the arts, and creative writing, all that, and yet how important that is for them to be the lights in the world as filmmakers as an antidote to all that weakness.

**Dallas:** That's right. Artists have the hardest time of any social group in the church. And it's tragic. Well, maybe the's too strong a statement. But they have a very hard time. Someone else had a hand up. Yes.

**Q:** [30:39] - I've been listening to this and I think I read it in one of your books. So then, it seems that all five are based on trust that God is good?

**Dallas:** If you don't have that you'll go nowhere because you'll never come to peace and rest in goodness.

**Q:** [30:53] And even the joy that your current situation is good or for your good.

**Dallas:** That will require some hope and that hope will have to rest upon the peace of a good God. And now that's why, when you're talking with people generally, **the problem of evil** as it is discussed, is nearly always the first thing that comes up because it threatens the goodness of God. And without the goodness of God there is no peace. And the rest of the stuff won't come along either. Thank you. Yes?

**Q:** [31:33] Peace is essentially rest in goodness. Is that synonymous with abiding concept in **John 15**? Is that another way to describe peace?

**Dallas:** The sufficiency of the vine to the branches is an illustration of resting in the goodness of God and has a lot of instructive elements in it. But **the assurance of the goodness of God lies back of everything and so the attack on it is arguably the most fundamental attack on faith and any possibility of goodness that has joy in it in the world.**

And now, of course, I trust you'll see grace in all of that because none of that is possible on our own.

## **Discipleship & Disciplines**

[33:55]

### **The Golden Triangle of Spiritual Transformation**

[transparency up on the screen]

So now let me begin to work a little more closely here with discipleship and discipline and start with this, some of you will have seen this before, it's in *The Divine Conspiracy*, (p. 348) that's what I call the Golden Triangle of Spiritual Transformation.





And with this, we're moving up now on disciplines and discipleship. What I'm saying here is that, if you're going to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, that's going to involve three essential things interacting, okay?

### The Action of the Holy Spirit

[33:35]

Now we haven't said much about Spirit, and the's purposive. In the choice of my title, "The Human Element in Holiness", I am addressing a deficiency in our teaching where everything is weighted to the Spirit as if He were going to do it. Now, I have injected from time to time that, of course, we can't do it on our own. And, so, we need to just emphasize that the action of the Holy Spirit is fundamental in all of this — the many dimensions of it, the new birth, the mind of the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit, the anointing of the Spirit, and so forth. This is just one way of giving a particular emphasis to the presence of the Kingdom. Kingdom has many instrumentalities. One of the most fundamental ones is the Holy Spirit.

What is distinctive about the Holy Spirit in relationship to the Son is that the Son is incarnational and the Holy Spirit is not. The Holy Spirit is spirit. We talked about that. That means it's unbodily personal power. Shows up in the first verses of Genesis, right? It is characteristic of the Holy Spirit to hover. And most of us, I think, will have had some experience of that. And it's very important that God be able to be present in this form in our lives and bring his kingdom with that. The Holy Spirit. Jesus said, *"If I don't go away, the Holy Spirit will not come."* (**John 16:14**) The Holy Spirit has some advantages over the incarnate Son. Of course, the incarnate Son has some advantages over the Holy Spirit. So, the Son is treated as the Logos and the Logos is the organizing principle that is present in the created world—that's the Logos. It is essentially incarnational. It is through the Son that

everything that is made was made. It's creational. It creates. This making any sense to you?

### Ordinary Events of Life

[36:35]

Ordinary Events of Life. Those are sometimes called temptations and tribulations. It is in the nature of the case. So, in **Romans 5:3** we read, "*We also exult in tribulations.*" That's an essential part of the growth pattern and that's why to grow spiritually, you don't want to try to get out of the world, and if you try to do it that way you will find the world right there where you've gotta wake up.

A very sensible monk once said to a person who said [asked] "What do you do up there?" He said, "We fall and get up, we fall and get up, we fall and get up." You cannot find a monastery where that isn't the rule. The wonderful old poem called "Fra Lippo Lippi" that was written by [Robert] Browning. And it's a lovely picture of life in the monastery. And it has all of the personal confusions and anger and disappointment and nagging and all of that that you would expect to find almost anywhere because it's still a human place— "Fra Lippo Lippi."

So, you don't go out of the world—you thank God for your place in the world. You claim it and you may want to say as Jacob did when he woke up, "What an astounding place this is. This is the doorway to Heaven. God was in this place and I didn't know it." (**Genesis 28:16-17**) You remember that story? Ties in with Jesus. "*What would you think if you see the angels ascending and descending upon the Son of Man?*" (**John 1:51**) Blew them away! Because it positioned the kingdom of God *right* here in the mess. It says, "Well, you know, maybe it's not a mess."

### Spiritual Disciplines

[39:05]

Now there are things that you have to do to be able to bear the Kingdom in the mess and the Spirit won't do it, and these are called disciplines. That's one word for them - the disciplines. And we need to think now, carefully, and get the concept right, and I know I've said a lot already about some of these things, but we can't afford to miss these concepts, now. Because the concept is what organizes things for us so we *know* what we're doing. Concepts are not bad, they're good.

So, planned disciplines to put on new bowels, guts, this is gut stuff, where your actions come from, and [pointing at the overhead] I give you here the the references to **2 Peter** where we're going to come back to that, now,

because that's such an important passage then **Colossians 3:12-17**: "*Put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humility of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another. If anyone has anything against someone else as Christ forgave you so also do ye put on the peace of God. Be thankful. The peace of God to which you're called in one body. Be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...*"

See those are things that we do in order to bring the fullness of life in the Kingdom. And then we have the Q: : "How do you do it?" and a large part of the answer is, "Well, you find activities that you engage in that actually change it" — and those are the disciplines.

### **Who is An Apprentice of Jesus?**

[41:30]

And, so let's get the concept here, and you get the concept through *disciple*.

[overhead transparency]

Who is an apprentice of Jesus?  
As Jesus' apprentice (disciple, student)  
I am learning from Him how to lead my life  
in the Kingdom of God as He would lead it  
if He were I.

I am with Him in all my circumstances  
learning to be like Him.

You notice the connection between discipline and disciple? So, who is a disciple, who is an apprentice? I use the word apprentice because it has a much more applied concept in it. An apprentice, you might be an apprentice to an accountant or a lawyer, or, they used to train people for clergy as apprentices. You wanted to be a clergy person, you apprenticed yourself to someone. Same way with the Law, and that's an interesting thing in itself.

Who is an apprentice of Jesus? Well, as Jesus' apprentice I am with Him learning to be like him. I'm learning from Him how to lead my life in the kingdom of God as he would lead it—my life—if he were I. How would He lead my life? I'm not learning to lead His life, I'm learning to lead my life—that's the one He's interested in and the one God is interested in. I'm learning to lead my life as He would lead my life if he were I.

Now, can you think that thought of Him leading your life? And you may have yourself categorized where you can't think that thought. For example, you may think he couldn't possibly be a woman. Well, what do you think? You

think He could lead your life? You have to work on that. I mean, really, because you're up against conceptual walls in your mind. You think of him on the cross—could that be a woman? They didn't usually bother to crucify a woman. They did sometimes, but they could get rid of them in a much more simple way. Could Jesus lead your life? Is there something about you that would make that impossible? That's a big bridge to cross otherwise you're going to have a hard time thinking of discipleship in a way that will lead where you need to go. That's the basic idea of the disciple.

## **Jesus and His Disciples**

[44:51]

Now, in Jesus' day that meant that you were physically with him and you followed him around the country. Some of you will know that nice piece "*In the Dust of the Rabbi*", and it's a good idea because it helps us get into the sense of what it meant to be chosen by a rabbi, which was an incredible thing for someone. And Jesus was very uncharacteristic in that he didn't go through the process that rabbis usually went through to choose his disciples. And in fact, the people that he chose were not the kind of people that rabbis chose to be their disciples. The apostles of Jesus are paradigmatic cases of the poor in spirit. Don't know what the poor in spirit is? Look at the apostles. And they were a pretty greasy bunch. But he judged character. He knew what he was doing and he had a purpose in choosing the ones he did. And then they were with him and that was their discipleship. They were with him learning to be like him and so they watched him and he taught, and then one day he said, "*Now you do it.*" Right? That's what he said wasn't it? Now you do it. And he sent them out and he told them to preach. What did they preach by the way? Jesus died for their sins? They preached what *he* preached. "*Repent for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*" *Exactly the message.* And he told them to manifest...and the biggest deal was casting out demons— that was the main thing. And you remember when they came back that's what they were jumping up and down about. He had to cool them off a little bit. But that was exciting. And some of them hit a real wall later. They got ahold of one they couldn't do anything with. Once you understand what's going on here this is *extremely* instructive to see how this is working. That's discipleship.

[48:00] Now, you'll notice the one thing he didn't tell them to do was to teach. Jesus' ministry was proclamation, manifestation, and teaching\*\*. He didn't tell them to teach. Teaching is where you not only know what you're *doing*, you know why it *works*. And they barely knew what they were doing. But they could proclaim.

[\*\* Session 1 @ 12:25; #9 @ 48:00; #14 @ 43:45]

So, now as disciples we are basically learning to proclaim, to manifest, and to teach and the teaching part means that we have to have understood, and, of course, accepted, the truth about the Kingdom of God and how it works in our life.

**What should we do as Ministers?**

[48:50]

How about try this? We should teach what Jesus taught in the manner he taught it. Doesn't that sound like a good idea? Now I'm pushing you a little bit here. Okay?

What should we do? We should teach what Jesus taught in the manner he taught it. Where would we learn to do that? By being his apprentices. Yes, but he's not here *now*. What's the answer to that one?

**Student:** [49:35] "*It's better that I go away.*"

**Dallas:** And what happens?

**Student:** The Holy Spirit comes.

**Dallas:** So, *if you have been raised with Christ.* (Colossians 3:1) He is here now, isn't He? Actually, in a better way. Among other things we get to profit from the disciples of the past including biblical ones and see what they did. That's discipleship. It's learning how to do what Jesus did in the way he did it by being with him. See what else we got here.

**Three Main Aspects of Discipleship** [Overhead]

[50:20]

1. Learning to do what Jesus did and what Jesus taught.
2. Learning to handle the ordinary events of daily life within the principles and power of God's Kingdom Rule.  
Ex. Running a business, a difficult committee meeting,  
a family dispute, writing a book,  
living through some political dispute.
3. Learning to act with God's power in bringing the Kingdom to bear on obvious human need, individual and social.

---

**1.) Learning to do what Jesus did & taught**

[50:20]

So, three main aspects of discipleship. The most important one in terms of progress is learning to do as he did and what he taught. We learn to do the things that Jesus *did* and taught. [[The Divine Conspiracy, p. 57](#)]

Of course, some of the things he did we can't do. That's okay. Most of them we can. We can take on his character and begin to exercise power of the Kingdom of God in ways that won't hurt us or hurt other people, and that's crucial, very important. And you can see how many people hurt themselves and others by having more power than their character can stand. Now, I don't know what you think would happen if you raised someone from the dead, for example. But I assure you it would change your life and not necessarily in ways that would be good. For one thing, you'd have a lot of people dragging dead people up to your door. That's just a little bit of it. And, so, it would put a strain on your character.

So, the first thing you do is, "learning to do as he did and to do what he taught". And that will take a while and you need a community to do that in and so forth.

## **2.) Handle Ordinary Events of Daily Life**

[52:25]

But, you also are "learning to handle ordinary events of daily life within the principles and power of God's Kingdom rule." See that's...you're learning how to do your business in the Kingdom of God whatever your business is. And learning how to count on and expect the presence of God to act with you. And you're learning how not to get out there on a limb by yourself and go it alone. That's really important then for us to understand that this is not, we're not talking about religion, we're talking about *life*. Discipleship is for *life*. It is for the world, in a good sense of the term, not for the Church. It's okay, it would help some to have the folks around the church be disciples. But we've already talked about that and found that that isn't necessary. But a lot of the difficulties we have might be solved if we tried that. And I put these things in a light way because it's so deadly serious that I don't want to stand up here and cry about it. I mean this issue of discipleship for all of us and the institutions we serve in is just so basic and heartbreaking. Because you wind up a Christian without being a disciple.

You don't have much in the way of promise laid on being a Christian, but a lot of promises laid on being disciples. And now the fact that it is total life transformation — see that, refocuses the meaning of faith and all the other things we talked about here, so that it is our entire life that now we're bringing with us into the Kingdom of God, and the learning has to go on in that. So when I'm "*running a business, in a difficult committee meeting, a family dispute, writing a book, living through some political issue,*" that's the place of discipleship. And I think probably the most important thing I have to say to you about this is precisely that: the place of discipleship is where you do your business. And I have tried to represent this a little better here.  
[changes transparency]

**In All Things of Daily Life**

[55:45]

----- [Screen shot of transparency] -----

"Whatever you do, speaking or acting, do it on behalf of Master Jesus, thus expressing your thankfulness to God through Him." **Colossians 3:17 (See Deuteronomy 30:9)**

In order:

- I. Your **Family**
- II. Your **Playmates** and **Neighbors**
- III. Your **Job**

The redemptive community is not your life, but fits and maintains you for life.

It is to make you a student of Jesus.

It is to surround you in Trinitarian Reality.

It is to teach you how to do

*"All things whatsoever I have commanded."* Matthew 28:18-20

-----

A place of discipleship where we find the Kingdom "in the all things of daily life." So "whatever you do in word or deed, do in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," the Master, Jesus, "expressing your thankfulness to God through him." Now, that's **Colossians 3:17** and that's the outcome of 1-16. Sums it all up. So after you've gone through all those things I've quoted several times, a main part of that, but this is where it comes out.

Now how many things does all things leave out? And that actually traces us back to the point to where I said, "Can you imagine that Jesus would be living your life?" Is that possible? *All things. "Whatever you do in word or deed do it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."*

"In Jesus Name"

[57:00]

So that means every time you start to do something you say, "in Jesus' name." Think that'll do it? I have people say "Why do people end their prayers by saying 'in Jesus' name?'"

Could you say "in Jesus' name" without it being in Jesus' name?



Could it be in Jesus' name without you saying "in Jesus' name?"  
What does it mean to do something in Jesus' name?  
Can you put it into other language?

Well, what does it mean when someone does something in your name? You know what Power of Attorney is? Someone has power of attorney, they have entree into your life. And hopefully they would do things that you wanted done and they would do things that you wanted done and they would be able to use your resources to do it. Isn't that true? Yeah, that's true.

Now, when you do something in Jesus' name you are doing something on his behalf, and with his resources, that's what it means. And when you do something on his behalf and [with] his resources then you are tied into ,the Kingdom. And that is why when you watch, especially the early chapters of the **Book of Acts**, you see people learning to act in Jesus' name. Now, Jesus *told* them to do that.

### **Acts 8:5-12**

[59:00]

Philip went down to the city of Samaria and *began* proclaiming Christ to them. **6** The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing. **7** For *in the case of* many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of *them* shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed. **8** So there was much rejoicing in that city. **9** Now there was a man named Simon, who formerly was practicing magic in the city and astonishing the people of Samaria, claiming to be someone great; **10** and they all, from smallest to greatest, were giving attention to him, saying, "This man is what is called the Great Power of God." **11** And they were giving him attention because he had for a long time astonished them with his magic arts. **12** But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.

Listen to Acts 8:12. You get an interesting version of the gospel here. This is old Philip rattling around Samaria. Now they had some big meetings up in Samaria, you remember, some really significant times. And Philip, maybe he heard that they were supposed to go to Samaria, and so he goes, and God went with him. And **verse 5 of Acts 8** "*Philip went down to the city of Samaria...and got the woman under the well to develop a musical group and they started having meetings...and he was proclaiming Christ to them and the multitudes of one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip as they heard and saw the signs.*"

Now, he wasn't just proclaiming, he was manifesting. He was manifesting. And it's hard to hold that stuff down. When the Kingdom is there, usually some things start popping, and often things that no one expected. *Sometimes we expect them. "For in the case of many who had unclean*

*spirits they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice...*" (enough to upset a service) "...and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed and there was much rejoicing in that city..." And old Simon Magnus tried to get in on it but they were paying much attention to Simon Magnus on the one hand because he was Magnus—great—they thought. "But when they believed Peter [Philip]..." Now, what I want you to get out of this verse is what Peter [Philip] was preaching. "When they believed Philip preaching the good news about..." What? "...the kingdom of God and..." what?

**Student:** The name of Jesus.

**Dallas:** Okay. Now, why was the name of Jesus good news? Because it gave them access to the Kingdom. Because they were acting on behalf of Jesus. They were acting for what *he* wanted and from *his* resources and the name of Jesus was part of the good news. Now, it'll be profitable for you at some point to take this idea of the name and think about it. You ever hear an old hymn, "Take the name of Jesus with you child of sorrow and of woe? It will joy and comfort give you. Take it then, where ere you go. Blessed name, oh how sweet. Hope of earth and hope of Heaven." We need to know how to work in the name of Jesus. Doing it isn't a matter of saying, "In Jesus' name." It's where we're living, and that's what comes with discipleship, is we learn how to live in that wherever we are. And many people have learned that and there are people who practice it today. They learn how to conduct their business, carry out their research, do whatever they're doing in the name of Jesus. That's discipleship. That's discipleship.

### **3.) Learning to act with God's power in bringing the Kingdom to bear on obvious human needs - individual and social. [1:03:30]**

Now, quite naturally since that is the case and these three things [puts up "Three Main Aspects of Discipleship" transparency] that I'm putting up here, they're not actually not separable. You know, when you try to teach stuff you have to, you kind of have to pick things out and say you look at these but they're not necessarily separate.

Learning to act with God's power in bringing the Kingdom to bear on obvious human needs - individual and social. That's what we're learning as disciples. We're learning how to do that.

So, in our family, yes. With our playmates and our neighbors. On our job—job is spelled the same way as Job and a lot of people, you know Johnny Paycheck? "*Take this job and prauck!*" See, hatred of jobs is epidemic. And beyond that, hatred of where one is stuck in life.

I have been in areas of the United States teaching where every preacher you came across was just hanging on until retirement. And I don't make fun of them. Because they're in a tough position, in a tough position. And maybe they've been pushing all their life trying to hope something would happen but didn't know how to go about it and so they don't really have a hope of earth and joy of Heaven.

And a job, that job deal, and now in the light of that think [he refers to the screen] "the redemptive community is not your life..." The Kingdom of God is your life. The Church is not the kingdom. That mistake has been made repeatedly with terrible results. *"The redemptive community is not your life but fits and maintains you for life."* *The church is to help you become a student of Jesus. It is to surround you with Trinitarian reality. It is to teach you to do things whatsoever. That's what it's for. The church is for discipleship, discipleship is for the world. The kingdom is in the world. The church is in the kingdom—should be. But when Jesus said go and make disciples of all nations he did not say go and plant churches. Churches are a natural outgrowth of beachheads of the kingdom. It's a rather different picture and if you plant a church and it's not a beachhead of the kingdom *rots-a-ruck*— it's going to be hard sledding.*

Now, if you're good looking and slick you can build a church. You can build a church, you can build a church. But it will be not a manifestation of the Kingdom most likely. Such statements always have exceptions, so please understand that. Okay. Should we take a break? Let's take a break. Don't stay too long, please. Now we've got to talk about disciplines, okay? Because *disciplines* are for *disciples*.

[Videos #11 - "The Will & Disciplines:"  
#12 - "Disciplines"  
#13 - "Disciplines: What we can learn"]

~ ~ ~ **End of Session 9 @ 1:07:53\*** ~ ~ ~

**Session 10 — "Relationship of Mind & Spirit" "V-I-M & The Will"**

[1:16:22\*]



That last chorus is profoundly true: "The things of the earth grow strangely dim" and then, there's another sense in which the things of the earth grow strangely clear. [Video jump cut at 0:00:18]

The visible landscape\*\*—is God's creation. It's good, and we need to see it for what it is. But we can only do that if we have got it positioned will within the other landscape.\*\*

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

**"The Cross" by John Calvin**

Now, last evening, or at some point, there was a discussion about the cross in Calvin. [He first referred to Calvin in #2 @ 25:00] And so I went back and studied especially the section on patience and cross bearing and there really is a troublesome ambiguity in this. [Calvin & the Cross #15 @ 29:00] His main theme is *thee* cross. And *the* Cross is not a difficulty. But then he talks about different "crosses" for different people. And on page 55 of the little booklet [*Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life, John Calvin*], he's talking about why people have different experiences and some are afflicted in ways that others are not and he says, "*The reason why we see different persons disciplined with different crosses: The heavenly physician takes care of the well-being of all his patients. He gives some a milder medicine and purifies others by more shocking treatments. But he omits no one for the whole world without exception is ill.*"

So, all you have to do is go back and read all that's he's saying and you'll see that when he talks about taking *thee* Cross, he is talking about something that is the same for everyone. Right? *Thee* Cross is the same for everyone. And *thee* Cross is laying aside your will in favor of the will of God. That is the Cross. That's the one that you have to take or you can't be his disciple. Right. And, in the hymns, "the cross of glory towering over the wrecks of time," that isn't your particular flat tire. So, you have to be careful with him and also you have to be careful, I think perhaps, beyond his real intentions. Because he sometimes talks as if the bad things that happened to you are directly brought upon you by God. And in his zeal to do justice to God's sovereignty, he tends to underestimate, and not sufficiently give importance to what in theology we call secondary causes. And you wind up

having Him the doer of the evil deeds that cause you difficulties. So, those two things and thanks to our friend over here who takes our picture

(and I'm sorry, I'm so bad on names) but I, uh...which?

Videographer: Aaron

Dallas: Aaron. Okay, Aaron. Thank you Aaron. It was a good point and I'm sure it was something that everyone is feeling. The sovereignty of God does not come in the form of inflicting evil actions and bad things on people. It comes in His capacity to bring things out for good no matter what happens. That is how the sovereignty of God relates to the difficult things that turn out to be crosses, *in the plural*, as he [Calvin] and other people use that. So I urge you, don't confuse *thee* Cross with the crosses. Now, I want to talk more about this. I think in the morning I'd like to sort of systematically go through this book. So if you think to bring it with you, do that.

### **Topics Going Forward**

[5:30]

Someone made copies of the little prayer that I put up at the end of the last session and I think it's a great idea and really you might want to think of *how* you would word this for today, and make a plaque, and put it up on your wall. It would be a good exercise.

And just to keep our continuity, we came up to discipleship and disciplines and we still have a little work to do on that and we'll try to finish that this morning. [Sessions 12 & 13] And then I want to hand this out now, because I may get to it before lunch, who knows? And if you just make sure everyone has a copy of that. It is a transparency and I just decided it would be too hard for you to get it off of this. There's too much information on it and I really want you to have it. Because now, when we get done with disciplines I want to talk about the Sermon on the Mount. Because if you're going to teach people to do what Jesus said, right in the middle of the road in front of you is the Sermon on the Mount, and you have to figure out what to do with it. [Sessions 13 & 14]

So we want to be sure and spend time on that and then after doing that I will want to take some time with a particular thing that Jesus said and talk to you in detail about how I would teach someone to do that. [Session 16 at 39:15] And then the final move will be trying to transfer all of this to our congregations. [Session 17] And there are quite difficult things to be dealt with there. I won't talk to you about all of them but just talk to you about how you might go about it if it struck you that it would be a good idea. And then, we'll see, whatever else we're able to manage. But that's the deal.

**V-I-M — A Reliable Pattern of Change**

[8:00]

----- [Overhead transparency] -----

**Vision**

1. Of the Kingdom of God and your life in it
2. Character goals
3. Power—your empowerment

**Intention**

To actually fulfill the vision

**Means**

1. For realizing the vision
2. Spiritual Disciplines effectively implemented

-----

Now, we've talked about this and alluded to it but it's too important to run the risk of you not getting it clearly. This is in chapter five of *Renovation of the Heart*. Now, we've talked about this but it's too important and I want to just spend a very brief moment on it because this is a scheme that is built into human nature and God has provided for human life in general, not just with spiritual things.

**Vision**

[8:40]

If you would like to be a millionaire in five years you need a vision of what that is and why it's a good thing. If you would like to lose 25 pounds, same thing is true. And if you have a vision that is *right*, to put it simply, then you can form an intention. If you don't have a **vision** your **intention** will be weak and wobbly at best and it will not be clear what it is an intention of. And as a result, you'll not be able to implement it. And that will show up when you're not utilizing the means to do it.

And in many cases, socially especially, we have all kinds of **means** but no **vision**. That's the general truth about education in this country. At USC, we have one floor of a big building with all kinds of equipment for language learning. Almost no one who goes through that university comes out proficient in any language other than English and sometimes not that. And people all over the world learn to speak English better than a lot of us do with nothing but vision and intention—and a few means gathered here and there they learned it.

*Vision in the Church* — And so the same thing is true of our churches, often. I've already said to you once, [Session 1 @ 7:20] and some things I'd like to say to you over and over, and one of them is the Church always does best when it has the least. That's historically true. And it's true because as means proliferate vision, and intention diminish. Why is that? Because you start taking care of the means, you invest in them, you give your attention, you give your time to it. And suddenly you are a caretaker of some institution that doesn't know why it exists.

*Our Vision of Kingdom Life* — So now our vision, what is it? For following Christ and learning to do the things that he did. It is the vision of the Kingdom of God and your life in it that's the fundamental thing, that's why we start where we do. Then in that, character goals. What kind of person was Jesus? What's your vision? What would your life be like, for example, if you actually exhibited the things that you see in the Sermon on the Mount? What would that look like? That's your vision.

And then power, because, as Paul says in 1st Corinthians [4:20], "the kingdom of God is not in words, it is in power." And power is, of course, the capacity to accomplish things. The kingdom is the Kingdom of God and there's power. So our vision would be a vision of a life in which there was a power flowing that is of God.

## **Intention**

[13:00]

And then the intention. Now, this is—think of it like this—this is where you're preaching the gospel. This is where you're calling people to commitment. This is gospel evangelism tied to discipleship. You might like the phrase, "discipleship evangelism," that is, evangelism specifically for the purpose of making disciples. And that's where the intention... So when someone as we would say today, when someone gets saved, what was their intention? See, that's going to hinge on what this is. [points to the heading "**vision**" on the screen] And it is a real good Q: , a very troubling and dangerous Q: , to ask when people get saved, *what do they intend?* And, in many cases they intend to join the church. That's not a bad thing. But you have to ask, "Now, what is that going to do for you?" And you realize that if that is the intention, then the vision underlying it may be rather weak. And it may be that the vision is getting saved and staying saved in the sense of being acceptable to God minimally because you're forgiven.

Now, I was raised Southern Baptist and one of the things they asked you to do when you joined the church was promise that when you moved, you would move your letter, as they called it. And that meant you would go to a Baptist church and you would say, "I'm transferring my membership from



that church to this one—if you will have me.” And they would ask you questions like how you were baptized and so forth and maybe probably take you in, and then you’d make that same promise to that church. So, I just use that as an illustration—what is the intention that lies in the mind and spirit of the person who becomes a church member? Now, I don’t want to spend a lot of time on that, but I really want you to think about it. Because all this stuff we’re doing is, if you can use it.

## Means

[16:20]

Now then, if you have come through this in a certain way that I’ve been trying to suggest to you, you become a disciple and your vision includes life in the Kingdom of God, character, goals, power — you’ll need some **means**. This is where the **vision** and **intention** do the selecting. Because when you start selecting **means** you’re going to do it in the light of your vision and your intention, and that is why some people don’t select any means except perhaps sort of the standard advice that they might get from those around them. And it would be a good exercise for each of us to list those.

*Means of Membership in the Local Church* — Now, very interesting, because of the the real ramshackle condition of all of this —ramshackle’s a theological term. You see many local groups that no longer do membership. Now that’s really something to think about. And I’m not coming out for it or against it. But, you know this is happening. You may be, maybe actually at your little group there in Reseda, we don’t do membership. And there are various ways of thinking about that, and ordered sets and all kinds of things that go open and closed sets and you probably—since you are students and in this period you have heard about that. But you want to think about, now, what’s the meaning of that move? And that is associated, see? And not long ago people would have said, “*Well, look. If you’re serious about being a Christian you better join a church.*” And let me say, there’s something to that. How you spell it out, I’d rather not do it in the ways it was often done. But there’s something to that. I mean, we’re in *real* trouble on ecclesiology. I mean, *real* trouble. The incoherence in ecclesiology is one of the things that is most troubling for those of us who are trying to do the work of the Lord.

And also it is one of the things that makes a constant stream of people going up, up, up, higher church, higher church, higher church. Because what they’re doing is (in part), responding to the kind of vacuum. And they wind up joining churches that— they don’t believe what they teach—but they feel like there’s a real substance there and so it’s very interesting how this works.

Now, for our means what we're talking about, realizing the vision is spiritual disciplines effectively implemented. Now, I put up the [Golden] triangle [of Christian Spiritual Growth] [#9 @ 33:55] because I want us to understand that spiritual disciplines are not enough. They are part of a picture. I have these diagrams and you have to overlap them and put V-I-M in with the Golden Triangle and see what sense you can make of it. They do fit up and it's a good challenge to do that for you, individually —and I don't mean to get it right according to me. But think out those issues so you can act on them, and you can teach, and you can lead in terms of something that makes sense for spiritual growth. Or, if you like, spiritual formation.

**Discipleship at Work — Reigning at Your "Job"** [20:45]

Now, one of the things that I was dwelling on last time was "Where is the place of discipleship?" [#9 @ 55:00] And I said the place of discipleship is everywhere you are. But undoubtedly the main place of discipleship is where you work, and for two very simple reasons. One is you spend most of your time there, right? And if you don't do discipleship there you are relegating most of your active life outside the range of discipleship, and learning to follow Christ, and experiencing the Kingdom of God. So now we're back to Job, otherwise known as job. And it's very important to put that in place. Your job is not your life. So I have to add that and I wish I had time to talk more about that, we'll see what's left tomorrow. But your job is not your life. But it is the place where you spend most of your time. And that's why you want to understand that the place of discipleship is *mainly* there.

*The Church Discipling You for Life & Work — Well, what's the church about?* The church is about helping you understand how to do that. It isn't about finding something religious for you to do when you're *not* working. Now the other reason—not just your time—but the other reason is that's where you are *reigning*. You reign at your job. And you may have some serious doubt about that and that becomes a real problem because there are some other people reigning around you, and over you maybe, and under you. But if you get that idea of reigning you get it right now, in Kingdom terms, you're going to have something that will enable you to transform your job. And if you got a bad job the best way out of it is to do a good job with the one you got. And if we are faithful where we are, the Lord will promote us—and according to his wisdom, and not our wisdom where we're just trying to get out of something bad. And, so the old deal about "from the frying pan into the fire" often works. You want to let God move you. Same way with leaving a church. Never leave a church just for negativity. Leave a church for something better. And that requires judgment and a lot of other things and there is a time to leave a church so, I'm not denying that.

*The Curate of Glaston* by George MacDonald

[23:50]

I wanted to read you a few lines from a book by George MacDonald. And this is a trilogy called *The Curate's Awakening* and this is the volume called *The Curate of Glaston* and it's a chapter headed, "Divine Service". And it's not a rip-snortin' novel. They're not going to make movies of George MacDonald novels by and large—there's some that would do better than others—but he's a didactic writer with wonderful insights that kept him in constant trouble. But he had wonderful things to say that, actually, disqualified him to serve as a minister in the normal setting. And he's talking in Chapter 24 here called Divine Service about what that is. The name of this volume is *The Curate of Glaston*: g-l-a-s-t-o-n, and it's Chapter 24, and it's simply titled, "Divine Service." So what is Divine Service? And, going from where I just was you will know what's coming I'm sure.

*"When I use the phrase divine service," explained Paul Rath, "I mean nothing whatever about the Church or its observance. I mean, simply serving God. Shall I make the church a temple of idolatrous worship by supposing that it exists for the sake of supplying some need that God has or of gratifying some taste in him that I there listen to his word, say prayers to him, and sing his praises for his benefit? Shall I degrade the sanctity of the closet hallowed by words of Jesus by shutting myself up behind its door in the vain fancy of doing something there that God requires of me as a sacred observance? Shall I foolishly imagine that to exercise the highest, loveliest privilege of my existence that are pouring forth my whole heart in prayer into the heart of him who is accountable for me, who has glorified me with his own image, and called that serving God?"*

*'But,' interjected Drew, 'is not God pleased that a man should pour out his soul to him?'*

*'Yes, indeed, Dominus. But is the child who sits by his father's knee, looks up into his father's eye, serving that father because the heart of the father delights to look down upon the child? And shall the moment of my deepest repose, the moment where I serve myself with the life of the universe be called serving God? What would you think of a child who said 'I am very useful to my father, for when I ask him for something or tell him the I love him, it gives him such pleasure?'"*

Now...well, I better just keep going here.

*"When my child would serve me, he sees some need I have, jumps from his seat, at my knee finds what will meet my need, and is my eager, happy servant he has done something for his father. His seat by my knee is love,*

*delight, well-being, peace, not service, however pleasing in my eyes. Do not talk of public worship as a divine service. Search the prophets and you will find observances, fasts, and sacrifices, and solemn feasts of the temple were regarded by God's holy men with loathing and scorn just because, by the people, they were regarded as divine service.'*

*'But,' Mr. Drew replied, 'I can't help thinking that if the phrase ever was used in that sense there's no meaning of that kind attached to it now. Service stands merely for the forms of of public worship.'*

*The reply: 'If there were no such thing as divine service in the true sense of the word then it would scarcely be worthwhile to quarrel with its misapplication. But I believe that true and genuine service may be given to the Living God and for the development of the divine nature in man it is necessary that he should do something for God. And it is not hard to discover how. For God is in every creature and in their needs. Therefore, Jesus says that whatever is done to one of the little ones is done for him. And if the soul of a believer be the temple of the Spirit, then is not the place of that man's labour—his shop, his bank, his laboratory, his school, his factory—the temple of Jesus Christ? Where the spirit of the man is at work... Mr. Drew, your shop is the temple of your service where the Lord Christ ought to be his throne, your counter ought to be his altar, and everything laid on it with intent of doing as you can for your neighbor in the name of Jesus Christ.'*

I'll leave this here if you want to look at it. [referring to the novel's words.]

### **Your Vocation as a Divine Calling**

[30:20]

Now, in connection with that you want to be sure to look at the very last section in Calvin's book [*Golden Booklet of the True Christian Life*] which is on page 92-94. Be faithful to your divine calling because the views which MacDonald is expressing are actually the views of the Reformation. Luther's always talking about the plowboy and the milkmaid and how they are serving God in Holy Orders. You know about the priesthood of the believer? Today, I think most people suppose that means that *anyone* can do what the priests do—they can do holy services. That's not what the priesthood of the believer meant for Luther. The priesthood of the believer in Luther means that at your *labor*, whatever it *is*, you *are* a priest. Then Calvin picks up on that same thing. It's not unknown in other writers, but it was a prominent part of the Reformation teaching and of the theology that formed America in its earliest days, and the Puritans had remarkable teachings about your vocation as a divine calling. Now, I must move on to other things but the important point that I'm trying to make here is simply that if you're going to

be a disciple you can't omit your work, see? Your work, where you are, that is the place of discipleship.

Any comments or questions just about that? Yes, Sir.

**Q:** [32:30] In the context of the spiritual disciplines and the primary place being your work, would I then practice spiritual disciplines at work?

**Dallas:** Indeed, and the way that would work is that you would find ways in which what you do are disciplines. For example, [waving his hand over his shoulder toward the screen] we will go over the list here in a moment. One discipline for the spiritual life is service. And we'll see how that works. Another one is submission—and let's see how *that* works. And the list isn't complete.

So how can one *use* what one does anyway? And now, that's where you need the concept, what is a discipline? It's something in your power that you can do to enable yourself to do what you can't do by direct effort. [#8 @ 1:04:00] I'm hoping that if someone wakes you up at 2:30 in the morning and says, “What is a discipline?” you would rattle that off. That's the concept. And there is no closed list. And each of us in our peculiar places need to learn how—now we'll still need the times of solitude and so on of worship and fellowship and so on and sometimes that can be done at work. I want to talk to you more about solitude and silence in a moment. And one of the great things about **solitude** is you can practice it and learn it so that it becomes your constant presence, that you are in solitude wherever you go because of where you stand before God and that's one of the important outcomes. But there are ways that this is to be done at work. Any other comments or questions?

Yes, Sir.

**Student:** [34:52] Just that I wish I had heard this teaching earlier in my career. Only in later years in my career would I ask Jesus, “If you were me, how would you write this report?”

**Dallas:** Okay. That's right. That's right. That's where we want to be, and then we learn the things that will help us be available to Him and to others and it gives a holy calling on every vocation. Now, if you despise your vocation or your job and you think “this couldn't possibly be a holy calling...” That itself—then you need to do some reworking of the Kingdom—and of course, I don't know if there are various kinds of jobs that probably shouldn't be done. But there again my advice—unless it's openly criminal or immoral—I think if you're in Cosa Nostra [Sicilian Mafia] that would be hard

to do, or a bank robber, but in most occupations if you feel like it is not glorifying to God, well then, find a way to do it until God moves you out. Yes.

**Student:** [36:28] I've been a homemaker for many years and when you stay at home you get a lot of phone calls from solicitors and most people hate those calls and don't answer. One time I thought "Well, I'll answer it." I knew it was a sales call and it was about consolidating debt and I said, "We have no debt but is there anything I can pray for you?" And he was like, "Whoa! I make fifty calls a day and I've never had anybody ask me that..."

**Dallas:** You did a wonderful thing. You did a wonderful thing.

**Student:** And so I ended up praying for him over the phone and that was really profound to think I can even be Jesus to a sales call over the phone so it was really profound.

**Dallas:** Now, suppose you were on the other end and you have the job. And then you ask yourself "Could Jesus do *this*?" Now, don't move too fast. Well, again, if it's not illegal or immoral, He could do it. Yes, Sir.

**Q:** [37:57] It seems that the natural byproduct of leading disciples toward this type of discipleship would then be the healthy step would be we see social transformation. Can you speak to the fact?

**Dallas:** You said it. Ain't nothing more to say.

**Student:** There's a new move of raising social issues.

**Dallas:** Now you're getting into criticism. Good for you.

**Student:** We're missing a pretty vital step. We're getting our congregation to feed the poor for a weekend and that's it.

**Dallas:** It might have some effect on the poor and maybe thousands upon thousands of people who don't ever do anything for the poor might actually start effecting it. Maybe without knowing what they are doing but they are changing what they do at what they do.

**Poverty & Education** — Now, I am going to make a remark about something that is very complicated. I have been doing that anyway and I can't tell you all the things I don't mean by what I say. [\[5 1/2 minutes of insightful teaching and exhortation on our secular, hopeless culture.\]](#)

[39:18] One of the greatest sources of poverty in this country is mis-education. Most of those people who are poor go through some school and they are not enabled by that experience because of the way the system is set up by the people who are in the system. Now, the reason I apologize before I start talking about it because it is so complicated. Some of the best



people and Christians I know are trying do something in that system. They always do wonders for the children that they work with. But they are grinding against the system where most of it is absolutely harmful for the kids.

One dimension is "Secularism". Secularism is an absolute personal dead end and a social one as well. "*Whoopee, I'm secular.*" What comes next? Well, you are proud you are secular. What does that do for your life? What does that do in terms of hope and peace? I will tel you it does absolutely nothing. These little children who need hope and peace and love, don't get it. They decide, "*Who needs this. I'll sell drugs on the street. I'll sell my body on the street. I'll make money and so forth and so on.*"

Thank you my brother! That's the key.

We are going through a period where a lot of folks have discovered the poor and others have discovered trees and owls and they are turning "green". All of those things need to be attended to, they are vital.

[42:10] Go back to Genesis 1:26, folks that's the key verse of the Bible, not John 3:16. You can't understand John 3:16 unless you understand **Genesis 1:26**. That's the whole story.

[\* - 1 @ 42:50; 2 @ 20:48; 6 @ 30:30; 7 @ 10:00; 10 @ 42:10]

Why are the Rain Forests being systematically destroyed? What's back of it? Human need. The people who go in and cut down the trees and run the monkey off are not the fat cats that are making the money. It is poor people who somehow have got to find some way to to feed their families. Who is going to deal with that? You are not going to deal with that by protesting or passing laws up here or something of that sort. You to have think in different ways. You have to think, as we say, ecologically, in terms of the whole thing and understand why those people down there have to do what they do. And occasionally go in and kill of a few Indians.

[43:50] The story of Jesus crucifixion is so touching when you look at the details. There is one passage that talks about how the servants came by and slapped Jesus. The people who are always the "slapped" (slap-ees) found someone they could slap and it was Jesus. Now, that is a reflection of what goes on every day on earth. Every day! And who is responsible for that? For the most part, a very select group of people who establish and maintain the system that produces something like that. So, you need to have a gospel for the "up and in". Ok, enough.



## William James\* - The Will

[44:45]

[\* - William James - see Sessions 3 @ 40:50; #7 @ 49:15; #8 @ 11:10-12:55, 24:30, 31:25, 1:02:55; #10 @ 44:45, #12 @ 52:00]

They use to say that the mark of an educated person was that they knew the James brothers were not Frank & Jesse, they were William and Henry. That's not quite right. A lot of people who know it's William and Henry are not educated.

I would like to just quickly go through a number of passages and then a little comment on it.

You'll remember I said yesterday, when you think about getting a hold of the "System" with all the circles [[#7 @ 24:20 - the whole person diagram](#)], the primary things you want to get a hold of are the body and the mind. There are systematic ways in which these interact. We talked about the body last time. I now want to take about thought because the discussion of "will", if you've had a chance to look at it you know it really turns out to be a discussion of thoughts or ideas. And it is so important to understand how the will works off of thoughts. I want to point out a few passages and make sure you've put down a mark by them.

p. 415 [46:40] *"A supply of ideas of the various movements that are possible left in the memory by experiences of their involuntary performance is the first prerequisite of the voluntary life."*

What he is saying is that in order to act you have to have an idea of the action. There is a certain obvious point about this. He is building up to his main conclusion about how the "will" works. So obviously what his is saying, for example, a baby does not have much a will, nothing to speak of. He is saying they have not had enough time to build up a repertoire of ideas of actions to guide their impulses in such a way that they would actually be able to act.

His view is that for action to occur, the "will" has to have a direction and it can have a direction unless it has an idea, which would include sensations, feelings, all sorts of things. He is not using "idea" in a very precise way.

p. 418 [48:30] Look at his illustration about 8 lines down -

*"If I will to write Peter rather than Paul, it is the thought of certain digital (Dallas: 'hand, fingers') sensations of certain alphabetic sounds, of certain appearances on the paper, and of no others, which immediately precedes the motion of my pen."*

What brings the action about? There is a set of images and sensations and so on. *"If I utter the word Paul rather than Peter, it is the thought of my voice falling on my ear, and a certain muscular feelings in my tongue, lips and larynx which guide the utterance."*

Now, people normally do not think that. People normally think there has to intervene an act of a certain kind between the image and the act. That is what he calls the **"fiat"**. His view is that in some cases there is a fiat, but in most cases, the action goes directly from the ideas to the action. The "fiat" is a peculiar case where there is some kind of tension. This is discussed on down 41 (?) about the middle, you have a paragraph, *"There is indeed the fiat, the element of consent or resolve that the act shall ensue."* And this is, as he says, *"This constitutes the essence of the voluntariness of the act."*

Now, his view is that in my cases you don't act voluntarily. In picking up your pen to write someone, there may be nothing at all of a choice. The action flows directly from the idea. In some cases, this will be the case of deliberation, there will be an act and that is going to be for him, the realizing contrary images. So if you have an image of writing to Peter, and there's a ring of the doorbell, then you may wonder shall I ignore that and go ahead and write and shall I go to the door? In that case, there will be a fiat or a decision as he refers to it. But that is for him not the customary case. In the customary case, you go directly from the idea to the act.

Now I'm hoping that already you can begin to see how this applies to the case of discipline. But let's go on.

p. 421 [52:10] You see the heading there, "Ideomotor Action". Ideomotor is a phrase he uses to refer to the structure where you go directly from the idea to the action - "Ideomotor".

In the middle of the page, the italicized section, he asks,

*"Is the bare idea of a movement's sensible affects its sufficient motor cue or must there be an additional mental antecedent in the shape of a fiat, decision, consent, volitional mandate, or other synonymous phenomenon of consciousness before the movement can follow?"* His answer is "no".

I am not trying to defend this, I am just trying to give you something to think with here as we get back to our topic. And I think that actually he is right and that most of what we call is free action because no one is keeping us from doing it or something, is actually a direct response to the ideas that we have accepted.

[53:30] Nice illustration if it works on top of p. 422,

*"Whilst talking I become conscious of a pen on the floor or some dust on my sleeve. Without interrupting the conversation, I brush away the dust or pick up the pen. I make no expressed resolve, but the mere perception of*

*the object and the fleeting notion of the act seem of themselves to bring the act about."*

Now, if you are trying to come to grips with this, this is a good thing to look at. You think of how you do that. If you are talking with someone and you see a pen on the floor, do you decide to pick up the pen? If you see dandruff on your shoulder, do you have a deliberating process or do you just [he brushes his shoulder]? You can test what he saying by your experience. His point is, I've already made it - that in most cases at least, you go directly from the idea to the action.

So what is going to be really important, isn't it, is what idea you have? Most of life is filled with trivialities like a pen on the floor, dandruff on your shoulder, but those trivialities are what illustrate his point.

[55:15] The bottom of that same page p. 422,

*"In all this, the determining condition of the unhesitating and the resistless sequence of the act seems to be the absence of any conflicting notion in the mind."*

If other ideas show up with the same degree of prominence, then you will have a conflict. Suppose you are about to reach down and pick up the pen and you suddenly have the thought that some dignified person is addressing you. Then you have another idea and you may not pick up the pen. But, if you do have a conflicting notion of mind, then you have a problem with proceeding with the act.

I am trying to hold off of applying this to what we are mainly interested in but it is very hard because you can see immediately how this comes in to discipline and the issues of temptation and so on. But the inhibitory ideas change the situation.

[56:55] On p. 424, the middle of the page, the italicized section:

*"We may the lay it down for certain that every representation of a movement awakens in some degree the actual movement which is its object and awakens it in a maximum degree whenever it is not kept from doing so by an antagonistic representation present simultaneously to the mind."*

Now if there is an antagonistic representation, then you have to reach what we might call a decision. You don't normally reach decisions. I've talked about this before about for example driving a car. You don't want to be riding with a person who has to make a decision about turning the wheel, hitting the brakes, all that sort of a thing, checking their rearview mirror and so. You want to be riding with someone who does not in James' language who has conflicting notions like they are "twittering". That certainly causes

problems, doesn't it? Now, can you use that as an illustration of how where there ought not to be any hesitation? You have another thing and there is hesitation and you wind up running into somebody. Yes sir?

**Student:** [58:35] There is also a problem in that, taking the driving example, I have a standard transmission vehicle and I was driving my parents' car which is automatic and I went to change gears and slapped it into reverse.

**Dallas:** Oh, that's not a good. That just illustrates the case here. In this case, you needed an intervening idea. And I'm glad you said that because that is why I'm asking you to read this because I want you to see how that works and how it fits in with disciplines. Thank you. That's a good illustration.

The essence of James' view is you do not have ideas that do not have impulses associated with them. Actually, for those of you with philosophical interests, this is the basis of American Pragmatism - it is the interpretation of ideas. It doesn't imply pragmatism but it is one of things it is based upon.

It think it is fundamentally right and that's one reason why I and a lot of other people smarter than me put emotions and ideas in the same place in the mind. [See Renovation of the Heart, chapter 7.] The idea that there are just ideas that don't have any impulses associated with them is a mistake. I think it is part of a strategy to blind people to the consequences of their ideas.

[1:00:25] So, just to nail that down, on page 425, you see the italicized section there,

*"Movement is the natural immediate effect of the process of feeling (by that he means a sensation which includes emotions), irrespective of what the quality of the feeling may be. It is so in reflex action, it is so in emotional expression, it is so in involuntary life. Ideomotor action is thus no paradox to be softened or explained away. It obeys the type of all conscious action from it one must start to explain what sort of action in which a special fiat is involved."*

You got I trust the "fiat" deal comes up when you've got different ideas, and therefore different impulses. That is what you get on page 426 under the heading of "Action after Deliberation". Deliberation is a matter of moving back and forth between two or more different ideas. The "fiat" is what gets you out of that and really the only thing we have left to do much here is to figure out what the fiat is and how the fiat works. This is going to bring

out some rather deep and difficult issues but I think we can deal with them successfully for our purposes.

[1:02:05] Another comment on that last vane is at the top of p. 432 where he says, "*When I said a while back that consciousness is in the very nature impulsive, I should have added the proviso that it must be sufficiently intense in order to illicit action.*"

His point is it is there when it doesn't illicit action. He has a nice discussion here how it shows up in little ways, even bodily conditions, muscle twitching and body language, even if it doesn't lead to an action, it's still there and actually that is a very important kind of thing to learn. Yes sir.

**Q:** [1:03:05] This is all a matter of degree. It seems like there are some people who spend a great deal of time deliberating everything, even very small decisions. It seems like there might be one important idea that might be missing?

**Dallas:** That's he gets into he is calling here "Healthiness and Unhealthiness of Will". And such things, for example, as inability to respond to ideas sometimes because they are stronger than they should be or they are weaker than they should be. He is not going to say that it is all okay. There are conditions of the will. I take it that is what you are referring to. He tries to understand that in terms of how the ideas are acting in the person. It is a very important point because, for example, a person who has a compulsive problem, "Did I lock the door?" That's an idea problem for him but it come's out an unhealthiness of will. It's not just, "Oh, did I?" It is not just a problem of forgetting. Because very often the person will actually remember he did lock the door and still go check it. That is the sort of thing he is referring to.

**Student:** [1:04:40] I think of this pastorally or mentoring someone, at some level moving someone from automatic disobedience to deliberation is the point where you can really connect that.

**Dallas:** *Great! Good! Yes, that's it!* Of course, you want to understand again that when you preach and teach, you are doing idea work. [Session 8 @ 22:05] A lot of that is the care that you put in to it to make sure the hearer gets the idea. Again, this is a dimension of the human side of holiness. And if we are not careful, we will just try to tell a jerking story and hope the Holy Spirit will hit them. And it does happen but is that the modus operandi for a pastor or a parent for that matter?

**Q:** [1:05:45] When I hear this "consciousness in its very nature is impulsive, we should add the proviso that is it sufficiently intense"...

**Dallas:** Well, don't forget what you are saying but I want to step in there. The "sufficient intensity" is only with reference to bringing about action and

he wants to say it is impulsive even if it doesn't bring about action. That it has effects and so on. His view is an idea as such is impulsive not matter whether it breaks out into action. Now, if I have not thrown you off, please finish.

**Q:** [1:06:35] What it's raising in my mind is you often hear, "Did Jesus actually experience temptation? Could God have sinned?" My thought has been that it's true temptation but his consciousness of the presence of the Father was so intense, the fiat that he came to dismissed the other concept. So, wouldn't our job be to bring people into a consciousness of God's presence?

**Dallas:** You have brought us to something very important. Now, I have to go back and talk about temptation. [Session 12, "[Disciplines](#)" @ 51:00] This is so important. I want to do that after going through our list here a little bit more. But, what we want to do is to help people not get into temptation. Now, I'm going to raise one Q: about James here in a moment. But, that is is so very important.

*"Watch and pray the you enter not into temptation."* [Matthew 26:41] You don't want to be in temptation. Now, when you are in temptation, it's not the same for everyone. Jesus was never tempted to find a bottle of Jack Daniels like a confirmed alcoholic is. He was never tempted to engage in illicit sex in the way that many people are. Again, I'm coming back to that because we want to distinguish stages here that will helps us think about here.

p. 444 [1:08:30] "What Holds Attention Determines Action" [heading]

*"If one must have a single name for the condition upon which the impulsive and inhibitive quality of object depends, one had better call it their 'interest'. The interest is the title which covers not only the pleasant and the painful, but also the morbidly fascinating..."* (that goes back to your point on the back row there about the will that is messed up), *"...the morbidly fascinating, the tediously haunting..."*

You know you hear some jingle, *"It's a Small, Small World"* [Dallas hums and laughs. The class groans.] Now you'll have that the rest of the day.

Student comment: "Thanks for that."

[Dallas laughing], "Glad to help you out." [Students laughing.]

*"Even the simply habitual, in as much as the attention usually travels on habitual lines in what we attend to and what interests us are synonymous terms. It seems as we ought to look for the secret of an idea's impulsiveness not in any particular relation to which it may have to the paths of motor discharge for all have that, but rather in a preliminary phenomenon, the*



urgency namely with which it is able to compel attention and dominate our consciousness."

I'm talking about the human side of holiness. But you see when you read that, immediately it comes to your mind, that's where the Holy Spirit comes in or the power of the Word.

**Q:** [1:10:40] Would that include, "As a man or woman thinketh, so is he"? In this, what holds attention?

**Dallas** That is a proverbial way of expressing the thing here which James is trying to give a more sophisticated treatment to. The source of that is the proverb, "When you go to dinner with the King, put a knife to your throat." He may be saying, "Eat, eat." He may not be wanting you to "eat, eat". A little complication there. But then [James] Allen wrote the famous piece, "[As a Man Thinketh](#)". This is one of the places where new age stuff starts coming together with genuine spiritual formation principles.

[1:11:54] Bottom of p. 445, the last paragraph:

*"Will is a relation between the mind and its ideas."*

This is where you want to start being careful with him [James]. I don't think you can make this work out and I will say so in a moment. But it is a very important truth that whatever you finally make out a "will", it is the idea that runs the show. We will have to say in a moment something about - how does that work?

[1:12:33] Bottom of p. 446 italicized. James is a good writer in that if you just read everything he italicizes, you get it.

*"The essential achievement of the will in short when it is most voluntary is to attend to a difficult object and hold it fast before the mind and so doing is the "fiat".*

Now he is talking as though the "fiat" is how you hold the idea.

"Effort of attention is thus the essential phenomenon of will."

Let me say, I think he is right about that. Then you have to deal with how you manage that. Down about 10 lines on p .447,

*"The difficulty is mental, it is that of getting the idea of the wise action to stay before the mind at all when any strong emotional state is upon us, the tendency is for no images but for such is congruous with it to come up if others by chance offer themselves, they are instantly smothered and crowded out. If we be joyous, we can not keep thinking of those uncertainties and risks of failure which abound upon our path. If lugubrious, we can not think of new triumphs, travels, loves and joys, nor vengeful of our oppressors, communing of nature with ourselves, the cooling advise we get from others when the fevered fit that is on us is the most jarring and exasperating thing in life."*



He is so good the way he puts things.  
Well, I must finish this. Just one more, maybe two.

[1:14:45] p. 449 - *"The whole drama is a mental drama. The whole difficulty is a mental difficulty. A difficulty with an ideal object of our thought it is in one word to which our will applies itself, and idea if we let it go, would slip away, but which we can not let go. Consent to the idea's undivided presence - this the effort's sole achievement."*

That just entirely gives you what I want you to get for the purposes of discipline.

The rest of it is just illustration.

p. 451 - Nice summary to sum it all up. Please mark that for your attention but I can't take more time right now. Then he applies this to ethics on page 454 and following. I am going to leave that to you because obviously what he says has tremendous implications for doing the right thing, doing what we ought.

*It's time to take a little break...and we will move on from here.*

**~ ~ ~ End of Session 10 @ 1:16:22 ~ ~ ~**

Session 11 – ["The Will & Disciplines"](#)



[47:15]

## Choosing Our Ideas

The thought will have occurred to you, I think, of how you manage to choose your ideas. That's an important issue that James and others who take his kind of theory never quite deals with. Because you are not going to be able to pick your ideas without starting with others. If "will" is what he says it is, picking your ideas is an act of "will" and can only be done with ideas that are already there. There is nothing inconsistent with that it is just you have to realize that what you do is going to depend ultimately upon the ideas that are already there.

If you are a hard Calvinist, you will say, "See I told you." You have to start with what you got. If all you got are your ideas and there is no way to get around that. If a person is victimized by wrong ideas, and they don't lead to God, there is not freedom in choosing God for those people. If the idea of God is there, you're stuck with that. If your idea is that you are god, you are stuck with that.

The real thing to take away from this is that Wm. James' theory is good at understanding how the "will" works.

The Q: of where ideas come from that provide you a basis for choosing to do what you do has to be dealt with in some way separately from a general account on how the "will" works. This brings up the thought that the will might be something in its own right.

Wm. James when he comes to the end says, "The only thing that is uniquely you are your *consents*". What you consent to and what you don't.

Your will is unique and God will not override it. He has allowed you to have a creative role in the world. That doesn't get rid of the problem because now we have the problem with the nature of the will. Is it bent, twisted, distorted when we start or is it straight? If it is the one or the other, who is responsible for that?

I want you to understand there is a problem with a view of the will that Wm. James presents - where do you get the idea to start with?

If you are a died in the wool empiricist, things come to you from outside. If you are a Cartesian, it all starts from the inside.

What I (Dallas) am concerned with, especially that you understand that you have a "will" and it is capable of choices which instigate courses of action,

plans of action, and you can do something about it. However you understand it, you can change your ideas and that will provide a basis for doing different things.

I am inclined to take a rather radical view of the metaphysics of the "will" which leaves it free yet responsible. My purpose is trying to impress upon you as treating the "will" as a reality in your life which opens up possibilities for change.

The difficulty with a strongly Calvinist view, which isn't well thought out and often it isn't, is that it tells you that you can do nothing about your condition. You might as well say that, whether you have lunch is beyond you. All you can do is sit there in the chair and see whether or not you are going to eat.

It doesn't matter about your theories about that kind of determinism, you still have to act. At the practical level, it will make no difference what your theory is unless you become psychotic and decide you just do nothing and see what happens.

### **Nature of the Will** - *Renovation of the Heart* (33-35, 2002 ed.) [6:45]

There is a discussion here of the "will". This is the section of the book where I am talking about all of these aspects I put on the circle. It is extremely important to understand that we have the capacity to originate things or events that would not otherwise occur. Right in the middle of page 33. By "Originate" here we mean to include two things most prized in human life—freedom & creativity. These are two aspects of the same thing when properly understood which is the power to do what is good or evil. This power belongs to individuals alone. Organizations do not have it. This gets us to another issue which was raised about social change. There is no such thing as evil structures, or wicked structures or sinful structures. There are harmful ones. Organizations do not have a will, that is why they can not repent. They don't repent. They don't have feelings. Individuals have that.

In our culture today, you have many people who believe they have a will or believe there is such a thing as a will. I want to refer you to the top of page 35, make a note. People today generally think their feelings are their will. They don't understand one of the reasons you have a will is so you will have a place to stand and deal with your feelings. It is especially important for **children** to be taught this because they are going to be endlessly bombarded by teaching that tells them it is just their feelings. We even have songs: "Feelings, whoa, whoa, whoa, feelings." Your feelings are an

absolute disaster when you take them as guides. You simply can't do it. Of course, that's where you have things like anger, contempt, and so on. Those are an active combination of ideas and feelings.

Your will is the only possibility you have of organizing your life around what is good rather than what you feel. That has so many levels of significance for human life that you can hardly begin to list them.

[10:43] "The Divorce Phenomenon" as it exists in our culture is fundamentally a reaction to the view that feelings is what you organize your life around. I am not saying divorce is always wrong. That is a different issue. I am just saying the way it works now, it is basically driven by a certain view of feeling and will. Will gives you the possibility of acting for good that doesn't change over the weeks and months if you get the right thing for your will.

It is very important for us to know there is a will. It is important for our process to know, if you like fancy words, a "meta-will" — I will to do God's will. I surrender my will to God. That is something you would do as part of becoming a disciple then you'll have to revisit it periodically as you grow. Because you discover dimensions of your life that were not surrendered.

*"Oh, I didn't know you meant that."*

*"Yeah, I meant that too!"*

I believe that this is a crucial thing for us to spend time on.

### **Living at the Mercy of Our Ideas**

[12:30]

Once you understand this you realize that in a certain sense, you live at the mercy of your ideas because of however you take it, your ideas set the parameter of your action. You even have to learn that there are ideas and then there are ideas. There are ideas like that - [Dallas lifts up a tissue.] But this is not a very big idea.

The ideas that really matter are patterns of interpretation that develop historically, have a large social presence and they govern the world and they are primarily the place where Satan works. Because he knows if he can get a hold of them, everything will go his way in human life. Of course, everything is not going to go his way eventually. His primary preoccupation is with human beings. He had a round with God and it did not turn out well for him. His main focus is on God's project with human beings because they do have freedom and can be messed with if you can just goof up their ideas.

Here's an idea - *"Did God really say...?"* (Genesis 3:1)

## Submission of the Will to God

[14:20]

We need to come through and understand "Submission of the will to God" is the safe place for the "will" to be because then it will be fixed on God and things will right as a result of that.

Isaiah 26:3-4 "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is set on thee because he trust in you."

Psalm 16:8, "I have set the Lord always before me."

That's the key.

If you have not surrendered to God, you will not want to spend a lot of time thinking about Him because for the un-surrendered will, God is bad news, big time bad news.

~ *Thinking of God*

Thomas Watson quoted in *Renovation of the Heart*, p. 106-107; 2002 ed.

*The first fruit of love is the musing of the mind upon God. He who is in love, his thoughts, are ever upon the object. He who loves God is ravaged and transported with a contemplation of God. "When I am awake, I am still with thee." (Psalm 139:18.) The thoughts are as travelers in the mind. David's thoughts kept Heaven-road, "I'm still with Thee." God is the treasure, and where the treasure is, there is the heart. By this we may test our love to God. What are our thoughts most upon? Can we say we are ravished with delight when we think on God? Have our thoughts got wings? Are they fled aloft? Do we contemplate Christ and glory? Oh, how far are they from being lovers of God, who scarcely ever think of God!*

[Dallas comments] That is one reason why Heaven would be hell for some people because God is unavoidable there. If you don't really like Him, it's going to eat you alive. That's why He excuses you to Hell in that circumstance.

*"God is not in all his thoughts" (Psalm 10:4). A sinner crowds out of his thoughts. He never thinks of God, unless with horror, as the prisoner thinks of the judge.*

So the most important thought we have is of God.

~ *Satan's Plan to Give Eve an Idea*

*Renovation of the Heart*, p. 100 (2002 edition)

*"Ideas in the images are, accordingly, the primary focus of Satan's efforts to defeat, God's purposes, with and for humankind. When we are subject to*

*his chosen ideas and images, he can take a nap or a holiday. When he undertook to draw Eve away from God, he did not hit her with a stick, but with an idea. It was with the idea that God cannot be trusted, and that she must act on her own to secure her own well-being. This is the basic idea back of all temptation..."*

I do this because I must take care of it myself.

Back of every ministry or leader who falls is disappointment - and it's always disappointment with God.

~ *Our Idea of God*

from A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, p. 10

quoted in *Renovation of the Heart*, p. 100 (2002 edition)

*"That our idea of God corresponds as nearly as possible to the true being of God, is of immense importance to us. Compared with our actual thoughts about him, or credo statements, or a little consequence. Our real idea of God may be buried under the rubbish of conventional religious notions, and may require an intelligent and vigorous search before it is finally on earth, and expose for what it is. Only after an ordeal of painful self probing are we likely to discover what we actually believe about God."*

[Dallas comments] And in fact from the human point of view, Jesus got killed for doing that.

*"A right conception of God is basic not only to systematic theology but to practical Christian living as well. It is to worship, with the foundation is to the temple; where it is inadequate or out of plumb, the whole structure must sooner or later, collapse. I believe there is scarcely an error in doctrine, or a failure in applying Christian ethics that cannot be traced finally to imperfect and ignoble thoughts about God."*

Cross reference that to page 107 and you see some other things there following the quotation from Thomas Watson and connecting all of this to worship.

**Worship is, actually in the moment, the most powerful discipline.**

It is able to hold in *"abeyance every evil tendency in every dimension of the self."* But, at that level, the human being can not live with it. It will be more distracting than Twitter.

*"Worship is at once the overall character of the renovated thought life and the only safe place for the human being to be." Renovation, p. 107*

There is a wonderful old hymn says,  
*"In our astonished reverence we confess thine uncreated loveliness."*

## **Renewal of the Mind**

[21:40]

What would the "renewal of the mind" mean? Why would Paul put it the way he does in Romans 12:2,

*"Be transformed by the renewal of the mind."*

You need to put that in Philippians 4, "...*Think about these things.*" (v. 8)

*7 And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is good repute, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.*

What would at the top of the list?

**Students:** God

**Dallas:** Who?

**Students:** God

**Dallas:** God! What an idea. And how God has manifested Himself in so many ways and God has manifested Himself in Jesus and you be ready to go down to all the good things in life and understand that every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father of light in which there is not even a shadow of turning away from life. Paul's way of putting that is,

*The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice those things; and the God of peace will be with you.* (v. 9)

Paul practiced what he preached and the people he's writing to knew that he did. This is primarily the way the disciplines were taught in the New Testament times. It was by example. You might well say, "Well, if they are so important, why isn't there a chapter in Romans on disciplines? The answer is they were in front of them at all the time. First in Jesus and then in those who followed Him and spoke for Him, it was embodied disciplines. When Paul says, "I buffet my body", that is saying something everyone knew. They knew what he did. A way of life is communicated through a community.

Unfortunately that is one of the weaknesses of our practice today. We tend to judge leaders, not by how they embody the life of Christ and what they do



to do that, but in terms of their technical capacities in making the ship float and go.

I may have already mentioned a wonderful man in one of my seminars who said, "They don't pay us to live." And unfortunately, it's true. It's true.

You will have people who know something is very wrong but they will say to one another, "for the sake of the ministry, let's don't say anything." In cases where there is sexual abuse of members, they often are given a rationale for not saying anything. It is terribly destructive. The right wording would be, "For the sake of the ministry, for the sake of God, say something." That is for the sake of the ministry is never to cover up. We really need to carry that with us.

### **List of Disciplines of Abstinence & Engagement** [27:10]

The next thing we need to do...we put this up last time.

[[Overhead transparency.](#)] [[Last time is Session 10 @ 6:30](#)]

*Abstinence - Solitude, Silence, Fasting, Frugality, Charity, Secrecy, Sacrifice*

*Engagement - Study, Worship, Celebration, Service, Payer, Fellowship, Confession, Submission*

We need to do something more systematic with them. These are among the most commonly used disciplines. We need to go down the list to say what each one is and what each one does. The more detailed treatment of them is in here: [[The Spirit of the Disciplines, p. 160 ff., Chapter 9.](#)]

[The list of disciplines is on page 158](#)]

We need to go through each of these and say what it is and what it does. For the fuller treatment, I refer you to the pages.

### **~ Solitude** [28:35]

What is solitude? Purposefully abstaining from interaction with other human beings. Denying ourselves companionship and all that comes from our conscious interaction with others. We close ourselves away. We go to the ocean, to the desert, the wilderness or the anonymity of the urban crowd. This is not just rest or refreshment from nature, although it can contribute to that. Solitude is choosing to be alone and dwell on our experience of isolation for other human beings. Now, the main thing that solitude does is

to free us from the constant interactions with other people that lock us into the habits and practices that make up our lives. Not because being with people is bad. It is not bad, but if that's all you've got, it can isolate you from God and keep you running in terms of what other people are doing and saying to you. It will change the whole character of your life. To step out of that and, among others things, to allow yourself to know what is happening to you there. It has a certain primacy and priority I think among the disciplines. That's why I list it first.

You begin to seriously practice it. In my own experience, I backed my way into it and I had no idea what I was doing, but the effects were good anyway.

I mention in the book [[The Spirit of the Disciplines](#)] that it takes twenty times more amount of amphetamine to kill an individual mice than it takes to kill them in groups. A mouse given no amphetamine at all will be dead within 10 minutes being placed in the midst of a group that are on the drug. In groups they go off like popcorn or firecrackers.

Western men and women talk a lot about being individuals but they are painfully lacking in it. And our conformity to social patterns is hardly less remarkable than the mice and just as deadly.

This is not dismissing community. This is teaching us how to live in community. In solitude, you go alone. You don't take your work with you. If you take your work with you, you are not alone. You find out who you are before God. You discover things like you really do have a soul, you are a substance and you discover that you are not alone. Solitude is the antidote to loneliness. Many leaders are desperately alone. They often then seek relationships which are destructive. Solitude cures you of hurry. And it would be wonderful thing if all you could go away from here and never hurry again. You can still act quickly but not hurry.

A letter John Wesley wrote, I think he was 71,

*"Though I am always in haste, I'm never in a hurry because I never undertake any more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit."*

Solitude helps you learn how to be active even in haste but not in a hurry. What's the difference between "haste" and "hurry"? That would be a project for a seminar paper I think in your classes. What's the difference between haste and hurry. Hurry has in it the element of harassment. Haste does not.

\* If you are taking your daily run, you might run rapidly, at least for a while, without being in a hurry.

If a mountain lion is after you, you will suddenly be in a hurry. The way to think about hurry is - what is chasing you? The way you solve that problem in life is to practice solitude. In solitude, you lay it all down. You get out of the harassed position. You learn that you still breathe, that you don't die. A part of what goes in to finding out you have a soul and that the reality is there in solitude.

Well, I think this is really, extremely important for us to think about and get us in a position where we can begin to take steps and get us out of passivity. That's one thing that solitude does because it breaks the grip of helplessness that comes from being locked in to what every one is coming to us for, what maybe we are laying on ourselves. We just step out of it.

Henry David Thoreau used to say, he lived in this heavy Calvinistic atmosphere, *"Men will lie on their backs talking about the fall of man and make no effort to get up."*

It is in solitude that you begin to find the place where you apply effort to change things.

**Q:** [36:20] Could you comment on the solitude on being alone in a crowd?

**Dallas:** Yes. That can be two sorts of things.

One is, you can be lonely in a crowd. The cure for loneliness is solitude. It will cure you of loneliness. It isn't the same as being alone. Sometimes people are alone in a crowd and they are lonely. That means they don't have meaningful connections to the people around them. They are connected. You can't avoid that in the crowd. But the connections do not assure you of connection with other people that provides the context of life. One of the good things about practicing solitude is you learn that you can take it with you everywhere you go. That also allows you to be alone in the crowd but in a different sense. Among which is, if the crowd goes crazy you won't go crazy, too! You will be able to identify...someone spoke of "group think". You will be able to stand before the audience of one no matter what is going on around you. That is two aspects - one negative and one positive of being alone in a crowd.

Remember, solitude will cure you of loneliness and it will cure you of busyness. Busyness is not a sign of importance. It is often a sign of self-importance. Solitude will help you in the realization that the world went on without you and that will be a great liberation because you will more easily

be able to bear the burdens that you have and to know that God is still in business when you are not.

There is saying of CS Lewis that he derives from the literature with which he was familiar that, "*Busy people are lazy people.*" Now what could he mean by that? He means busy people are those who are too lazy to make decisions and get to their calendar before other people do and decide what's going to happen. If you don't know that saying, you might want to write it down and think about it. "*Busy people are lazy people.*" You want to understand what he means and how that works. It doesn't mean it's wrong to work hard. It's talking about managing your time and he's talking about what kind of "oomph" it takes to decide what you are going to do and not let other people decide it. In order to do that, you are going to have to have a place to stand. Like, how about the Kingdom of God?

**Q:** [40:00} Are there ideas you suggest to foster the habit of solitude?

**Dallas:** Right now I am working on the ideas and there are issues of how you go about it. The main thing is where you apply the V-I-M pattern to a particular thing. You have to have a vision. We talked about that and why it is important. How are you going to get it? That's where the "oomph" comes it. You can't be lazy. You have to make the hard decisions. You take your calendar out. You might have a little ritual or something in which you danced around it and took control of it. Say, "No one fills in my calendar but me. I am the only...God doesn't do it. I do it." Whatever is helpful.

The main thing here is you have to have time and you do not find time, you make it. Then of course, you want some arrangements. You have to find a comfortable place. Don't do any discipline in a way that makes you miserable. There will be effort and there will be unpleasant things about it. For example, most of us it will take a little while before we stop jerking after we go into solitude. We'll be, "what's happening?" And of course, nothing is happening. That's the point. [[Loud laughter from the students.](#)]

The idea of doing nothing is one of the hardest things for people in our society to take because they have attached their significance to their doing. Being busy is one way of being important. If you are busy, people shouldn't interrupt you. They still will.

**Q:** [42:35] So this would also be a discipline we could use to encourage humility, what it means to be important, right?

**Dallas:** - Humility is dependence upon God. So solitude is a way of taking your hands off of things. If you are able to depend on God, you can do that and you will need to build a habit of doing that. So it is definitely

interconnected with that. It is like most of these things, you need a little bit to start and you get a good deal more as you go along.

The basic thing is take control of your calendar. You may have to say to your intimate associates something about what you are doing because they may think this is very strange. You may have to respect them, especially if it is your husband or wife, you don't just announce, "I'm going into solitude.". Like you don't show up at dinner time and say, "I am fasting". If you are fasting and she doesn't know, and she fixes dinner, you eat. [Loud laughter] The old desert fathers and mothers knew that if you were on a long fast and someone came to your door, you prepared food for them and you ate with them. That was more important than fasting.

In all the disciplines, usually I wind up saying a lot of things about solitude that have to be said about all the disciplines, but you don't need to say it over and over, you have to be very considerate of other people. Solitude and silence is often used as a rebuke to other people. You have to work through that and you don't want that to happen. One way that you do is you try to arrange for others. if you have others on the staff and you want to spend Friday and Saturday at a retreat house alone, you try to do the same thing. You will not be overwhelmed by demand. You want them to know it is available for them or your wife. You make arrangements for other people. Find time and find place. That is basically it. Finding a place is sometimes a problem for people in the that way we live now. You just have to make arrangements and plan for it. You learn a lot about how to do that as you go.

[45:40] Another quotation from Thoreau. He saw how even how our secular existence withers from the lack of a hidden life.

*"Conversation degenerates into mere gossip and those we meet can only talk of what they heard from someone else. The only difference between us and our neighbors is that he has seen the news and we have not. As our inward quiet life fails, we go more constantly and desperately to the post office but the poor fellow who walks away with the greatest number of letter proud of his correspondence has not heard from himself in a long while. Read not the Times, read the eternities."*

Now, if he knew about email and Twitter and all of that stuff, he would have even more to say about it. A great part of solitude is turning off all the things that can get at us wherever we are now and finding we can still live.

Okay we'll interrupt this here and we'll come back and continue with this discussion.

**~ ~ ~ End of Session 11 @ 47:15 ~ ~ ~**

Session 12 — "[Disciplines](#)"



[1:20:04]

~ **Solitude**

I think the Q: was, can you have music? Can you have your Bible? What can you have? Well, I would suggest that you spend some time without any of that. But you don't lay down laws about things of that sort. You ask yourself, what is the purpose of solitude, which I hope now you might have a little something to go on. And then you ask yourself, will this distract or hinder the purpose of solitaire. And if it does, I would dispense with it. And a good way to find out whether or not you need it is start without it. And but you, again, you don't want to be too harsh on yourself, don't be a hero, that's a general rule about disciplines is Do not be heroic. So I think actually, that as you enter into solitude, it's going to be so rich that you will not need something to jangle you or to help you worship. So, just be experimental about it, that's the main thing. You'll find out what you need to do as you go along. When you go into a discipline, your teacher is Jesus. And He will teach you.

**Q:** [01:44] A comment earlier about letting your staff know what you're doing?

**Dallas:** Yes, sorry.

**Student Continues:**...permission for them....that he would also allow his staff to do that? Earlier I told my husband, I needed that you watch the kids like I do, he's got so that's, that's just my word.

**Dallas:** No, that's absolutely right, you all the people around you, but most importantly, your spouse, if you have one, make sure not only that, you let them know what's going on, but you you try to help them understand it. And you make provision for them. And there are few people that need solitude more than young mothers. And so, if you're in a fellowship, where you have understanding, you can make provision for that. And you want to be thoughtful in every every connection that you have with other people. Yes,

**Q:** [02:51] At what age do you think you can start introducing your kids to this?

**Dallas:** For the discipline, spiritual disciplines, very young,

**Student continues:** Or specifically, the solitude, or?

**Dallas:** Well, you don't need to give them a big word or a theory, but you need you need your children to have times to play alone. And don't give them a bunch of stuff, to occupy them. Let them learn how to be with themselves. And I think that's one of the most helpful things you can do for a child, is to not make a big deal out of it, but just make arrangements. They generally, when they're quite young, love to play alone. And until they're ruined, they they enjoy that. And actually, sometimes you have people who will try to get them out of that, that they need to be able to play alone, and they need to be able to play imaginatively. And there was a time not long ago, when children and in some parts of the world, I was still still have that. Just leave them alone, they'll find a corner of the yard. And pretty soon their imagination will have that all the way up with Jack and the Beanstalk. They will be old and they will match and their imagination will grow and they will know who they are. If you don't do that, they will be kids that come around and look at you reproachfully and say I'm bored and then you've got a real problem. You've got a real problem. And it takes a lot of wisdom to communicate to them that there's they're approaching things wrongly if they're bored and then that will grow up and then they will not like themselves and They will have to get stuff to fix their minds.

**Q:** [5:11] Imagination as a child...the gift of imagination is a tool of spiritual disciplines? As adults, we think we shouldn't outgrow imagination.

**Dallas:** God help us.

**Student continues:** Can you can you speak of how the gift of the imagination is a tool for spiritual disciplines for spiritual life?

**Dallas:** Well, because of imagination is what it is, you can't very well do much, but try to get out of its way. And let it roll on. Children's Literature is especially helpful, if it's the right sort of thing. But we need to encourage it, and we need to bring it to the Bible. And we need to let children be very creative with it as much as they can. And I don't know really much more to say than that.

**Q:** [06:34] You mentioned earlier in a conversation that you use imagination in prayer?

**Dallas:** Well, I use imagination, in the sense that I imagined things, I image things. Yes. And particularly, if you're praying for something, you need to have a pretty firm grasp of what it is. And usually, the imagination is used to



refer to something that is not real. And that's unfortunate. Because imagination is the primary instrument that we use to come to grips with what is real. And so I don't use imagination as a kind of trick, or magical thing. And it's important to stay out of magic, in prayer. But you do need to be able to very clearly image, what you're praying about. Big prayers rarely do anything, rarely accomplish anything. That's because prayer is not a way of manipulating something, it is a way of working at something. It is a way of working at something with God. And in that process, you need to be able to graphically bring before you what it is you are doing. So that you don't just vapor off into "bless them, Lord."

**Q:** [8:20] Comment on that it's so easy for Satan to step in and run prayer. When I was younger, we lost our dog and my aunt said, "you just have to have faith and pray and it'll come back." And so I every day, I'd go out and put the food out and the water out knowing that my dog was going to come back because I had faith that my dog would come back... and she never did. And just how all of a sudden God must not be good, therefore I must not be good because God didn't answer my prayers.

**Dallas:** Yep. You have just written a volume on it. Yep, that's That's very true. God does not answer our prayers because we have faith. I'll leave you to think about that for a while. I want to say a little bit about prayer later on, but I'm really getting up against on time. And I do want to say something about the other disciplines and we will come back on and touch briefly on prayer because prayer is a major discipline in addition to being much else.

### ~ **Silence: Quietness & Not Talking**

[9:35]

There are two kinds of silence: quietness and not talking. They're actually different disciplines. Though obviously they're related because if you're talking, you're not in quietness.

#### **1.) Silence = Quietness**

So there is a choice to have no sound. It's a matter of degree unless you go into a corn field, or cork lined recording studio or something of that sort. But just once in a while, it might be good to make a stop off in such a place to learn what quietness is. Because we lose track of it, and accordingly lose track of its effects upon our souls. Total silence is very rare, and not something that one should seek for long, long periods of time. And what we usually call silence or being quiet is just a matter of degree. And we forget what it is. Our households and offices are filled with worrying, buzzing, murmuring, grinding, chattering, whining contractions. So it's almost impossible to have quiet now in a house. Try it in this place, in the middle of

the night, and there's all kinds of noises going. Now, we need to try that out some, because silence allows you to hear the hidden landscape\*\* [11:35], it allows you to discover that the wind of eternity is blowing in your face. And so it's important to experiment with that. And one aspect of that is we can turn off the rackets, the CD, the radio, the tape player, the iPod, and so forth. We can experience what it is like not to be at the disposal of noise. And so again, say well, why? Well, you'll find out when you do it. But sound goes deeply into the soul. It's even said that it is the last of the senses that you lose when you're dying. And you have a different presence to yourself when you are in silence. Sound tugs at you. So that's one kind of silence.

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

## **2.) Silence = Not Talking**

[13:10]

The other kind of silence is not talking. And not talking is a whole theme, the whole story in itself. And one of the main things that we let go when we enter into silence is adjusting how others perceive us. And we learn to let them make up their own minds. We don't try to man the facades that we do. When we talk. James [[Bible author](#)] really goes deeply into this issue in his letter. And the Proverbs are full of statements about this, the power of the tongue, for good, as well as for evil. And how to stop that?

Well, we we first start by stopping talking. And then we find that we can talk much more to the point. And, as Paul says, we can let our words be bearers of grace. But it's rare to be able to do that if we have not practiced silence. So that we speak out of silence, and not just as a part of the yammering that goes on around us. James says, "Let every man be swift to hear slow to speak slow to wrath." [[James 1:19](#)] Interesting connection, what has wrath got to do with speaking? Well, if you have observed very much you will see that wrath usually depends upon speaking. When he gets going between people, it's nearly always a result of or sustained by language. When in doing the tongue is moving rapidly, wrath is usually found close at hand. And James also says, as the Proverb [[10:19](#)] does, "In the multitudes of words, there is sin." Sin has a particular association with the tongue. Think of how it works in exchanges around sexuality, as well as anger and wrath, pride, vanity, and so on. And learning not to speak, gives us a kind of grasp upon many of these other things that depend upon speaking and how we speak. [It] is a major problem in trying to witness to people and evangelize is often too much talking and too little listening. One of the ways that you can

communicate most effectively to people is listening to them. And in order to do that, you need to be able to not talk. We often encourage people to evangelize by talking. And sometimes, unfortunately, because as Spanish Philosopher Unamundo says, *We need to pay less attention to what people are trying to tell us and more than what they tell us without trying.* And actually, that's most of what we witnessed to, is what we tell people without trying.

So, we need to think about stopping, and then learning how to speak out of silence. Very often talking a lot is just a manifestation of lack of confidence, fear, uncertainty. And when we turn to silence, we began to learn a different way of experiencing ourselves and God. And that allows us to see the world differently and relate to it differently. On page 165, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, I quote the testimony of a young person, actually Japanese girl in Japan, who happened to be taking some training with a Christian minister on this. And I've always thought she just hit it so solidly, she said, *"The more I practice this discipline of solitude, and silence, the more I appreciate the strength of silence. And the less I become skeptical and judgmental. The more I learn to accept the things I don't like about others, the more I accept them as uniquely created in the image of God, the less I talk, the fuller our words spoken at an appropriate time. And the more I value others, the more I serve them in small ways, the more I enjoy and celebrate my life. The more I celebrate, the more I realized God has been giving me wonderful things in my life. And the less I worry about my future, I will accept and enjoy what God is continuously giving to me. I think I am beginning to really enjoy God."*

Now you can tell people about solitude and silence until you're blue in the face. But it's the experience of it that brings this to you. And it is primarily I think, because when we are silent, we lay aside our efforts in various directions to control others. Now, of course, silence itself, nothing sacred about it; talking - nothing evil about it. And that's with reference to disciplines you have to get used to that. What you're abstaining from usually there's nothing wrong with it. But it is harming your life and the lives of those around you. And so it isn't like you just quit, like you take a vow of silence and you're not going to speak anymore. Don't be silly. There's a time to speak, as well as a time to be silent. We learn by experience the effects of silence and solitude on our souls, our spirits, our body and it has wonderful consequences then for particular issues about doing the things that Jesus said.

~ Frugality

[20:10]

Just a word about frugality. Frugality is a matter of abstaining from using money or goods that are at our disposal in ways that merely gratify our desires for status, glamour, or luxury. Practicing frugality means we stay within the bounds of what generally would fall in good judgment and designate as necessary for the kind of life which God has led us. So there's a judgment about what is necessary and what is not. And this discipline is something that people have recognized even pagan cultures have recognized the danger of lavishness and luxury. And various governments at times have passed what are known as sumptuary laws forbidding exhibitions of luxury beyond what is necessary, and the reason for that is because it really does hurt people. Luxury establishes a relationship between the rich and the poor, and involves people in expenditures that are not for good in the way that they could be. Frivolous consumption corrupts the soul away from trust in worship of and service to God. Frugality is a service to God and humankind for in being frugal, we are able to use our money in ways that would benefit the work of God and others. But we are concerned about it as a discipline here. This is one of those practices that has many benefits other than the disciplinary benefit and the benefit of the discipline is to train us away from dependence on a sensual kind of existence. Sensuality — living for feelings — is harmful to the soul.

*The Bondage of Debt*

[23:10]

In our society, a primary manifestation of the harm that comes from not having frugality is the bondage that is caused by financial debt. And there are many causes many factors involved. But our current financial distress that we're in is due to a failure of frugality. And if you follow the money trail, and you discovered a certain point that there wasn't money, there was promises. And those promises were used by and large, to buy things for which there was no good reason. And just look at [Mr. \[Barry\] Madoff](#) again [[see Session 2 @ 25:30](#)] and see what he spent his money on. And then the money that was not money, but was promises began to disappear. And we found that we're caught up as a society in a huge Ponzi scheme. Promises, Promises, promises, and you try to keep that pyramid of promises going. And eventually, it collapses. And then we decided that the way out of debt was more debt. And the fundamental reality is people who could not say no. And they could not say no, because they were hooked on essential mode of living. Now, that's not the whole story. And many people are hurting not because they hooked on essential mode, but because this thing collapses and the goods are not there that they need. So pursuing luxury leads one, to

be incapable of dealing with necessities And that's basically where we are now.

I don't want to take time to go into that further, you probably understand it all. But debt is a terrible problem. Because debt allows you to possess something that you haven't paid for. And you have enough of that going, and especially if you possess things that aren't necessary that are frivolous, then you build a society and a personality that is built on a lack of reality. That's why Paul says, "Let no debt remain outstanding except the continuing debt to love one another." [Romans 13:8] I love this quote that I give on 169 and 170 [*The Spirit of the Disciplines*] from John Joseph. He was once asked why when so many people seem to wish to be great in God's eyes, there are so few who are truly saintly. And the chief reason, he replied is that, "they give too big a place in life to indifferent things." And that is precisely what you do when you move away from frugality. And a lot of things that you need to say here, one, is that frugality isn't the same as stinginess, and cheapness. And much harm is done by a teaching, especially to young people and children, were things that aren't necessarily necessary, but they want them and they are rejected on a basis of stinginess and cheapness. And God is not cheap. He not only owns the cattle on a thousand hills, he owns the Cadillacs on a thousand hills. He owns the whole thing. God does not need our money. But we need to be careful with it because money is a form of our kingdom and when we expend it in foolish ways, it will make us pay a price for that.

*Frugality is not Poverty*

[27:18]

Now the thing that needs to be said frugality is not poverty. Poverty is neither a discipline nor a virtue. Jesus was not poor. And then if you think he was poor, do go back and read your New Testament and try to figure out what was going on there. He's often presented as if he slept under the bridge and ate out of a garbage can. But he was well off enough to have an embezzler as his secretary treasurer. They don't hang around where there's no money. He raised funds, he supported his ministry He gave to the poor, Jesus was not poor. And it's no virtue to be poor and no advantage to be poor. It can have some disciplinary effects and it can keep bad people from doing worse. So you know, just don't confuse poverty with frugality. Poverty is not a discipline. And what is called poverty by most people today and where vows of poverty are taken is not poverty. Like people confuse poverty, with ownership. Poverty is not a matter of ownership. It's a matter of use. Doesn't matter who owns it if you have the use of it. But it's one of those curiously deceptive things that religious people have developed to say, "*Well, I am poor, I don't own anything.*" Well, what is accessible to you?

Now, forgive me if I offend you. But this is something we really need to think about. Some very wonderful people like Mother Teresa lived under a vow of poverty. But she when she was down in Tijuana, and she had some heart trouble, they swiftly brought her to the best possible medical clinic on the face of the earth. A mother in South Los Angeles or perhaps in an area of Denver, who is really poor and has to take her children by bus to a cheap hospital changing three times and spending half the day getting there, that's poor. That's poor. So, I just want to take a minute just to jar your thinking if not, if that's what it is, and help you understand frugality is one thing, poverty is another. You could undertake poverty as a service. If God called you to do that you should do that. That would be a good thing. You could undertake poverty as a discipline though when you start to work the details out, it's a little hard. And most people who experienced poverty do not experience it as a discipline, or a virtue, the real thing. So do think about that.

**Q:** [30:56] So, when scriptures talk about, "*Foxes have their dens and birds have their nests, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head*", [Matthew 8:20] is that a reference to a choice, or a homelessness, or...?

**Dallas:** No, that was a reference to how Jesus was living. But now think a moment you see, that doesn't say Jesus was poor. Rabbis routinely did that. They traveled about the country. They didn't have a steady place to live for a part of his life or part of his ministry. Apparently, Jesus did have that. But didn't he didn't know all of us. And so he's saying to the man now, you if you're going to be my disciple, you have to understand this is a particular mode of life, and you have to be ready for it. But see, we have to rethink all of these passages. Because we have been, we've had the image hung on us of Jesus as a person who was poor. And, and perhaps partly because he said, "Blessed are the poor." [Luke 6:20] But look at the details of his life. He was not poor. He had people supporting him, caring for him, giving him money. He gave money. You can't give it if you don't have it. And remember when we glorify poverty, that nearly everything that we glorify is supported by people with money. So just challenging you to rethink that. And of course, you have many scriptures on it.

**Chastity** - *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, p. 170

[32:45]

I need to say a word about chastity. Chastity is not a good word for what I want to talk about here because it's more of an outcome than it is a discipline. This is on page 170, of your, of *The Spirit of the Disciplines* if you have the book there and you're trying to follow.

"What is the discipline of chastity? In chastity, we repeat, *we refrain for a lengthy period of time from sexual acts, thoughts and desires as a way of*



*accustoming oneself to freedom from domination by sex. Sex is not bad in itself any more than food or conversation. The biblical and Christian view of sexual desire is that like all desires, it is good in its place. It is not an elimination that we seek but subordination to the good is what is needed. And one of the most important things in the life of training for the disciple is to be able not to be dominated by sexual desire.* And we know how hard that proves to be for so many people today, because we live in an atmosphere of constant sexualization of everything. And as sex has now lived in our world, it is a major source of evil. And those in ministry and those they serve suffer from it, we are operating from broken souls with devastating results. So we have to say something about it and training ourselves to simply move out of that realm, in our thoughts, and if we are legitimately engaged with another person in our actions for a time frees us up from simply being dominated by sex.

*Love and joy in life generally is to be cultivated as a bulwark against domination by sexual experiences.* One of the things that sex does in life is to supply a substitute for drama and intimacy. It creates illusions in that regard. And it has attached to it a pleasure of a certain kind, that is very powerful. In sexuality, basically what we desire is not just physical engagement, but what we desire is the desire of the other for us. So, being desirable, becomes a major issue in sexuality. And that takes over in its male forms, and it's muted in its female forms, in different ways, of course, but wanting to be sexually attractive, nothing again, nothing wrong in that in itself, but it goes crazy. And then we, because we can't achieve intimacy, we keep beating on that sexual button to try to get something out of it. And it doesn't come because intimacy with another person, which is what is really desired in sexual relationships, and not just the physical because it's, of course, much bigger than that. And it gets reduced to the physical in the way it often does in its more bizarre manifestations just because we're lonely, and don't seem to have meaning in our lives, and we find meaning in romance and sex and its various modifications."

So now what I'm saying is fairly simple, that we practice chastity by abstaining from sexual involvements of all kinds, including our thoughts and our feelings. And in so doing, we are set free in our habits from domination by sexuality. Well, there's lots of stuff in the Scripture. And again, in the spirit of the disciplines, I've given a lot of references to things. And I don't have time to deal with all of that.



*Homosexuality*

[37:50]

Homosexuality is simply a case in point where someone has decided to live in terms of a peculiar form of desire. And so they take on an identity. Now this is peculiarly true for today. It has not always been true that people who had homosexual desires and acted them out, identified themselves as homosexuals. That if I come to your town, I hope you will not introduce me as a well known heterosexual advocate. My heterosexuality does not define me as a person. And I don't think anyone should be defined in terms of their sexuality. A homosexual is someone who devotes themselves to the gratification of homosexual desire. That's not a place to be as a human being. I wouldn't want to be a person who had devoted themselves to the desire for strawberry milkshakes. It's degrading, to find one's identity, or to identify others in terms of a desire whether it's a good desire or a bad one. I mean, there's nothing really wrong with desiring strawberry milkshakes. But if you have your identity with reference to that, wouldn't you say you're in trouble? And so, I mean, I know there's a lot you may want to discuss some more of that, but to be devoted to a desire of anything, and to identify yourself in those terms, is not good.

It's not good to mistreat and disregard and not love homosexuals. You treat them in the way that Christ taught us to treat to treat others. But that does not include saying that what they want and what they do is good. And the tension that we're in now...and it has gotten awfully quiet in the room...the tension we're in now is one where we are demanded to approve. It isn't like that you are not going to treat people with love. It's that you can't love them unless you approve of them. And so the old saying we used to use easily "Hate the sin, love the sinner". You can't do that anymore. And this is partly due to the fact that the sense of self has disappeared from people and they identify themselves in terms of what they do and not what they are. So if you condemn what I do, you couldn't possibly approve of me or love me. Now that is that is a stage of desire forcing itself forward onto people. Desire, not just content to be my desire, but now I'm forcing it on you. And we now live in this country under a form of the tyranny of a minority that has learned how to manipulate the public resources, including law, to force their opinions upon others.

**Q:** [41:45] Is there a way to help people see that they are not what their desires might be?

**Dallas:** Well, I do believe there is but for example, or, to illustrate, if I'm going to engage with someone about a discussion about homosexuality, I don't want to start there and I won't start there. I want to know what they think about God. I want to know what they believe is right and wrong. And whether or not there is a difference. And then, at some point, if we can sustain the discussion, we can talk about what is helpful and what is not about homosexual desire, and then further on homosexual practice, and then further on the acceptance of homosexuality as an acceptable and good style of life. My experience is, if you try to start there, you might as well forget it. That's why, after all, the most basic thing about them is not what they think about sex. It's what they think about God. And if you start with what they think about sex, you're going to wind up with a god who thinks what they do. So this is a very difficult thing, and I only take it up because I know you have to deal with it yourself. You're constantly faced with it in life. Issues about the ministry come up. And so I just want to say that the problem we're in with sexuality today is not just about sexuality. It is primarily about other things, the meaning of life. Why are we here? What is good and evil? In particular, what is the Christian message on reality? And if you don't get that, right, it's no wonder that we wind up with huge denominations having to spend unlimited amounts of money and time trying to figure out what to do about a particular issue with homosexuals. We shouldn't be there. How did we get there? And that's where you need to be thinking and doing the work.

Individual homosexuals you love, just like you would love anyone and that means you seek to do what is best for them. It does not mean that you seek to do what they want you to do. So now we have to go back to our earlier discussions — what is love and love is not doing what someone wants you to do. Love is doing what is best for people. And if we have worked through those kinds of considerations, then we are able to go on to other troubling issues.

*"The practice of chastity purifies our thoughts and allows us to step free from playing the various games around which sex and romance, the look, verbal and bodily innuendo, sub tones trying for perfect satisfaction in our marriage. We must regard others as spiritual beings in a world that is spiritual, sex is a passing mode of human union for specific purposes. You are a whole person before God regardless of sex and marriage. If you never are married, if you never have sex."*

Now we have these silly things that show up like our movies "The 40 year old virgin". HA HA HA HA like a 40 year old virgin is a freak some kind of freak. We ought to have him in a sideshow and the circus. It's just tragic when it gets there. You are a whole person. And you still have to make decisions of various kinds, but you don't want to lose that your identity is not sexuality. It is not being married, or not being married, or any of that.

Comments and questions? [Silence] I must have gotten off the reservation.

**Dr. Baker:** [46:30] Chastity almost seems different sort of thing from the other disciplines. Seems like it's a different sort of thing than the other disciplines?

**Dallas:** The word doesn't fit and I don't I've tried to think of a word this as I say chastity is actually an outcome and the discipline is what you do to get there but there just isn't any word that will do it so I try to spell it out there.

**Dr. Baker:** [47:18] There is really not a time when we should not practice chastity?

**Dallas:** Okay, now this is the hard part. Yes, there are times when we should not the way I've described it is abstaining from act, thought, involvement sexually. Now, if we are married there are times when we should engage in sexual acts, thoughts and feelings. And so the problem is to, let's put it this way. There is no time when we should not be chaste which is not the same thing as celibate. So this is where I mean we have plenty good teachings on this in the New Testament, the Old Testament about it and then also about how it goes wrong. So chastity as a discipline is the exercise of a certain abstinence for a definite period of time. And as a discipline we should not be always engaged in it.

Now this is a good time to dig a little deeper here...

Are sexual thoughts wrong?

Are sexual thoughts dirty?

Is being sexually tempted dirty?

**With Reference to Sinning** [[Screen Shot of Transparency](#)] [49:00]

Well, before you answer let's put this up. It is actually a general or kind of general teaching that we need to help us deal with many, many different issues. But there is constant confusion among Christians about these and we need to distinguish them.

## ***Distinguish...***

### **1.) Thought of Sin only - no inclination to do it.**

Did Jesus ever have a thought of sin? Well, I hope he did. He talked about it a lot. I would hope that he had some thoughts about it. And in the domain of sex, perhaps you would have a flash of a thought about a wrong sexual relationship. Thought. No inclination.

### **2.) Temptation - Thought AND inclination but no relenting of the will.**

Now inclination is the next move. That's where you have some tendency towards doing it. That's going to be a matter of degree. If you have a thought of getting drunk, that's different from having a temptation to get drunk. Some people have thoughts of it, and no inclination at all, or if anything an inclination in the opposite direction. Temptation is thought and inclination, but no relenting of the will, and this is why I like to talk about William James\* before we come to this part, because of his very lovely presentation of what it means when you consent - the consent of the will. You can have temptation without consent. You can have temptation without even consenting to the temptation. But on the other hand, if you don't want to consent, there are some things you should probably do so you wouldn't.

### **3.) Sin - Relenting of the will.**

And then there is sin. There is the relenting of the will. A yes to the deed where they're actually carried out or not. Now, when you read Matthew 5 where Jesus is talking about, you have already committed in adultery in your heart, and that's here [[Dallas points to Level 3 - Sin](#)], that's not here. [[points to Level 2 - Temptation.](#)]

He is talking about temptation enthusiastically entered into. That's what he's talking about. He's talking about cultivating it, fostering it, and in particular, about using another person for that purpose.

So now, the ordinary person is going to have sexual thoughts. If they aren't careful, those thoughts can become obsessive. And now, I hope you'll go back to the William James\* stuff, and you can utilize it and in thinking about this. [\* - William James - see Sessions 3 @ 40:50; #7 @ 49:15; #8 @ 11:10-12:55, 24:30, 31:25, 1:02:55; #10 @ 44:45, #12 @ 52:00]

The discipline of chastity is to turn away from such thoughts. Not necessarily because they are bad. They aren't in themselves. There is nothing wrong with sexual thoughts.

*Temptation* - Well, it depends if you like it, you got a problem. And there's a lot of that in our culture. See, that's... Titillation is practically a division of the economy in the United States. Don't go there.

Did you sin if you went there, maybe not. But you don't need to be that close to it. Unless you've got a problem, then you need to deal with the problem. What might the problem be? You might be bored stiff. You might be stuck in a job that just, [sigh], "I can't stand it." In other words, your life might be so devoid of drama and meaning that you're ready for anything that will give you a buzz. Beyond coffee. [[Dallas waves the cup in his hand and the students laugh.](#)] Actually, it doesn't give me a buzz if it did I'd quit.

*Why is this so important?* - It's so important to help people so that they don't think they have sinned when they haven't. And it's important to help them to know when sin is coming around the mountain. So that's, you know, the song, "She'll be coming around the mountain when she comes"? Sin is always like that. And a major part of learning how to live beyond it is recognizing it when she's coming around the mountain and you get off the conveyor belt in time. Don't get on it if you can not get on it, but if you find yourself on the conveyor belt, get off! Don't just lie there and say, "I can't. I can't not do it". No, you can. Same thing with positive things in a different direction.

**Q:** [55:38] I just had a question. I think you said that a sexual thoughts is not a sin, if it's still in the number one stage, that is you are married, you have thought of having sex with whoever else. That's not a sin?

**Dallas:** That's not a sin, not a sin. Now, if you start to enjoy it and cultivate it, that's still not a sin. But you're getting warm. And you know, you want to recognize that. But if you start beating yourself up for having sinned at that point, the next thing you're apt to say is, "well, I've already sinned. So we might as well go ahead and do it." I'm giving you real scripts out of a pastor's life where you have to listen to people. And they say that. And actually they use that as an excuse for going ahead and doing what they want. Thank you for helping us clarify that.

**Q:** [56:45] So going back to William James — excessive thoughts could eventually change the inclination of the will?

**Dallas:** You bet it can. You bet it can. And that's the whole point of what we've been doing today, is to get that there.

So now, that's why if you're dealing with this, [[Dallas points to the transparency \(go to 49:00\) - "Distinguish" and the 3 points](#)] you want to pay attention to this [[#1 - "Thought of Sin"](#)]. But you want to realize that in itself, it is not sin and realize that you can turn it in that direction.

Now, then, at this level, this would be the level [[level #2 - "Temptation"](#)] at which you probably have more than one idea. You may be thinking about the wrong thing. But you also have some other things, other ideas in your mind. And the key is to turn to those other ideas. And you have that ability. But if you don't understand this, you may not know that. And you may just think it's all one thing and be unable to deal with it.

*Chastity* (continued) — Now, what does chastity as the practice I've described do? It helps you come to terms with this. [[Dallas points to the screen.](#)] To begin with, it helps you know, it's okay, if you're not even here [[Level 1 - Thought of Sin only](#)]. And you live in a culture that would tell you well, my if you're not even here [[Thought of Sin](#)], you're sick. You're sick!

**Q:** [58:15] I guess from Dr. Baker's Q: , [[Denver class professor](#)] what is a healthy sexual expression of a single person?

**Dallas:** Well, the general response to that is be leading a kind of life that is full enough of good things and strengthening things that when the thought came by, it didn't suck you up like a vacuum cleaner.

**Student continues:** [58:51] I guess I'm just trying to understand the difference between the abstinence and chastity as a single person and *not* that abstinence and chastity of a single person?

**Dallas:** A single person can use the discipline of chastity, as I've described it here, in order to live in a state of chasteness - cleanness. They have to know that and they have to get it straight that there's nothing unhealthy about that. And that they will be stronger if they have times where by choice, they choose not to engage in sexual thoughts, feelings, kinds of relationships that are marginal. You can choose not to do that. And if you do choose not to do it, you'll be in a much stronger position. If you don't, these are apt to develop in ways that you will regret

**Q:** [1:00:00] Just to clarify, I was thinking that you are saying sin is when you start to cultivate the thought that you said that's not true says then when you actually...?

**Dallas** Sin is when you consent to it. When you would do it if it were possible. So the Q: is not just, "I did not have sex with that woman", as someone once said. Would you if you could have? If you would, if you could, the consent is already given. Now, I know that this is really ticklish, and there's a whole lot of stuff. I mean, if you go back to the ages of the churches, you find them dealing with this. And one of the things that we lost when we threw out the Catholic side was a lot of extremely fine work on how to deal with these kinds of issues. Of course, there's a lot of failures as well. That's par for the course. But we have to talk about it, because it is such an issue for us. And many, many dimensions not just things like pornography, and adultery and so on, but the misery, the misery around sexuality, both for people who are single, and sometimes devout Christians who are single, they're still miserable about this issue, and partly on the basis of mistaken interpretations of their humanity, and feeling that somehow they're less than human, less than prosperous, and all of that. So it just has a lot of dimensions. And we need to affirm our identity in distinction from our sexuality. Now, that itself, is like rank heresy in many quarters.

Do you mean my maleness isn't a part of my identity? Your femaleness?

Actually, yes, that's right.

Now then, being a man or a woman does enter substantially into our life. But it's not our identity. Now, it used to be said that the way to a man's heart was is through his stomach. Did you know that? But Mama has moved out of the kitchen into the bedroom now. That's exactly what we're taught. So if you're not engaged sexually, what are you? Nothing! Or if you are married, why do you matter to the other person? It's just sex. Thank you very much.

Now think about marriage in terms other than sexuality. Is there anything there? Well, they'd better be because if you live long enough... [laughter]... apparently there ain't going to be any in Heaven but often it stops before Heaven.

**Student:** [1:03:40] That's why they created the little purple pill. [groans]

**Dallas:** You thinking they might have that in Heaven? [louder laughter]

You have really contributed to our discussion. Thank you so much. Because one of the things that comes from the practice of chastity in marriage is the deepening of the personal relationship between the persons who are married and to receive one another, bless one another. Just because you are the one that has given yourself to me and I to you, in wedding, marriage, living together under God. See, that's what we're really trying to get at. And actually, the kind of intimacy that you have spoken of is what people are really after through sex and it won't come. And so then they keep hitting



that button. And then all sorts of problems come like well, I'll get someone else, or two of them. And so on.

**Q:** [1:05:18] - I heard a story told one time at a bible study that was being conducted and it was a marriage kind of thing. Women were told that if your husband is having a hard day, you know, a way to comfort him was to give him sex. And I think, you know, we don't give men enough credit. For Heaven's sake, they're not just sexual organs. That is really offensive.

**Dallas:** Well, that's true. It is offensive. But you see, that's essentially the same sort of degradation that comes from a person who identifies themselves as homosexual. See, the basic problem with that is it does not do justice to the human dignity. It does not do justice to human dignity. Of course, I understand that some people would disagree with that, but it's exactly in the same area. It's a terrible thing for men and women to treat one another that way. I mean, there are other things that are bad too, in that respect. But what it does is it cuts off genuine intimacy.

**Q:** [1:06:30] For many years I thought I was in sin [Level 3] when I probably was in temptation... [Level 2]

**Dallas:** Yep, or maybe even a thought. [Level 1]

**Student continues:** Yeah, and it just got really tiresome. I agreed, there were certain things I wouldn't do. Yes, wouldn't look at certain magazines, or certain kinds of movies like that. But I, I had the idea that it would always be a constant and relentless struggle, no matter what. And this is as good as it gets.

**Dallas:** - Well, actually a failure even because you're dealing with things like thoughts. And if you think that's sin, it isn't just going to be a struggle, it's going to be a constant failure. And that's what many people live with. And especially, you find young people brought up in that. And we just really need teaching. That's one reason why I go through this is because I want people to have these distinctions to think about them and they are extremely liberating. Not just because you find out you didn't sin, but because now you know, something you can do about it.

**Student continues:** [1:07:52] But I wanted to go on because I had an experience of inner healing. And one of the totally unanticipated consequences of that experience was that for a whole year whenever I looked at a woman, women became three times more beautiful than I've ever noticed. I don't know that I've ever heard anybody else say they had an experience like that. And now I have to be somewhat intentional again. But do you have a comment about that?

**Dallas:** [1:08:28] Yes. It's very important to distinguish the recognition of beauty from even the thought of sex. Whether it's for a man or for a woman. And the recognition of beauty is distinct and the failure to recognize that,

though there are some problems with it, is that's where you find the Pope's going around and covering up Michelangelo's statues and pictures. And now, see, when people aren't really balanced and right in their souls, it may be they shouldn't see beauty, because they can confuse it. Like a man or a woman who can't who confuses friendliness and openness from someone as a sexual overture. That's where our minds get twisted. So that a woman might realize that she can't actually be friendly with men because they will think it's sexual overture. So the confusion that comes out of the darkness of the sinful mind blends these things over and we can't deal with them. And there are...you have to have that worked out in yourself in order to draw the distinctions in practice, but it's a very important distinction to draw.

**Q:** [1:10:10] So, you're saying and I agree that, we manipulate our sexuality when really we're searching for intimacy.

**Dallas:** Intimacy, love.

**Student Continues:** Where, how is intimacy experienced for a single person outside of marriage?

**Dallas:** Well, it should be with their families with their friends. And you have to clear your mind as to what intimacy is.

**Student Continues:** [1:10:37] What would you say intimacy is?

**Dallas:** Intimacy (def.) is being present with another person in terms of who they are, where they're going, what they're doing. Sharing Life is intimacy. Sharing life, is a phrase for intimacy. And unfortunately, you can be sexually involved up to your ears and not sharing your life with anyone. The other side is, can you be sharing your life without being sexually involved? If you get your mind messed up enough, then when you see, for example, Jonathan and David, and how intimate they were, you will say they're homosexuals. Because you can't interpret it any other way. Or the tenderness of the grandparent for a grandchild will turn into sexual activity. And that's just a part of the terrible confusion that people fall into when they decline from their knowledge of God that would enable them to be intimate with other persons without sexual involvement.

**Q:** [1:11:54] I ask you to please clarify. Did you say that Matthew 5 when Jesus says, "If you look upon a women lustfully, you have already committed adultery", you said that's in number two?

[\[2. Temptation - Thought & Inclination but not relenting the Will\]](#)

**Dallas:** I said that is a case where temptation cultivated has already turned into number three. But you have to read that language carefully. You don't put anything into it that's not really there. For example, some of your translations say, "who looks at a woman *and* lusts after her". *And*. It isn't "*and*". It's for the purpose of lusting after her. So you have to watch the language carefully.

**Student Continues:** [1:12:44] Okay, but you can say that's three then.

**Dallas:** That's three. They have already consented.

**Student Continues:** [1:12:44] Then what what is your opinion as far as a problem that's so prevalent in the churches today with addiction to pornography? If someone is married to someone who's addicted to pornography, would you say that's a biblical reason for divorce? Because there's no has not been physical consummation. But it's clearly a case of, I don't know, I think Matthew 5.

**Dallas:** [1:13:20] Sometimes I think it clearly is, I just would hesitate to give a general answer without knowing the details of a particular case. I wouldn't want to come down with something that said it is always number three because the complexities of the person that is involved in this. You can have a person who is addicted to pornography, partly because they're so fearful they wouldn't have sex with anyone. That make any sense to you? You see it becomes a substitute for genuine relationships to a woman even at a sexual level. So now, in that case, what would I say? Should they get divorced? Well, it's depends on what's going on in the marriage. Because sometimes, the use of pornography for one partner can simply eliminate real sex. There something needs to be done, maybe divorce. Right. Because it's pathetic how sometimes women or men are made to suffer just because of that.

**Q:** [1:14:37] So, I've always heard that your sexuality is a part of your identity. And so going on with what you said, at some point, that identity is, that our identities that...

**Dallas:** There's a lot of confusion on that. What does that do with sex change operations?

**Student:** Yeah... (pause). [Loud laughter]

**Dallas:** It would mean that you could not be the same person and have a sex change operation, wouldn't it? Our intellectual atmosphere is just full of confusions about this. It doesn't make sense. But I'm sorry, you go ahead.

**Student continues:** [1:15:22] And that's okay. You just said at some point that our identity that we're spiritual beings and are spiritual, right? What is our sexuality?

**Dallas:** Our sexuality is not spiritual. It means it isn't a spiritual reality. It's a glandular, physical, chemical, anatomical part of us. Now, it needs to be subordinated to the spiritual. That's the safe place for it. But that's true of our whole body. Our gluttony is a physical reality. How heavy you are, is not a part of your identity, or how thin you are is not a part of your identity. These are physical traits, and they need to be in subjection to the spiritual.

**Q:** [1:16:12] Earlier, I think you said that our identities are kind of tied to our bodies and our appearance and that continues after death. So I'm just wondering, because I've heard like Jenny [classmate], that our identity is tied to our gender and the way that God created male and female and that maleness and femaleness reflects certain parts of Him uniquely...?

**Dallas:** I don't know about that. I don't think God is in that business. We have we have a tradition that refers to him as male. You can find reasons for that. And then usually, our Reconstructionist friends want to come back and say, "well, we also have reasons for treating him, her female", and that's true. But none of it is because of his genitalia. Because he or she doesn't have any. And that's like what I said about brains. God doesn't have a brain. And you won't have one after you die, at least until the resurrection, and I doubt you'll have one then. I suspect you'll get something better. The brain, after all, it's just a very complicated piece of meat.

Yes, last on this one, last one.

**Q:** [1:17:42] Sexuality in terms of the greater scope of just passion, strong feelings in general. The Gnostic worldview that really grabbed seemed like grappling with aspects of saying the earthly realm was bad spiritual. I don't think that way. Right, strong feelings, therefore, the creative world is lesser, as bad avoided, has resulted in not having good teaching on spiritual passion but subordinated it.

**Dallas:** Very good. Very good. So now you'll find many people who want to jump all the way back, but that's because they lacked good teaching. And, and it can sometimes it couldn't comes in the form if you say that is not essential, that sexuality is not a part of your identity well, then you are downplaying the physical. Well, the object is not to downplay it or up-play it, it's to get it right. And it's not easy. But it can be done. And we have lots of guidance for that if we look for it. We have to be thoughtful. We want to believe that the scriptural teachings in principle deal with these issues. But then we get all kinds of confusions, and these are foisted on youth, and then youth get twisted and hurt by it and it doesn't go well.

I want to suggest that for helping young people there are a couple of books. I think you can still get them by Charlie Shedd - *Letters to Phillip* and *Letters to Karen*. And they are filled with immense good, biblical and pastoral sense. Thank God for Charlie Shed. So *Letters to Karen* and *Letters to Philip*. And they're very helpful with many of these issues.

I think we had better take a break or we won't be able to come back.

~ ~ ~ **End of Session 12 @ 1:20:04** ~ ~ ~

**Session 13** — "[Disciplines: What We Can Learn](#)" [44:18]  
"...and Sermon on the Mount"



**Spiritual Disciplines Review** — I'm not able to have the time to go over each of the disciplines. But now remember when you think about and be clear on what it is. Don't allow yourself to be confused on that. And each of these disciplines that I put on the board, in *The Spirit of the Disciplines* I have discussed each one of them. And each one of them, I tried to discuss what it is, and then what does it do. And hopefully, you will be able to answer those questions. And then the next step is simply put them in practice and learn from them.

**How Does One Practice the Disciplines?** [0:50]

Now, here's a little scratchy outline of how you do it. [\[Screen shot\]](#)

- 1. Decide to Live as Jesus' Student** — And the first thing you do is you decide to live as Jesus' student. You can't get very far if you start messing with disciplines, just sort of to see what happens. That's the first step. So now, why is that the first step? Well, now you are a student. You're a student, now, you're learning.
- 2. Begin to obey His Teaching** — And so you begin to obey His teachings. That's the next step, you don't start by doing disciplines, you begin by trying to obey His teachings. Now, when you do that, you will fail.
- 3. Observe Why You Fail** — So your next step is observe why you fail. If you are unable, for example, we've just been talking about something we might call sexual purity, if you're unable to do that, there is a reason why. Observe why. That may be something like simple habits. You may have a habit of looking at things which you shouldn't be looking at. And so then you have to work that through. And you may have to decide, well, it isn't necessarily a good thing to just look at everything you can look at, think every thought you can think. And then you may say, "Well, but I'm an American. I have a right. I have a right to do that." You have a right to do that. And you also have a right to have the consequences. See, that's the one of the things about choice is you're free to choose in some cases, but you do not choose the consequences of your choice.

4. **Do do in reliance upon the Spirit what will remove the cause of the failure** — So, observe why then do in reliance upon the spirit, what will remove the cause of the failure and those will be disciplines of some sort. Remember, a discipline is something in your power that you do to enable yourself to do what you can't do by direct effort. Right. Now, this list I've given you isn't a complete list. Maybe the thing which would be most helpful to you isn't on that list. I don't know maybe no one else has tried it. That's okay. What's important is that it helps you deal with this issue of failure. Now then the same thing will repeat with the with the discipline. Okay, so now you try to fast and you fail. Why did you fail? See, the secret of the spiritual life is not if at first you don't succeed, try, try again. It is if at first you don't succeed, find out why you fail, fix it, and then try again. That's the way it works.

**Q:** [04:25] So you don't fail at fasting because you're hungry?

**Dallas:** No. You failed because of somehow you were thinking about hunger. Like if you have the habit of thinking, "Oh, I'm hungry. I must eat something." Well, you're going to have to break that habit. Train yourself to think when you feel hungry, "we're really getting somewhere now. I welcome hunger." So you have to do that. Or something like that. You learn you won't die if you don't eat. So this is just a little pattern.

Summary — How do you practice the disciplines? You start with a decision to be a disciple. You begin to try to obey His teachings, you've probably already done that many times. So you're familiar with it. You observe why you fail, which you will certainly do. And then you will do in reliance on the spirit, what would remove the causes of the failure. Again, that's a fairly general sort of way of going about things.

### **The Importance of the Sermon on the Mount**

[05:48]

Now, I wanted you to look with me at the sheet that we handed out earlier. Because I want to, well, because if you ever decide to train people so that they do what Jesus said, you're going to have to come to face the Sermon on the Mount. Because there isn't any place else where a list of condensed commands if you wish, though we must worry about that word, is drawn



together. And actually, when when most people, even who aren't Christians, think about what Jesus taught they normally think about something in the Sermon on the Mount.

### **Things Great Teachers Must Teach** [Screen shot] [06:40]

And as you approach it now, you want to realize that there are a few basic things that any great teacher must teach. Just a few basic things. Every teacher great or small, your local talk radio host, for example, will expound on these. The Buddha has a teaching on these. All of the great religions, Sigmund Freud, has a teaching on these. Big discovery: the sub or unconscious mind, that's a teaching about reality. What is real? Love, the sub or unconscious mind— that's a teaching about reality — what is real. The sub or unconscious mind — that's the discovery. And then who is a really good person, all of these, those are the common...now Jesus is teaching you about these things.

#### **1.) What is reality?** [7:45]

And you have to get a hold of his teaching, which begins on the first Q: — What is real? God in His Kingdom. That includes the natural world. But that's the basic reality that Jesus teaches. That's why he says what he does, that's why he says, "Repent, for the Kingdom of the heavens at hand." [[Matthew 4:17](#)] If it wasn't real, it wouldn't do any good for it to be at hand. Actually it couldn't even be at hand. It's a teaching about reality. That's a teaching in a very chaotic form that dominates our culture — *What is real?* Are you a spiritual being? Or are you a physical being? Hear again, there's all kinds of chaos. Someone was talking, you were talking about people who say, in a sex change operation, "well, I was really a man all along". Alright, well, but now think about what that means. They were not a man. Physically. There's no Q: about that. If it wasn't for that, they wouldn't need a sex change operation would they? So when they say I was really a man, they have suddenly shifted that out of the physical into another realm. And it comes down to things like "Well, I've always felt like" or something of that sort. So you get so many twists on this that are you physical or are you're not? Well, for some purposes I am in for some purposes, I'm not. Reality doesn't work that way.

*So these are the main questions.*

**2.) Who is well off?**

[09:37]

What would you say is the part of Jesus's teachings that most clearly addresses that? The Beatitudes and the Woe-be's. Who has the good life?

**3.) Who is a really good person for Jesus? [10:00]**

Who is a really good person? What does Jesus teach you about that? Someone who loves the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength and their neighbors as themselves." [Mark 12:30-31] Or for short, anyone pervaded with agape love is a really good person. Of course they come together because it's the nature of reality that supports the other answers. The Spirit has to support the really good person, has to lead them into blessedness, and so on.

**4.) How do you become a really good person?**

[10:50]

What does Jesus say? Join the church? Well, that's not a bad idea, necessarily, but it's probably not enough. So, if you were going to tell someone now how to be, how to be a really good person, what would you say to them? You would say, become a disciple of Jesus, wouldn't you? Isn't that what you would say? Or would you say, have a DNA sliced and patched up so that you can't do anything bad? Would that work? Well, I'll tell you, if they ever figure out which piece of DNA does that, you'll hear from it. And we'll fix this up where we can't lie, except the ones who fix us up. They'll reserve a little place for them.

Summary — So now, these are the four great questions. And I hope that you can fit that stuff that we've been working on into this pattern. I try to lay stuff out carefully, give ways of organizing it, some alternative ways of organizing, put them together to provide a conceptual framework for dealing with the basic issue. Our basic issue here is "the human side of holiness" and it's now coming into how to teach someone to do the things that Jesus said.

## The Sermon on the Mount

[12:52]

I want to acknowledge again, that there's a large segment of our own Christian fellowships that just think you can't do it. And that's a fairly routine assumption about the Sermon on the Mount. That the law was given to defeat you real good, and that Jesus is meaner than Moses. And if you think you got Moses, just wait to Jesus gets a hold of you. And you will find out you are really a miserable failure. And that way, you will have to crawl to the foot of the Cross. And that will take care of your problem. But the difficulty there is, that is organized entirely around guilt and what to do with it. And we need to think the thought that Jesus in His teachings, especially in the the Sermon on the Mount, is not concerned with guilt. He is concerned with goodness, and how to enter into it. Be a part of it. Concerned with mistakes about where people go wrong, and he wants to help us deal with that.

## Beatitude Blessedness [14:28]

The first mistake is where's your blessedness? Where's your blessedness? And the big, wrong turn here is to say "getting my way" - that's blessedness. My kingdom is my blessedness and the sad plight of humankind as a result of that is what we see around us. So, now he gives you a new understanding of blessedness. Blessedness is life in the Kingdom of God. So how are you going to get there? Well, of course, you're going to get there by listening to Him. But the main thing He has to tell you is you cannot get there if you do not get some version of righteousness other than that of the Scribes and the Pharisees. We have to spend some time on that verse, that's Matthew 5:20. He has just declared that a bunch of people who in the human kingdom were regarded as hopeless, un-blessable. [[Mt. 5:2-12](#)] He's just declared that in the Kingdom of God they are blessed. And he is really rubbing it in. Because He then turns to them and says, "Now, you are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world." He wasn't just talking to his little coterie of apostles. He was talking to the multitudes that were following Him and that show up at the end of chapter four. And you need to read the description of that group to get the full weight of what the Beatitudes are, because he's speaking to them, including, of course, the apostles. And they are the ones that respond at the end of the Sermon [on the Mount]. That's how you know he's speaking to them. And he's looking at this group of un-blessables, and

starts to show and tell, pulling them out of the crowd and saying, "blessed is this kind of person, because theirs is the Kingdom of God". He's not saying every person like this is saved, every person like this is in the Kingdom of God because they're like this. Not saying that. He is contradicting the general assumption that people like that are not blessed. And he's saying some of those are blessed. Some of those are blessed. Why? Because they're alive in the Kingdom of God. And then, on the basis of that, He talks to them about who is the light of the world, who is the salt of the earth, and they immediately think that He has gone revolutionary. You remember, He says to them, "Do not think", remember that? Maybe you'd better look at the text if you don't. *"Do not think that I have come to destroy the Law and the Prophets"*. [Matthew 5:17] Now, when do you say that to someone? When they're thinking that. They are thinking that. Wait a moment. Now, why would they think that? Because what they had been told about the Law and the Prophets said they were not blessed. And here he comes and says some of those are blessed. Am I making any sense to you? Right? So he's working with a background of assumptions about who is blessed. And, of course, you have to be righteous to be blessed. And therefore, if righteousness has been defined so that you're left out, and the scribes and the Pharisees were very strong on that point. They had defined righteousness so that they were righteous and others were not. Now since they are not righteous, they're not blessed. So if they're blessed, they must be righteous. Now then, we've got to deal with righteousness.

### **Kingdom Righteousness**

[19:50]

Jesus, first of all, reassures them that He's not about to abolish the law. Rather, He's going to show how to do the law, how to fulfill the law. How can you fulfill the law? So now, in making these adjustments, verse 20, *"I'm telling you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of the heavens."* Plural. You will not enter the Kingdom of the heavens. Now, I said to you earlier with reference to this verse, which is so absolutely important in understanding the gospel and the way of Christ, he is not talking about going to Heaven when you die. [Session 2 @ 40:39] He's talking about entering into a living relationship, an interactive relationship with the invisible landscape\*\* now. Okay. He's saying that if you stick at what the scribes and the Pharisee call

righteousness, you will not do that. They don't do it. Because they've got their own kingdom, defined very visibly. And that's where they're ruling and living and so their righteousness turns out to be not righteousness at all. That's something else full of meanness and hypocrisy. A man comes by and does something good on the Sabbath, and they're ready to kill him. So they have long discussions about this.

Now, notice that the word "*surpasses*" in my translation - New American Standard - does not mean you do more of the same thing. That is absolutely crucial. Now to get the meaning here. It doesn't mean the scribes and the Pharisees are running. And you're just going to run faster down the same path. "*Surpasses*" here does not mean more of the same. It means you move into a different kind. You go beyond. And the words exceed and surpasses as translations can be misleading because they suggest to many people that you're just going to do more of the same kind of thing. Uh-uh. You have got to change categories. And that means you're going to get out of the visible landscape\*\*, and you're going to move in the invisible landscape. Now the invisible landscape is the landscape of the Spirit, it is the landscape of the heart. So if you're going to enter the Kingdom of the heavens, you're going to have to move to the level of the heart, of the Spirit. God is looking for people to worship him. But they who worship Him must worship him in spirit, and in truth. Jake...

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

**Q:** [23:37] I'm being taught to do word studies right now, so I'm kind of curious, how did you come to the conclusion that Kingdom of Heavens is not referring to life after death?

**Dallas:** Because of what he says afterwards. Because he gives you contrast between the two ways of righteousness here and now. Okay, because like, for example, "Thou shalt not kill", that's the first contrast — "Thou shalt not kill." And so what is killing is in the visible landscape, right? Then what he starts talking about is anger, and contempt and different attitudes. And that's in the invisible landscape of which you are a part. So you're going to have to go with that part of you which is already in the invisible landscape. And you're going to have to deal in terms of it and that's not Heaven when

you die. Entering the Kingdom of the heavens is a general idea that is present in Matthew and the Kingdom of God and others, and it never refers to going to Heaven when you die. Never. Now, I say that in the midst of scholars and challenge you to show that you're wrong and email me when you find out. Okay? Because that is such an important thing for us because almost everyone when they read, *"you can't enter the Kingdom of Heaven"* they read it as if your righteousness does not surpass that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you won't go to Heaven when you die. And you have to teach yourself to read the scriptures differently when that word "heavens" appears. And that involves some work of digging out the historical meaning of Heavens. For the Jews, there were three heavens. One was, where the birds and the clouds are, and where you are, that one goes all the way down to your socks. That's the first Heaven. The second Heaven is the one between that and the moon. And the third Heaven is the one beyond the moon. The third Heaven is basically where God and the angels dwell. So you want to work that out. Now that's important.

**1st Illustration - Murder & Anger** — Matthew 5:21-26 [26:15]

So let's look at his first illustration. What has changed? Now, remember that these contrasts that go basically to the end of chapter five, are contrasts between the righteousness of the Scribes and the Pharisees and the righteousness of the Kingdom of the heavens. That's what these contrasts are. And if you get the picture, it will light up the page for you. So the first illustration. *"You shall not commit murder, and whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court."* [v. 21] That was it. That's the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees. "I didn't kill anybody." Congratulations, you didn't kill anybody. What's left? Now Jesus says, "I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court." And if you like the easy version, you can add without a cause angry without a cause, I have occasionally little helpful comments that are added in in some of the texts. And the court has sort of like the lowest level of being called to account. *"Whoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca'..."* [v. 23] My margin says empty head or good for nothing. It is...some people think that "raca" is derived from the sound that you make when you clear your throat to spit. I won't make it for you. Spitting, of course, is one of the human expressions of contempt. Used to be much more common than it is now. Baseball players still do it.

"Raca", a term of contempt - twit, twerp - shall be guilty before the Supreme Court. We moved up a notch. Because we've gone from anger to a different attitude - that of contempt. Anger and contempt are very interesting to study. I discuss all of this in the in *The Divine Conspiracy*, chapter five, if you want to look at it in more detail.

*"Whoever shall say, 'You fool!' shall be guilty enough to go into Gehenna"* [v. 22] - the cosmic dump. So, now, what has he done? He has moved further and further from the overt action into the heart. And so far, He's just going down. He's going to come up now just a moment. All of this is a teaching about the righteousness of the Kingdom of God. Now, of course, you can try to treat these legalistically. My grandmother would not allow me to call my playmates a fool. So I said, "Okay, I'll just think it." And do you think that made God happy? Probably not. Because what was troublesome was my attitude, not what I said.

So, now, what is this? This is the righteousness that goes beyond the righteousness of the Scribes and the Pharisee. It says, anger is not a good thing. There is a long discussion here almost as long as sexuality. Anger is an expression of your will being crossed. It's your response to the crossing of the will. And when that happens, the natural response is anger. Anger is an impulse to harm or a willingness to see harm done. When I'm angry at you, I just might hurt you. And since I just might hurt you, I have crossed your will because you don't want me set to hurt you. And so now you're angry at me. That's the way anger is. Anger feeds on anger. Is anger a sin? No, not really. But it's it gets there pretty fast. It gets there pretty fast. And that's why the Scripture tells us to lay aside anger. If it comes, get rid of it quickly and don't adopt it as a method. Many people adopted it as a method of running their kingdom, you will find families that are organized around Papa's anger. We used to have an old talk guy out in Los Angeles named Joe Pine and he used to speak about people who ruled their house with an iron lung. Well, it happens. And you have businesses that are organized around dealing with the angry boss or CEO. I have actually heard of churches that were organized around anger. Some very well known churches.

Well, that's one way of doing it. But Jesus is saying don't do that. And then don't get into contempt. And don't, when you say someone is a fool in



biblical language, you're really coming down on them. It isn't like, we use the word fool. We tend to think the associate fool with foolishness. The biblical fool is a perverse person who is intent on evil. When it says, "*The fool in his heart has said there is no God.*" [Psalm 14:1] this is talking about someone who is really not a good person. And the reason they say there is no God is because they want not to be a good person. They want to be a bad person. Now then, so Jesus is saying, no, no, you gotta go in there and deal with that if you want to be interactive with the Kingdom of the heavens.

**Ritual Worship Interruption** [33:50] Now he's got more to say, listen to this. "*If you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you leave your offering.*" [v. 23-24] That was unthinkable. The only justification you could have for doing that in the Levitical proceedings was if you found something unclean in the offering, or if there was something out of order in the way that it had been prepared and was being presented. In short, the only reason for interrupting an offering was a ritual reading a ritual meaning a ritual reason and then you could interrupt it. No mere moral consideration like, well, you know, I really need to go help my brother who has got something against me and deal with that. That's the curse of the Jewish religion was exalting formalism over the heart and the prophets who are on to that constantly and that's what Jesus is saying here. Now, why would someone do that? Well, I hope they wouldn't do it because they said, "Jesus said do this." The idea is that they would do it because they cared so much about their brother.

### **The Righteousness of the Kingdom in Court** [35:28]

Now we're moving into the righteousness of the Kingdom. One more move — going to law — one of the most unpleasant kinds of occasions in human life, not just in Jesus's day, certainly in our day. If you know people who are caught in this, you know how bitter it is and how sad what it does to people. "*Make friends with your opponent at law.*" [v. 25] Well, that's not what most folks have in mind. When they go to law, what they want is justice defined in terms of how they think they have been wronged.

*"Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, in order that your opponent may not deliver you to the judge, and the judge to the officer and you'll be thrown in prison. Truly I say*

*to you, you shall not come out of there until you have paid the last cent."*  
[v. 25-26]

And that's what is called justice. You want justice? Well, there's a system. You want that to rule your life, you are submitting yourself to a kingdom other than the Kingdom of God. Now, let me jump here because I know that some of you are thinking, "Oh, you shouldn't ever go to law." He didn't say that. I met a man in South Africa who said I will not do business with Christians because I can't sue them. A little distortion of I Corinthians 8, and this passage will get you there. He's not saying you shouldn't work for justice, you shouldn't stand for justice. He is saying love the people who are on the other side and, if possible, find a way to work it out. And if the person says naturally, "yeah, but what about me?" Now, I'm glad you asked. That's where the Kingdom comes in. You approach these things with the attitude, that you are blessed that you are alive in the Kingdom of God. And when the Q: comes up, "well, what about me?", then their answer is already there. What about you? God is about you. Now then you take that step, and lo and behold, you are living interactively with the kingdom of God. That's how you enter the kingdom of God as you move into the domain where God is acting. And you do that by going beyond what is in the action and to what is in the heart. We live in a world in a society that is sick on justice, sick on getting it and sick on not getting it. And the truth of the matter is justice never does justice to justice. Never. Is justice important? Yes, it's important. Especially for those who suffer injustice. But you cannot solve the problem at a social or personal level by just grinding away at the justice button. You've got to move into a different gear and that is what Jesus is talking about. That does not mean you will not stand for what is right. Actually, you will stand for what is right better than you have ever stood for it before. If you respond in terms of anger in justice, you get the very same thing back in your face. If you can stand for what is right and for what is good, even where it involves you, and you should do that. Jesus is not saying don't do that. He's telling you how to do it, telling you how to do it. The only thing that will do justice to justice is love.

So now we have groups that have rightly spoken up about the injustices that they have suffered, including the homosexual group. They have suffered injustices, often from Christians. And they want justice. But let me tell you,

the homosexual group does not want justice. They want someone to love them. Someone to respect them. Someone to say not only, "okay, you got justice", but to say "you are good." That's what they want. I don't blame them. I would want that if I'm homosexual. We all want that we want someone to say to us, "you are good." And you can say the same thing about races, about female/male relationships and so on. You have to stand in a different place if you're going to deal with those issues. But it doesn't say don't deal with issues. It tells you how to do it. And we have to approach that not just as individuals but as a Christian community and then that throws us back into nearly everything we've been talking about.

*Now, just this remark, and we must quit for today. And I will come back to this in the morning.*

[42:12] You have to understand that when Jesus gives the Sermon on the Mount, (you have it there on your sheet right at the bottom) He is not giving laws. He's not saying this is what you must always do. He is talking to you about what the person who is at home in the Kingdom of God will characteristically do when the occasion is right.

We talked earlier about we have to make judgments. If you don't make judgments with Jesus's teachings, you will turn them into legalisms and they will kill you. So you have to understand these are expressions of how people who are alive in the Kingdom of God characteristically behave, not because they're trying to get something, but because they've already got it. They've already got it! And then out of the abundance of what they have, they act. They do not act out of scarcity, out of fear, out of weakness. They act out of strength, out of fullness, out of confidence. And by doing that, they enter into a power that is so great that we can speak of the Kingdom advancing among human beings.

So let me leave you with that now. And I hate to quit because I have so much to say to you but I'm going to wear you completely out. So let's quit for today.

**~ ~ ~ End of Session 13 @ 44:18 ~ ~ ~**

## Session 14 - "Life & Transformation"

[Sermon on the Mount detail]



[57:42]

Now, then we come to the end with today.

[Final day of the Denver Seminary class.]

### Content Overview

I will have to make sure that we get there. So on your outline actually, for the last day, that first part there where it says the will human spirit, heart and soul, I had wanted to talk a little bit more about the soul, but I'm trying to think of what would be best. And so I'm going to not do that specifically. If you, there's a whole chapter on the soul in the *Renovation [of the Heart]* book. And it is very important but we are out of time.

### The Sermon on the Mount Overview

I think of all the things that I try to do in ministry, the thing that seems most helpful to people is actually to talk about the Sermon on the Mount. And I think that's because people have a real hard time with it. And it just seems to me that it opens up life in the Kingdom of the Heavens so beautifully. And, again, I won't have time to deal with all of it. But I want to take our first period today to continue with it. And just say to you that the chapters 5, 6, and 7 of *The Divine Conspiracy* is focused on chapters 5, 6, and 7 of Matthew. And so, if you want to go on with the remarks, I will be able to make in the time that we have, that would be a good place to go.

Now you have a handout. And you may want to keep that up with you. But here's here's the way it looks. [Pointing to the handout. See the study guide next page.]

And basically, this part here is chapter 5 runs to here. [A to E]

This is chapter 6. [F and G]

And this is chapter seven. [H]

The heart that Jesus gives us—seen in the Sermon on the Mount"  
"A GOOD TREE CANNOT BRING FORTH BAD FRUIT"

Trust in Jesus will bring us to being the kind of person who:

- A. Lives free of contempt and anger (Mt. 5:21-26)
- B. Is free from domination by sexual lust and disgust (Mt. 5:27-32)
- C. Is free of desire to dominate and control verbally (Mt. 5:33-37)
- D. Is free from grudges, 'fairness', and 'paying back' (Mt. 5:38-42)
- E. Is able to love enemies and bless those who curse, etc. (Mt. 5:43-48)
- F. Does not 'perform' for human credit (Mt. 6:1-18)
- G. Does not trust in physical substances (money, etc.) (Mt. 6:19-34)
- H. Does not manage others by condemnation 'condemnation engineering' (Mt. 7:1-12)

The commands' of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount are invitations to be a certain type of person, a person who through faith and discipleship to him has become inwardly transformed so that his behaviors flow naturally (supernaturally, of course) from who they now are as his mature brothers and sisters under the present rule of God.

~ ~ ~ End of the Handout/Transparency on the Screen ~ ~ ~

Now I don't deal with everything that's in the Sermon [on the Mount], especially at the end, because the end consists of some admonitions about how you can tell who is really living there and who is not. And it is, among other thing, a teaching that we are actually supposed to do the things that he said. And he's, it gets pretty grim before you get to the end, because he's talking to people who say that they have done various kinds of things and for the Lord and claim to know him, and his response is not you don't know me. His response is, "I don't know you". And there are two sides to that. And the mark of knowing him was that they actually did the will of the Father which is in Heaven and that has spelled out in what he has been teaching. Again, not as laws. That's what will kill you. Not just with the Sermon on the Mount, but any of Jesus's teachings. And I hope you will remember my saying that if you want to keep the law, don't try to keep the law. [[Applied to pornography - Session 4 @ 13:00](#)] Concentrate on becoming the kind of person who would keep the law. And that's what sets you free, liberates you into the holiness and power that comes from living as a disciple of Jesus in the Kingdom of God. So now let's go back to the Sermon [on the Mount] and spend our time.

What is our first break, Howard?

**Professor Dr. Baker** You can probably go until 10:30 then you can take a break.

**Dallas:** Well, okay, all right, well, I'm afraid I won't need to. But...the mind can only absorb, as you know, what the behind kind can stand. I assumed you had heard that.

### **Review of Session 13 - Contrasting Righteousness** [05:42]

So, now I did talk through the very first contrast between the righteousness of describing the Pharisee and the righteousness of the Kingdom. [Session 13 @ 15:15] We talked through that. And we talked about how Jesus turns to the attitude of the heart as manifested in anger and contempt, and calling people fools. [Session 13 @ 26:45] And then turns positive, and teaches us how careful we are to be about an offended sister or brother, that we are to be more careful about that than we are about our religious observations. [Session 13 @ 33:50] And you okay on that? That's where he says, leave your gift at the altar, and so forth. And then how the final positive step in deepening the righteousness of the Kingdom is when he talks about people who have a disagreement going to law, to settle it. [Session 13 @ 36:05] And how the Kingdom way would be to find, if possible, a way to make your opponent your friend. And probably, that would lead to working out the difficulty. And we talked about how you have to have the Kingdom resources in order to do that. Because you have to be able to step beyond the Q: , "Well, what is going to happen to me if I don't get what I demand?" [Session 13 @ 38:05 ] And the answer is, "I'm taken care of. I'm taken care of." [Session 13 @ 43:00]

Now, that whole passage really simply points us to the surrender of the will to the care of the Father. The way to learn how to step free from anger is the surrendered will. Because anger is a will problem. And then, we didn't have time to cover all of it. But again, I just have to refer you to chapter 5. Sorry to seem like I'm selling books, but just have to forgive me for that. Because, really, you need to work through this carefully. And, and you need to understand exactly what anger is and how it works and why it's not a sin in itself, but why it's so close to it. It's so close to it. And it's very hard. You

don't want to live there. It's one thing to feel the pain of anger for a moment, and have your attention called to something that needs to be dealt with. But it's another just to live there and be an angry person. And, and of course, forgiveness fits in here. Because forgiveness is a way of dealing with injury that tends to lead to anger and resentment, and thanks be to God, you don't have to go there. You don't have to live there. So that I hope will give you a sense of Kingdom righteousness.

### **The Sermon on the Mount**

[9:50]

Now then, Jesus is not theorizing here. He's starting at street level where people really live and that's why he starts with anger and contempt. He could leave it to his followers from Paul and John all the way up to you modern scholars to elaborate theoretically, what love is, but he's going right at it, where the problem lies in ordinary life.

### **Violence (Anger) & Sex — Matthew 5:27-30**

[10:25]

And so the next things he takes up is sex. And so you can see that he was quite modern, because sex and violence, violence and sex, are the two things that constantly preoccupy human beings, and especially in a society such as our own.

Now, this is because of the progression that you find in Romans 1. Because when people put God out of their knowledge, then he lets them go. He lets them go. And of course, keeping God in your knowledge is in a capsule form the solution to all problems. But Romans 1 is a story put in a large historical framework of what happens when people refuse to retain God in their knowledge. And they turn to their body and their body can do primarily two things.

1.) It can exercise violence on other people. And that will happen because when you put God out of your knowledge, your kingdom is the only one that is left, and the only way you can make it work is violence. And that's why violence is so common. And that's why the first two people that were born, one of them killed the other one.

2.) The other one is pleasure. And the most immediate form of pleasure is bodily pleasure. And the most constant form of bodily pleasure is sexuality.



So you want to understand that when you look at what Jesus is doing here, he is working in an order. Now, you might expect that if you thought he was smart, you know, you might expect that he would have a conceptual order and knowledge. And what he's saying is you start with violence. And you deal with that, and you deal with the sources of violence. Then you won't have to worry about killing someone because if it comes up, it will be very rare. And normally, killing comes from anger, and contempt, or some mixture of that. And so you want to when you come to verse 27 in [ch] 5, you want to have already dealt with anger.

### **Sexuality & Lust**

[13:21]

That's very important to understand now and you can ask yourself the Q: - if it were not for anger and contempt, how much would go wrong in sexuality? Pull the anger out, pull the contempt out, and you have transformed sexuality. And I don't have time to elaborate that on great length, but you need to think about it and divorce. And he treats divorce under the heading of sexuality because most of the issues that lead to divorce, not all of them, but most of them have their roots, at least in anger and desire, and in anger that arises out of frustration of desire. And what he's actually talking about here is how to be free, how to be free from domination by sexual desire. And he's addressing the particular point about cultivating lust by using a person to excite it. That's what he's talking about. To go back to our discussion yesterday, [Session 12 @ 49:00] he's not talking about the thought, he's not talking about being tempted, though that's dangerous. He's talking about purposefully cultivating sexual desire and letting it roam and using people for that purpose. And together with that he's putting the issue of divorce because divorce normally comes out of some desire issue, not necessarily sex. And indeed, he's talking about desire here, generally, he's just taking the one that causes the most trouble. But for example, we all know I think how many...how much problems in relationships come from money issues. Money issues are basically desire issues. And that's a complicated and important topic.

But now, please, after you read 29, um 28, *"I say unto you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her, has committed adultery with her*

*already in his heart.*" That's because the will is involved here. "To lust". See, that is a purposive action in which the will is already implicated. And that's why he says what he does about it not because of the thought, not because of the temptation. Now, he says something that has caused people so much trouble, because they read this as Pharisees. And now there's teaching you're going to have here is precisely directed at the Pharisees interpretation and I must try to make sure that you see it. Is adultery with her already in his heart? This is a matter of the heart and the heart, actually isn't that pump in your chest. It's what we've talked about as your spirit and your will. [\[Session 3 @ 44:45; #6 @ 36:45\]](#)

[17:18] And now, he says [\[v. 29\]](#) , *"If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you, for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell."*

Okay, that's true, isn't it? If you could purchase Heaven by pulling out your eye, it would be a bargain, wouldn't it? So, okay, that's true. And this teaching shows up elsewhere in the Gospels, and let's concede that point. But if you think that's the point of this passage, you will miss the point. Look at what he says.

*"It is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you. For it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish than for the whole body to go into hell."* [\[v. 29b-30\]](#)

Now, what do you think he's saying there? What is the point? And for most people they read, "Well, the point is, I should punch out my eye. I should cut off my hand." The point is, that if you did, it wouldn't help. Because your problem is a heart problem. And he is doing what in logic we call a *reductio ad absurdum*. You ever hear that phrase? Who thought that sin was with their members? Who thought that? The Pharisees. That's who he's talking to? *"Say listen, you guys have got a system nice system. Just dismember yourself so you cannot act outwardly. And you roll into Heaven a mutilated stump."*

Do you think that was what Jesus was saying? No. He is drawing the implication of the righteousness of the scribe and the Pharisee and saying this shows that that righteousness is mistaken. Are you with me? Okay. Now you don't have to believe what I'm saying to you. And you will have to test this out. You are scholars, you are students. And so now you have to think this through and decide whether or not this is correct. One reason why you can't make disciples is people read this and say, "Well, gee, it's like reading the Beatitudes, Blessed are the poor, I ain't gonna do that." Or, you do it in a way that it doesn't mean poverty, it's just symbolic. Because now, you don't have title to anything. So you don't own it. You just use it. So you're poor.

Now, the important thing here is to get the point. And this goes back to the issue that I spoke about earlier about how Jesus teaches. [Session 5 # 6:20] He teaches by undermining prevailing assumptions. What is the prevailing assumption here? The prevailing assumption here is that righteousness is a matter of what you do. Are you with me? And just like in the case of killing, it isn't a matter of what you do. It's true you shouldn't kill people, murder people. It's true you shouldn't commit adultery. But if that's all you have not done, you're a long way from where you ought to be. A person who has learned to see another person as a child of God with a destiny in God's great universe, and does not use them to cultivate their lust or whatever other purpose, is a person who will not have a problem with adultery. Are you with me, see?

So what Jesus is saying, "Go to the root." When I got on the airplane, to come to Denver, I didn't have to worry about not going to Seattle, though that illustration is a little stretched. But you get the point. I didn't have to not go there and not go there and not go there. Because I was going to Denver. Now, Pharisaical righteousness is almost 100%, "Don't do this, don't do that. Don't do the other." And when you step into Kingdom righteousness, you get away from the "Don'ts". Not because they're not important, they are important. Outward behavior is very important. And one of the reoccurring disasters in Christian history has been people who discovered that it was not most important, and concluded it wasn't important at all. And that's the root of what is called antinomianism. The idea that since I am saved by grace, then I can do anything. That just makes you sick to think about how confused people can get and the terrible things they can do. But you just

want to remember, the devil sets up 24/7 to mess people's ideas up. Because he knows that we run from our ideas, really, and if you can get a hold of them, then he'll take us where he wants us.

**Divorce** Matthew 5:31-32

[24:30]

If you pull, anger, contempt, and illicit lusting out of divorce, how many divorces do you think would be left? Now think that, think the thought was me, folks. Okay. I'm gonna say it again. If you pull anger and contempt and verbal abuse, you can call "Raca" and "Thou fool" verbal abuse. If you pull that and illicit lusting, how much divorce would be left? Somebody say something? Not many, not many. And divorce is one of the most wounding things that people live through. And that's why when you come down to the last book in the Old Testament, [Malachi 2:16] you have a statement about in that context, divorcing the wife of your youth, putting her away — trading your 40 in for two 20s.

And now, it of course, it's stated that way, and Jesus's teaching is conditioned on the practice that it was almost never that a woman divorced a man. In fact, there were no rituals for that even though the Old Testament provided for a woman divorcing a husband. But that's, you know, you want to always remember that the law is one thing, but when you see the Law and the Prophets referred to in the New Testament, it is normally not to the Mosaic law, but to the interpretation of the Mosaic law that had developed by the time Jesus and Paul are on the grounds. And it was a brutal, mean system designed for the crushing of people and Jesus really lays it out. The only times you can sort of see him just dismantling people is when he gets into this in passages like, what is it I think, Luke 14, and or Luke 13, maybe, and Matthew 23. "*Woe be to you lawyers. You impose backbreaking burdens on simple common people and you will not move a finger yourself to lift that burden.*" [v. 1-4] So the law and the prophets have become a system of privilege. And that's why Jesus just comes up and slaps the whole system in the face with the Beatitudes. He takes the ones that are crushed by that system and says, you know, you can be there and blessed at the same time.

Well, divorce, of course, is a huge topic. I guess the main thing I want to say to you is that Jesus does not forbid divorce. He describes the disaster,

especially that happens to a woman in this culture by divorce. And, again, I do discuss that further in the fifth chapter of *The Divine Conspiracy*.

**Not Make False Vows** Matthew 5:33-37

[29:00]

Well, the old law says you will not make false vows in verse 33. "*You shall not make false vows, you shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.*" That was the righteousness of the scribe and the Pharisee. Here's the righteousness of the kingdom. [v. 34] "*I say to you, make no oath at all, either by the heavens, for it is the throne of God or by the earth, for it is his footstool, the footstool of his feet.*" God reaches all the way down to the ground. That's important to understand now about the kingdoms. The Kingdom of the heavens goes all the way to the ground. "*Nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. Nor shall you shall you make an oath by your head for you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your statement be, yes, it's this way, or no, it's not that way. Anything beyond these is of evil.*" [v.34b-37]

What's that about? Well, obviously, it's about not taking an oath in court. So you have groups that make a big deal, they will not make an oath in court. Jesus said, "*Don't do it. That's a law.*" So I won't do it.

Well, if you read the words there carefully, you will see that he's talking about using language in such a way as to get people to do what you want them to do. So when someone says, "By God!", what are they doing? Well, sometimes they have no idea of what they're doing. But, you ever hear anyone say, "I'll bet the devil my head that Texas is going to win"? What this is talking about, it isn't talking about cussing by the way. That's another topic. It isn't talking about filthy language. That's another topic. It's talking about using a statement in such a way as to convince others to do something or believe something which they don't want to believe or do. This is a particular form of what is called "a song and dance". And it's what dies back of it is manipulation. It is a manipulative device where someone in their little finitude is standing here, and they want to get someone to do something. And so they rip off some big declaration. Don't swear. Now, Jesus was not teaching that you should never promise God something. That has its own problems. He's not saying you shouldn't resolve to do things and ask God to help you. He is saying just state things the way they are. That's what

letting your yes be a Yes is. You just say it's this way. Or, your no be a No. Just say no. It's not like that. Now, to just latch on to that and say, "well, there's a little verbal thing here that I have here..." No, no, it's getting to your heart. Are you willing to let people make up their own minds on the basis of truth? Now he's saying, if you're not, you got a problem. You can blame it on the devil like some translations do here. But that's an interpolation more than "this comes from evil". The evil that it comes from is your desire to manipulate people and get them to do things that they don't really want to do. And that involves a lot of religion folks. And we need to be able to speak plainly, to state how things are, to present as to people in love, and let them decide. And that's what Jesus is talking about because this is way up there in human devices. And one of the benefits of the practice of silence will be to help you stop doing what Jesus is talking about. It will help you let your Yes be Yes and your No be No, because what silence does is train your will, so that you are able to direct your speech in terms of what is good and not necessarily what you want. This is another dimension of desire that Jesus is dealing with here and it's the heart. The Kingdom heart is one that stands freely and does not utter yeses that are no's and no's that are yes.

On a favorite comic - one of those little comics of mine is out of "The New Yorker". They're very good with some of these things. And it shows a man sitting here on this side of the desk, and another man sitting over here, and out of this man's mouth comes a bunch of yeses. "Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes." And they form a cloud that says "No!"

That's a great illustration, you'll see because it's, I mean, look at advertisements. For goodness sakes, what does it have to do with anything they show you all and tell you all these lovely little stories? I remember one that was advertising a Subaru by showing it driving along a road beside some mountains and a goat running on the mountain. What's the point? It's association. The suggestion is that the Subaru can do what the goat does. Watch advertisements. Watch how we advertise our services. If all of the services that promised to change your life if you came, changed your life, we would have been in the millennium a long time ago. Let's see that's what Jesus is talking about here. *Yes, sir.*

**Q:** [37:39] Could this also be omitting things, like allowing people to believe certain things about situations?

**Dallas:** By omitting things. Yes, well, is the function to manipulate them into something? Then that's it. Because see, that's what he's teaching about is manipulating people by your language that perhaps omits a few things. And now, what are you going to do, what are you going to do, if you don't do that? Well, you're going to have to trust God, aren't you. And when we're promoting our religious operations, we want to really be careful about the language we use. Or they will actually turn out to the acts of not trusting God, or trusting the power of language to manipulate people. And you can even do that in giving an invitation. And one of the reasons why we have so many people who are Christians but not disciples is because they were brought in to the membership of the church in a way that was misleading. And now then, to jump to my very last topic after brunch, you as a leader have to deal with those folks. And they are going to think this is bait and switch. I didn't buy the discipleship car, I bought the Christian car. Now know you're trying to sell me this discipleship car. Get out of here. *Ingrid.*

**Q:** [39:40] I wanted to just give a small example but a very powerful one. When I was 14, and it was, it was catechism. We were trained. And and I recently got out the picture of that as archiving family photos. And here were 10 young people who were 14. And everyone had this horrible look on their face, drained and whatever. And I remember thinking, how this is what you had to do. What is his name and you know proof-text and you had to be in front of the congregation. And I look back at that and we have a guy who had a learning disability, you know, young woman that came from a tragic background and whatever. And at that moment, I thought we were manipulating people in the name of Jesus, to follow the law.

**Dallas:** All in a good cause. So now if you're when you're dealing with people, and you're trying to teach them, you remember, you don't push things, you don't force things. You don't get a turtle to stick its head out by whacking it with something. You let it decide. You let it decide. Yes, sir.

**Q:** [40:50] You know, if there's some sense of our language being used to convince and persuade, and, you know, almost in all language, what perhaps, would be the distinction between manipulation and persuasion? Or, you know, in some senses, is it truth is the same? Or



**Dallas:** You can, you can use as a rule of thumb — Whose good is at issue? If you are using persuasion for the good of the person you're talking to, you have to be careful, but there is a legitimate use of that. But if you're using persuasion for your benefit, stop it. That any good?

**Q:** [41:40] But always be thinking that you're benefiting them by getting them saved...is that what you meant?

**Dallas:** Well, I would...truth is a good guideline. But even within the limits of truth, you want to distinguish whose interest is being served? The old rule in criminal law — follow the money? *Yes, ma'am.*

**Q:** [42:10] Of course, my mind is going directly to educational context of teaching and lecturing. How important then is it to incite dialogue, questions?

**Dallas:** Well, this is a an important way of staying out of what Jesus is talking about. As you engage in dialogue. If you're engaging in dialogue in a context, so it's clear, you're not trying to manipulate people, and you're aiming at truth, that will help a lot. And that's why the "sit down and shut up" method of instruction or religious teaching is not a good one. We need to let people talk back. And the hard questions, sometimes the questions we don't know how to answer, those are the ones we need to listen to.

*Yes, go ahead.*

**Q:** [43:15] In regards to the act of preaching, there is a school of thought that we should stop "speaching", and began to use dialogue in the proclamation of God's Word.

**Dallas:** And with reference to preaching, yes, "there's a time to preach and there's a time not to preach". You can add that one to the list in Ecclesiastes. And it's important to understand that Jesus did both. And I gave you the three activities of Jesus preaching or proclamation — that's making announcements, manifesting, and teaching. [Session 1 @ 12:25; #9 @ 48:00] The teaching requires that you really understand what you're talking about. And one reason why we revert to preaching is because we feel uncertain. And so we don't want to open the questions up and try to teach because we're uncertain. And I want to talk about that after the break. Okay.

**Eye for an Eye & Loving Enemies - Matthew 5:38-42** [44:20]

Now, just to make sure you've got the main idea here: Jesus is not laying down things for you to do like a law. You go on to the others and, by the way, you want to keep in order here, what's going on before you come to "resist not evil" [5:38]. Make sure you've taken care of not swearing, not cultivating lust, not being filled with anger because if you try to not resist evil, "whoever slaps you on the right cheek turn to him the other" [v. 38]. If you try to do that without having taken care of the others, basically you will be a failure. If you are a person full of anger, you will have slapped the person before you thought. So, keep that idea of progression here and stay with it to the end of the the Sermon [on the Mount] if you can. So, that will keep you from saying, "Okay, I'll turn the other cheek and then I'll knock your head off." You've heard that said, haven't you? And of course that goes right back to Pharisaic righteousness. I've done my duty. Jesus said, turn the other cheek. Here it is and then "Pow!"

What is it teaching? Well, now remember the principle — Jesus is teaching by contradicting a prevailing assumption. The prevailing assumption is the one expressed in the "lex talionis" [(def.) "law of retribution in kind"], which is stated just before that an eye for the eye and tooth for the two. And you want to remember that that was a huge move forward in grace because that was designed to keep us from taking two eyes for an eye and two teeth for a teeth and probably your whole head. See, it's like people, they don't understand the beauty of the old law because again, they don't go to the intention, and they read if if you have a child who is so obstreperous and disobedient, you can't control him, then bring him to the elders of the town. And the elders of the town will consider the case and it may be that they will then stone that child and kill him. You didn't know that was in there did you? Now that sounds awful, doesn't it? Sounds awful. Okay, here was what was worse. One day dad gets so mad at that kid that he simply takes him out of the back of the back of the house and cuts his throat. And in all of the ancient societies, that was something that was in the province of the father. So, now do you think it would be better to let that prevail, or try to do something about it? So, actually, this law is an advance in mercy and justice. And the "lex talionis" is an advance in mercy and justice. "An eye for an eye." And we think, "Oh, no, that's terrible." No, no, it's better than a head

for an eye. Now, this get into lots of issues about the progress of God in dealing with his people and so on, but when you come to Jesus, now, he's going beyond that. And the rest of the teaching there in chapter 5 is about largely about that. It's about going beyond and, and teaching a better way, a better way.

So, what's being undermined - the Law of Retaliation. That's the Pharisaical understanding an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. And you will get out of that, that you not only have an obligation not to take two, you have an obligation to take one and that would be called justice. And now Jesus says, "No, you don't have an obligation to do that." Don't retaliate. Don't live in retaliation. Don't let that be a principle of your life. Live with the Kingdom understanding that sometimes you simply want to forgive and say, "Okay, we will pick up and go on from here". That doesn't mean that you forget that the person punched your eye out. It doesn't mean that now you don't know that he's the kind of person who would do that. It doesn't mean that but it does mean that you just don't sock them back. You open up a space in which grace and judgment and love can intervene.

*Pacifism* — This passage, let me just say has absolutely nothing to do with pacifism. So let me just make a brutal statement to that effect, and then you have to worry about it. But it has nothing to do with pacifism. It's not talking about that issue. That's a separate issue. And of course, it is one that is important, very important, but don't misuse the Scripture, if you can keep from it.

*"Whoever shall force you to go a mile. Go with him two."* [Matthew 5:41]  
Well, okay. You forced me to carry the load a mile. But Jesus said, "Carry it two." So I'll have to carry it a mile further down the road. "Well, but I don't want to go a mile further down the road. I want to stop here." Yeah, but Jesus said! Not a law. What's it saying? Well, it's saying if particularly a Roman soldier compels you to carry on a load for a mile, don't drop it on his foot at that point and walk off. Consider whether or not he needs more help.

Am I making any sense to you? You see, that changes the relationship entirely. That's what Jesus is after.

Well, I wish I had time to go on like this. I wish I had time to talk to you about the rest of the Sermon [on the Mount]. I refer you to those chapters I mentioned.

## **Prayer & The Lord's Prayer**

[52:25]

Chapter 7 is just so wonderful in teaching about community and about how community is related to prayer. I want to give you a version of the Lord's Prayer, which is, of course - The Disciples Prayer — that might help you to see it better in the Kingdom contexts that we've been talking about now and hopefully, you can think it differently. This is this is from chapter 7 of *The Divine Conspiracy*. So if you don't want to have to write it down, you can find it there.

*Dear Father always near us.*

("Our Father, who art in Heaven..." What's that mean? Our Father who are far away, and much later. See? No, this is what it is "Our Father who art in Heaven"...the Father always near us.)

*May your name be treasured and loved,  
May your rule be completed in us,  
May your will be done here on earth  
And just the way it is done in Heaven.  
Give us today the things we need for today,  
And forgive our sins and impositions on you,  
As we are forgiving all who in any way offend us.  
Please don't put us through trials,  
But deliver us from everything bad,  
Because you are the one in charge,  
And you have all the power, And the glory is all yours — Forever  
Which is just the way we want it!*

Now, I would just encourage you to this. I know I'm not I'm trying to replace the old version. You can't do that. It's wonderful, the wording, but the trouble is the wording that is used often insulates us from having getting the real meaning that is contained in the words.      Yes?

**Q:** [54:48] The line about "please don't put us through trials" seems to go against what Paul was saying that we should be rejoicing in our sufferings.

**Dallas:** Paul doesn't say that you should ask for trials. He doesn't say that you should not ask for not having trials. I'm glad you said this because I run into constantly people who think you're supposed to ask for trials. You rejoice in your trials. Sure. But you should ask not to be led into temptation. Now temptation isn't what happens when you're tempted to sin. This is about hard times. You should ask, not to be led in hard times. This is this is a child's prayer. A child's prayer...little child. You are a little child in the Kingdom of God and you should ask that you be spared tribulations. Now, when they come to them, then you should, as Calvin says, receive them as something in which God will bless you. And then you can jump up and down because of the good that you are going to see come out of that. But you should ask not to be put through trials.

Okay, well, you know, if you'd like, you can do it however you want to. I'm just suggesting that you try to read this in the spirit of the Kingdom of God, and see what the Kingdom of God...this is a Kingdom prayer. And once you get it, I recommend trying at the end, instead of saying, that's just the way we want it, or you can say that. But instead of saying "Amen", you might try saying, "Whoopee!" Try it. It'll do something for you. This is a prayer that just is so wonderful that once you get it you may want to dance while you pray it.

So, now, joy is in the prayer and joy is in the Kingdom.

~ ~ ~ **End of Session 14 @ 57:42** ~ ~ ~

Session 15 - "[Change, Disciplines, Indirection](#)"  [37:59]

**3 Paths of Christian Progress** [bold below are on the overhead screen]

Now there are in general, you get three kinds of responses to the kinds of things that we're talking about when we start talking about obeying and teaching the things that Jesus taught. And I've had a lot of joy and delight in teaching this to people, especially get them cornered in a place like this, and get the intensity. And actually, I think you can learn a lot about how to teach people to do the things that Jesus said just by reflecting on your experience here in terms of the intensity. Remember what I said about you can't get a shower by one drop off every five minutes for 3 years. Most of what we do, in the way of church services is like that, frankly. And so a part of our strategy, if we're going to teach people is to arrange different occasions. I don't recommend that you throw out what we do in the way of regular church services, though I do have some recommendations that I will talk about after brunch about changing them somewhat. But in general, you don't start by changing things like that. If you do, you'll just have a wonderful brawl. Even trying to change the way the seating is arranged in an auditorium is like the Civil War all over again.

Now, what I have found is that people struggle on these first two of three paths of Christian progress. [Screen shot in **bold** below]

**1.) Try Harder to Live Up to the Commandments** — One is to try harder to live up to the commandments - don't do it. And that's what makes people hopeless. Obviously, there should be a desire to keep the commandments. But you don't get there by trying harder. I mentioned earlier that the secret is not trying but training. And that's what I've been trying to do and lay a foundation for, in what we have spent our time on.

**2.) Live in Defeat and Call it "Brokenness" and Rest on Forgiveness by Grace** — Number two is live in defeat. It's remarkable how much there is that recommends this today, I want to call it to your attention and not mention any names. But once you understand this, you will recognize it as you read popular magazines, and books and things of that sort. That the the response to the problem is call it brokenness. And rest on forgiveness by grace. Well, you better do that anyway. But brokenness has become exalted,

in recent years, as a constant condition in which you must live. Don't sing that song to me about victory in Jesus. They ain't no victory Jesus, you just stay broken until you're dead and out of here, and something will automatically happen. And you become a person who is comfortable in righteousness probably because you're ready, you are rid of that despicable sack you call your body.

So, there's tons of misunderstandings here, some of which I've touched on more or less, but just think a moment about the first two: try harder, or give up. And as I say, I don't want to mention names you some of them are very popular. They're very good people and they're very good writers but you can identify them. Say where does it come out? And actually a good place. I will say a good place to watch for this is in the magazine "Christianity Today". Then, I mentioned that because it's a very balanced magazine. It's a very good magazine, but watch what shows up and you're going to identify one way you let the steam off is live in brokenness. And that will go with the gospel that is predominant in those circles which is forgiveness.

*Yes, ma'am.*

**Q:** [5:27] If you try to help people differentiate between brokenness and humility, how would you go about defining the difference?

**Dallas:** I would say that humility empowers you. And brokenness doesn't. Remember what humility is now and here again, I go back to the book -- what?

**Student:** Living in dependence. [[Session 5 @ 19:45](#)]

**Dallas:** Absolutely right. Give that girl an "A" in the course. That's right. Now you see, brokenness is a limited form of dependence. Its dependence on forgiveness. Yes.

**Q:** [6:10] What would you think of this idea - that there is a degraded brokenness, a degraded brokenness, which is the brokenness that Christ came to heal and we don't live in that one. But we live in a state of holy brokenness, which is Isaiah 6 of "Woe is me because I'm unclean and need him. I need the holiness of God..."?

**Dallas:** Well, now, you need to go through that. The Q: is if you're going to live there. And now, the way that would show up as you go on would



precisely be learning more and more of dependence upon God. But as you learn more and more of dependence upon God, you are going to find that you don't have to try harder and that you wind up doing what Jesus said.

See, the second point here goes with living in **Romans 7**. You understand what I'm saying? It goes with living in Romans 7. You just don't go on to chapter eight. You just say, "*Woe is me, woe is me, Woe is me. Who shall deliver me from this body of death?*" Nobody is going to deliver me. I'm so broken. Paul didn't do that. He moved right on. Now, having been broken, was a great benefit to him. But that wasn't his whole life.

Now, in one retreat setting, a wonderful fellow named Don Engebretsen. I don't know if you know him. He's a part of the leadership of one of the denominations in Chicago, a wonderful man. After struggling with this for most of his life, trying harder for the most part. Because actually, if you do believe number two, your conscience will not leave you alone. And you wind up trying harder.

### **3.) Progress Toward the Character and power of Christ by Indirection: disciplines in the process of spiritual formation toward Christlikeness — [8:40]**

And so in the process of the experience and the teaching, the third option here is progress toward the character and power of Christ by indirection. That's the way disciplines work is indirection. That's true in any area. You don't just start with Beethoven's "Appassionata Sonata" and try real hard to play it. If you succeeded, it wouldn't be because you have become a musician. Maybe you have become a robot. Progress toward the character and power of Christ by indirection, discipleship and active grace with disciplines in the process of spiritual formation towards Christlikeness. I would like to just pause a moment and ask you to look at that [\[The 3 points on the screen\]](#) and see if you feel you understand that because this is the whole deal as far as the human side of holiness is concerned.

This was Don's exclamation when he came in about the middle of the second week of the retreat. "*This is too good not to be true.*"

It's too good not to be true. And the fact of is that this is the scriptural teaching in the New Testament. This is the record of the people of Christ down through the ages. There's a lot of deviation and missing, and it doesn't make you perfect, and you can't reduce it to a mechanism. That's one reason why I purposely avoid trying to package the stuff too tightly is because it isn't meant to be like that it is meant to be a personal walk with the Lord. It is meant to be a personal walk with the Lord. And, and when we are helping people with it we want to remember that. That we can instruct them. We can set examples, we can answer questions, we can do all of that. But what it comes down to is what is happening with them and the Lord. Yes?

**Q:** [11:15] So indirection is your walk with God?

**Dallas:** Yeah, well, that's what goes on in your walk with the Lord. The indirection is through discipline. And remember that thing I said to you over and over now, don't try to do what he said. Try to become the kind of person who would do what he said. [[Session 4 @ 13:00](#); [#14 @ 4:25](#)] That's the indirection. That's the indirection. So running scales — that's the indirection. Because if you do that, it turns out, you can actually do that other stuff that Beethoven wrote out for you. And it will be something of a surprise and a gift when you do. And that will always be true of how all of our growth in the Lord. Yes?

**Q:** [12:05] I just want to make sure you're using the word indirection here in the sense to describe what we've been talking about this week about not trying directly but trying to be a person that can do it?

**Obedience is the Key** (Dallas) Absolutely right. Indirection means you do one thing by doing another. And that's why "try harder" fails. It tries to do the other without doing the one thing. And if you don't get the full scheme, then you turn the discipline into what it's all about. And that's what you see this all over the place you go to things supposed to deal with spiritual formation, and you find out spiritual formation is about disciplines. Give us a cotton picking break. The whole thing is about obedience. And you can, now you can test programs and speakers about spiritual formation by discerning whether or not it comes out at obedience. And it will so often it will stop at disciplines. Yes, sir.

**Q:** [13:22] You might have already touched on this so I apologize. But, with regard to the human side of holiness, how would you define conscience?

**Dallas:** Well, the conscience is not a reliable sort of thing. If you have learned to walk in holiness your conscience will be completely reliable. But if you haven't, you need to watch it. And you need to keep it at least running parallel with the Scripture. If you do that, it's a very good thing. But actually, I would prefer to also keep it in touch with the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Now we haven't, you know, I wrote a whole book on *Hearing God*. We haven't talked about that. But you want to become familiar with what it is like to be spoken to by the Holy Spirit. And then you have conscience also. And then you have the scripture. And if you're lucky, you have a good companion or two. And you listen to those, and you will probably stay on the right direction. Yes?

**Q:** [14:52] I'm trying to put the pieces together about what what you spoke about about [hope?] . And it seems to me that we have a church history of dealing with problems by going to the opposite end of the spectrum. So, like right now, I feel like people don't even recognize sin. So we have to go to this end of the spectrum of teaching them that they have to be broken. I'm just curious if I'm on the right track there. And that's kind of a way of being manipulative?

**Dallas:** It depends on how you do it. If you do it by speaking truth, and allowing the Spirit to work with you. Ah, that's the way you ought to do it.

**Student continues:** [15:39] Seems like we can miss truth...

**Dallas:** We can absolutely.

**Student continues:** ...and we try to jerk people back in line...

**Dallas:** Yeah. Well, in general, you want to stop trying to get people to do things.

**Student continues:** That's what it feels like sometimes happens when you look back at church history, when there's a problem we kind of want to jerk people back into...

**Dallas:** It's the natural tendency to make one's own kingdom prevail. And you embed that in an institution and then it has a kingdom, and you want to make it prevail. That's a deadly natural tendency. We're never far from it because...

**Student continues:** [16:28] Am I thinking right on that? Am I missing something?

**Dallas:** Well, restate your point.

**Student continues:** Well, the point is, it seems like in the context of the church and how they respond to problems, we will go to the other end of the spectrum in teaching say about reverence (?), when we're trying to deal with people who don't even recognize sin, so we go all the way over here and preach, preach, preach on brokenness is that, was that the manipulation thing with calls to try harder?

**Dallas:** If it doesn't say something more than that, it probably is. Right? Because one way of making people dependent on us is to convince them they can do nothing. And that happens often in religion, and happens in many different ways. We don't want to make people dependent on us, we want to make them dependent upon God. Now, if they are dependent upon God, they are not going to just be broken. And that might threaten our kingdom. I finally got it, I think. Yes?

**Q:** [17:48] Help me know how to move from getting people, how to move from getting someone I love to do something to wanting to live a life of discipleship, which includes them doing something?

**Dallas:** To getting them to lead a life of discipleship.?

**Student continues:** When you say, "Stop getting people to do something" and yet, I see that by indirection we are involved with discipleship and active discipline, that seems to be "doing"...?

**Dallas:** Okay. When you do things that seem wise, you don't trust your own efforts. You trust God, you let him get them to do something.

**Student continues:** That's the teaching that we need to make sure we have?

**Dallas:** We do need to teach we need but, very often we need to listen, we need to find ways of being with them. We need to find out what exactly is messing them up. And so there are lots of things that we can do, but we never trust our efforts.

**Student continues:** Or our program.

**Dallas:** Or our program. I prepare endlessly for things. But I never trust my preparation. So, when I walk into the room to teach, I not trusting my preparation. And sometimes that's apparent.

## A Few More Words about John Calvin

[19:30]

Now then, I do want to say just a few more words about Calvin because Calvin was so right about so many things. And I want to just touch on the points that he goes through.

[\[Calvin: Session 1 @ 35:00; #10 @ 1:00 & 30:20\]](#)

## Page 18-20 — Holiness

[19:50]

Calvin thought that holiness was the whole thing. And he was right. And now what does holy holiness mean? We've spent some time talking about that, what does it look like? And on page 18, holiness means full obedience to Christ. Now that's right. And then you have to be careful. And one of the things that not only Calvinism, but Arminianism, and all the "isms" is they come to this, and then they have problems interpreting it. And the almost inevitable tendency is to try to interpret it in terms of specific actions that you do. So I just want to say to you, when we read when you read this, by Calvin, do understand — holiness does not consist in a specific set of actions, or beliefs that would mark you out as a good Calvinist or something of that sort.

And now, he has it right at the top of page 19, paragraph opening there.

*"We should exhibit the character of Christ in our lives. For what can be more effective than this one stirring consideration."*

Again, you have to hold that out hold *"the righteousness of the Scribes and the Pharisees"*. [Matthew 5:20] You do not exhibit the character of Christ, but exhibiting behavior that fits some of the things he said. Let's see over and over in church history when people get serious about this, they will pick up on one or two things that he said and that will turn out to be the character of Christ. And it only takes a glance from someone who hasn't been taken in to realize these folks don't have the character of Christ, they're mean. You know, there are mean Christians, you ever run into one? And they're nearly always because they have bypassed the character of Christ. And they've latched on to a little something and said, "Oh, that's, that's it." No, you have to go deeper now.

**Page 25 – Self-Denial**

[22:15]

Now, then, in order to handle that, he, on page 25, introduces the idea of self denial. Self denial, you can always use your song, "we cast our crowns at the feet of Jesus". That is resigning your kingdom. That is self denial. Self denial does not say "*Oh, I am nothing, I am nothing, I am nothing.*" You ain't nothing. You're something. And you bring that into subjection to Christ, the King, and that is self denial. It's subjecting your kingdom to His Kingdom. It is surrender of the will in precisely that sense. And it means anything but that you become a nothing. This is where you get to really have substance. It's just not your substance, it's God's substance. So, when we talk about the character, we want to see that this is primarily a matter of self denial. And on the bottom of 27, seeking God's glory means self denial. See it is not a negative concept. Self denial is not a negative concept. It's an affirmation of God. And now, how does that express itself? Well, Calvin has some struggles with that. But there are some beautiful words in what he says - bottom of page 29:

*"Self denial means sobriety, righteousness and godliness."* And this is a wonderful passage in Titus chapter 2, that he's referring to "*the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us...*" (Titus 2:11)

Now continue that sentence, teaching us what? Now that's, that's the test of any gospel. "*...teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lust we should live soberly, righteously, godly in this present world, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that...*" (Titus 2:12-13)  
we might go to heaven when we die. Is that what he says?

*"That he might redeem unto himself a peculiar people, zealous for good works."* (Titus 2:14)

That's what you're made for. Ephesians 2. That's what grace does for you. It puts you out there zealous for good words. So, you keep that on the positive side.

**Page 36 - In Small Kindnesses**

[25:35]

And there's one line here that is so unlike Calvin, as he's presented on page 36, by Roman numeral, by Arabic 4, *"The law of love does not only pertain to the sizable prophets, but from the ancient days, God has commanded us to remember it..."* and this I love, *"in the small kindnesses of life."* The harsh picture that comes out of Calvinism and Puritanism is not an adequate representation of Calvin himself.

**Page 38 - Be of Good Cheer**

[26:24]

And as he goes on, he talks about how to be of good cheer, page 38. In the middle of Arabic 3, there, he says, *"We should forever keep in mind, that we must not brood on the wickedness of man, but realize that he is God's image bearer."*

Now actually, that's how you manage issues about sexual temptation and the desire to take someone's head off and all of that. As you remember, you're dealing with someone that is in God's image, he is God's image bearer. And that is, that is why he is worthy of your love not because of what he does or doesn't do.

**Self-Denial through Cross Bearing** — So, cross bearing then, is a way of spelling out the self denial. But cross bearing is not a helpless, hopeless grind that's designed to make you miserable. Your cross is designed to lift your burden, and allow you to live happily in patience and love with the situation you're in. And so page 47 takes that up. And the cross [page] 49 makes us humble. Now, can you put that together with our teaching?

Humble is dependent upon God.

The cross cuts off your self-dependence.

And the cross makes us humble.

**Page 51 — Hopeful through the Cross**

[28:05]

And then page 51. The cross makes us hopeful. Now, why? Well, because we have at last come to put our trust in what genuinely gives us reason to



hope. If I'm hoping in my own kingdom, I don't have any reason to hope. That's death. The mind of the flesh that is trusting in myself and in the natural world robs us of hope.

Now, we did talk earlier about the difference between the Cross and the crosses. [[Session 10 @ 1:00](#)] And so you have to take the Cross. And then in the crosses, the little crosses, as he calls it. I don't like that language, I think it's very, very difficult to come to terms with it. But still, if you take the Cross, then under the difficulties of life, you will be cheerful. You will be cheerful. And you will also cry. And that's okay too. One of the lovely things in this on the bottom of 59 is "*we are not required to be cheerful.*" It's okay to groan. It's okay to have tears. It's okay to be disappointed. And Calvin is very conscious of the stoic and what we today would know as the Buddhist approach to these kinds of things, which is just denial. Calvin, "No, no." This is a world where we suffer. But we take the cross and that liberates us from hopelessness and still as we go through the process, we hurt and we don't try to deny that.

*Sing and smile and pray for that's the only way.*

*You sing and smile and pray will drive the clouds away.*

Well, there's some truth in that but sometimes you don't feel like singing and smiling and praying. And Calvin is saying, "Don't fake it. Be real." Yes?

**Q:** [30:15] Can you describe how we might help people put that together with rejoicing when trials and tribulations...?

**Dallas:** We have to teach them that sorrow and rejoicing are not antithetical. So, we go back and we hear Old Brother Paul, saying, "*I am sorrowful but always rejoicing.*" (II Corinthians 6:10) Now how can you do that? Well, you have to teach them what joy is. Joy is not "whoopie!". Joy is, as I said, a pervasive sense of well being. [[Session 9 @ 12:30](#)] And that is compatible with pain and sorrow. So, basically, we just have to make sure that they understand what these are and it's really important that we do that. And one of the reasons why I spend so much time defining and describing is because we desperately need it. And we don't do enough of it.

**Q:** [31:26] I'm trying to reconcile what he's saying with the picture you're painting of the life in the Kingdom. On page 47. And he [Calvin] says, "*We need to prepare ourselves for a life that is hard, difficult, full of worries and*

*countless griefs.*" And then later, he's talking about "*we are weighed down by anxiety.*" I guess, maybe, I misunderstand your picture, but it seems like you're saying that a life of easy routine obedience is light and so that seems to contradict what he's saying.

**Dallas:** Well, I think all I can do there is ask you to sort of work on that and see if you can come to an understanding of joy and lightness that is consistent with burdens. You're not promised no burdens, but you're promised strength to bear them. And the lightness is seen in how you take your responsibilities in relationship to them. And I am going to try to get you all to offload the responsibility of outcomes and shift those to God. And when you do that, you begin to experience the lightness of the yoke. And again, that contrast that we read the very first day, [#2 @ 2:48] or looked at from II Corinthians 4 where he lists all those different things on one side is the treasure on the other side is the vessel. This is not a simple little thing you have. You will have to work through it to your own satisfaction. And it will take a little while. But, I'm hoping that the distinctions that I've drawn and the way you take those back to the scripture, you can begin to see it. And see, Calvin doesn't want us to fake it. And when we hurt, we hurt. But there is help and there is hope.

## **Page 67 — The Hope of Heaven**

[33:30]

And just quickly to wrap up here on page 67 - the Cross and self denial and all of that brings us hopefulness of heaven. This is really important. And it is one of the things that in the mix of contemporary Christianity and life, we do not do justice to. There's an old hymn, "*Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.*" And you just want to make sure you don't think that means only after you're dead. But it does mean that and there really is no solution to the difficulties of life than the hope of heaven. And see if that doesn't mean anything to us, then it won't help us. And it's very interesting, and it's fascinating to watch people handle the text of old writings. Look on page 67. And now the phrase here "*with whatever kind of trials we may be afflicted, we should always keep our eye on this goal, that we accustom ourselves to the contempt...*" And now our editor and translator wants to help us out. Because the old language - the absolutely standard language - was contempt of the present life. "Contemptus mundi" is a standard practice of

the older church. "Contempt for this world, contempt for this life". But, he wants to help us out. And so he interpolates of the vanities of the present line. And the message is that in the light of the world to come, the present life is to be regarded with contempt. Contempt doesn't mean all in this language that it means. It means something more like indifference. "Contempt. Indifference." We have added on to that. But if you get your Oxford English Dictionary, and make a study of the word, you'll see that it means something more like indifference. And the indifference is not based upon the nature of this present life, so much as it is the comparison with the life to come. And in the light of that, which we've entered into by the Cross and so forth, then hopefulness for the next life is what lifts us out of all of the difficulties in this life.

**Page 70 — Vocation as a Divine Calling** (again) [36:35]

And so you get language like on page 70,

*"Human life is nothing but a vapor or shadow."*

"The things of earth grow strangely dim", right?

So, we even sung that here in the light of what the full story is.

So, then he goes on to talk about not fearing death, and winds up in the passage I've already referred to [[Session 10 @ 30:20](#)] talking about the importance of vocation that God has placed us in this world at a place in a time and that we are to stand there as His vicars.

[[Vicar \(def.\)](#) - "a representative or deputy of a bishop or clergy".]

Now, if you don't believe that you're a vicar of Christ, you believe you need a backward collar on or something to be a vicar, please work on that. You are a vicar of Christ where you are. That's your calling. If you're working in a taco stand, you are a vicar of Christ. And he wants to teach you how to do that, as he would do it if he were you.

~ ~ ~ **End of Session 15 @ 37:59** ~ ~ ~

**Session 16 - "[Knowledge, Grace, Discipleship](#)"**  [1:29:44]

I'm very fond of Gerard Manley Hopkins poetry and particularly, is one about the "Kingfishers".

*"As kingfishers catch fire. How God is present. Dragonflies draw flame; As tumbled over rim and roundy wells. Stones ring; like each tucked string tells each hung bells. Bow swung finds tongue, to fling out broad its name. Each mortal thing does one thing and the same deals out. That being indoors, each one dwells. Selves goes itself; myself, it speaks and spells, Crying, what I do is me for that I came. I say more, the just man justices keeps grace that keeps all his goings graces acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is, Christ, for Christ plays in 10,000 places, lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes, not his, to the Father through the features of men's faces."*

It is a wonderful thing that Christ is doing, a wonderful thing. And I have a few things still to talk to you about. One of the things that I want to talk to you about is the role of knowledge in making disciples, living together in Trinitarian fellowship, and teaching people to do everything Christ said.

Now, it is very difficult to teach anyone if you don't have knowledge. And we are in a period where knowledge is not only underdone but feared and opposed, as if it were an enemy of faith. But you need to think deeply about how you're going to do the work you contemplate to do as ministers of Christ and how you're going to live your life if it is not on a basis of knowledge. The prophet Hosea does not say my people perish for lack of faith does he? He says my people perish for lack of knowledge. A major defense of the secular world against the gospel is "well, we have knowledge, you have faith." Am I making any sense? You've run into this haven't you? And that is a primary point upon which the gospel and the people of Christ must challenge its world today.

**~ Knowledge ~ Belief/Faith ~ Commitment ~ Profession** [4:12]

[see Dallas Willard's teaching - "[Knowledge & Faith: Religion or Reality](#)"]

So, let's begin here just by making clear that these are different things and then we'll talk about what they are briefly. Knowledge, belief or faith are the same thing, commitment and profession. Those are different things.

## Profession

[4:53]

We tend to take people in on the basis of their profession. Isn't that right?

*"Upon the profession of your faith, my Brother, sister in Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."*

Profession. Maybe we'd better begin with knowledge and work down to that. But you will want to understand that if you're working in terms of this, without the rest of it, you ain't got much. You may not even have commitment. And in fact, we are constantly struggling with commitment in our congregations. With having projects which our people are not committed to. Well, what are they committed to? It may be that they're not committed to much of anything. Or maybe they're committed to things that they don't really believe in. Hmm, that may explain why they're not committed.

Or, maybe they believe things, but it's not founded in knowledge. Now, Biblical faith is always in an environment of knowledge. Always. The idea which modern thought, through a torturous process, has saddled the church that "faith is a leap" is ridiculous. What they call a "leap of faith" is a leap without faith. And you always find that out when you listen to them a little bit. Faith leaps on a basis of knowledge. That's how faith leaps.

## Faith of Abraham & Job & Disciples Today

[7:25]

Abraham in faith went out not knowing where he was going. But he did that on the basis of his knowledge that God was with him. Am I making any sense? Okay. Now you watch the biblical record. And you'll see that that is always the case. There are no leaps of faith. Job exercised faith of immense proportions, but it was on the basis of his knowledge. And we have to in our day, really deal with this or you cannot make disciples. Upon what basis would you make a disciple if it isn't knowledge? Now, the standard way, I think that people managed to stand up in the pulpit and proclaim, hoping that something will happen is they believe that if they say the words, in faith, God will strike people with lightning. And the miracle of faith will happen. Now, God does strike people with lightning, and miracles of faith do happen. But that is not the general context out of which one speaks and lives as a Christian, and especially not as a disciple of Christ. It's on the basis of what you know that you act. And when you act, sometimes in faith, your experience gives more knowledge and more faith. And that is the natural progression.     Yes?

**Q:** [9:20] So reconcile that with Ephesians 2 then, where it says faith is a gift. Would you say that God will only give that gift to those who have knowledge? Or...

**Dallas:** How do you get it? How do you get faith as a gift? Without knowledge? With knowledge? Is knowledge ever miraculous in its own right? You strike one of the issues. Faith is a gift, knowledge is a what? Work? Knowledge is human, faith is divine. Right? Knowledge can come by gift and miracle, as much as faith. What Paul is saying in that passage is you are dead in trespasses and sins, and that you're coming to faith comes as a miracle. But now what is missing here? If you want faith, can you do anything about it? How does faith come? Faith comes by the word of God. [Romans 10:17] Now, is that knowledge or what is it? Now, this is such a big deal. I just encourage you to take your concordance and do inductive Bible study on "knowledge". "Know" - the word know and see how often that occurs. Especially in relationship to what God does. And how many times it is said "*I'm doing this in order that you may know.*" Okay, and I'm hoping I've got your concept stirred up a little bit here. And so let's pursue this.

By the way, is there anyone here who knows anything? [\[Students laugh.\]](#) Good, I feel better already. Now, be my guest.

The academic context has a vested interest in making people skeptics. But no one lives as a skeptic, including the people in the academic context. But, a part of the human project is to undermine knowledge, especially of things that matter in human life, so that the Word of God cannot have effect in human life.

We have a thing in this country called "the separation of church and state". Upon what assumption would you say that separation is made? Well, you can you imagine anyone talking about the separation of state and chemistry. Now, there are social and political reasons for not having an establishment of religion. But that's not what we're talking about when we talk about separation of church and state. When people generally speak of separation of church and state, they are assuming that the church doesn't know anything important. It is predicated on the assumption that what the Church teaches is not knowledge of reality.

## **Knowledge**

[13:45]

(defined) "*You know something if you are able to represent it as it is, on an appropriate basis of thought and experience.*"

Knowledge is not just being right. Knowledge has a foundation in evidence and method. When someone says they know something, they have stepped into the public arena because that bears the claim of truth and method. Knowledge requires method and knowledge requires truth.

Now that's what you want in your dentist, don't you? You'd like them to know something. You wouldn't take your car to a shop that said we're lucky at making repairs. You want them to know something. Often they are lucky and sometimes unlucky. But that's not what you go there for. You want people who know in this sense, this is what knowledge is.

Now you need to understand that folks, because the confusion about it is what the resistance to the gospel thrives on. "Well, you know, if it's not knowledge where you can just take it or leave it. It's just belief, just faith."

## **Belief & Truth**

[15:35]

Truth (defined) - *"A belief, idea, statement, proposition, or whatever is true if what it is about is as it is represented in the belief."*

You believe you have a dime in your pocket. The belief is true if you have a dime in your pocket. Now, beliefs can be true without constituting knowledge. You pick up beliefs by the people you're with. Little children come to believe most of the things they believe just because the people around them believe. That's a good thing. You wouldn't want them to have to wait until they could know. And we arrive at maturity with a set of beliefs that we picked up. And then a large part of our responsibility is to sort those out. And define which ones are true and which ones are false. We learn things like, *"Well, it wasn't true just because my folks believed it."*

Belief never makes truth never makes true. Truth is not relative, belief is relative. A proposition or belief isn't true because you believe it. It's true, because what it's about is, as it says. That's true. And you can't make anything true by believing it. You can make something believed by believing it. So when you hear some ways someone say what's true for me and false for you, they've already missed they don't know what truth is. It's believed by me and disbelieved by you, okay? His belief is relative, truth is not. And you can't make anything true by believing it. You just try. Try to do it.

## **Knowledge**

[17:55]

Okay, now, knowledge is the environment of belief. And when you're going to make disciples, I hope you won't go with the attitude that you're going to



say some words, and God is going to hit him. It won't work. There are occurrences where something like that happens, but you cannot adopt it as your modus operandi. I will say the words and God will hit him. Many people actually believe that. That's where they take on that passage in **I Corinthians 1** where Paul is talking about the foolishness of preaching. Preaching is only foolish in comparison to what the Jews and the Greeks thought was the way you're supposed to proceed. And in any case, it doesn't say the foolishness of the preacher. Preaching as a technique - declaring, pronouncing - we talked about that briefly, is a way of bringing truth to people, and God does interact with that. What I'm saying to you is, don't adopt that as your modus operandi. Bring knowledge of Christ to people. Bring knowledge of Christ to people. That means you have to have it first. And if you have it, it will come to people in a very different way. Because knowledge is a totally different kind of thing from belief.

If you bring knowledge to people, you are coming to them as someone who has the right and responsibility to act. That's what knowledge does. Knowledge brings you the right and responsibility to act, belief does not.

\* A Dentist: If you believe that tooth is rotten, but don't know, and you're a dentist, you do not have the right to start to work on it. If you know that it is you have the responsibility, as well as the right to start to work on it.

Knowledge brings... [20:35]

- 1.) The right to act
- 2.) The right to direct action
- 3.) The right to formulate policy and supervise it and,
- 4.) The right to teach.

Only knowledge brings those things — the right to act, the right to direct action, the right to formulate policy and to supervise it, and the right to teach.

Now, may I say to you, that that's why you're in school. You are not in school to get faith. Do you agree with me about that? You're not in school to get faith, you're in school to get knowledge.

Now, if the Christian teaching is not knowledge, what are you getting? Well, tradition, maybe you're learning how to be good. You fill in the blank. Then you go out, you're trained to act like a good [...] So that happens.

Not everything that people think is knowledge is knowledge. You can think you know, and you don't. That's a common occurrence. You have to be

careful. But I think, probably, if you all became convinced that you were not gaining a body of knowledge that authorized you to act, to direct action, to formulate and supervise policy, and teach, I think you'd drop out. Now, some of you might say, "Well, no, but I want my credentials." And credentials don't necessarily represent knowledge. You can be credentialed and have a sign on your wall that says I'm "Mr. Goodwrench" because I've gone to school and still not be able to fix cars. Credentialing is one thing, enablement is another.

Now, I'm dragging you through this, because this is absolutely essential to making disciples. You have to have decided that you are dealing with knowledge

## **Belief**

[23:35]

What about belief? You're dealing with belief also. But remember, you believe something when you are prepared to act as if it were so but it may not be so. Belief can be totally ungrounded irrational or false and no less belief for that. And now you may think that God will really like you if you would act as if you believe something when you don't. A lot of people are acting as if they believe things that's profession and maybe a little commitment, but they don't believe it. [[Session 5 @ 49:04](#)]

Now, let me say something really mean and that is when we get up to preach on Sunday morning we're basically facing a wall of unbelief and that's why people don't act as if what they say they believe is true. Now, this is not something to harass people with. It's something to try to help people to understand. Many people have trouble with belief because they don't believe, they profess. And professing things does not have the effects of belief. And you need your belief to be environed in knowledge so that your belief is steady and established, because it's based on knowledge and continuing experience.

## **The Problem Facing Holiness**

[25:20]

Now, I've talked about a lot of different things here that causes problems in progressing towards holiness, and enabling those we teach to make progress in obedience to Christ. But one of the most severe problems is we're not operating on the basis of knowledge. And our beliefs are wavering. And we realize that some person that's been involved in our church, maybe even a minister for years may show up one day, and, or not show up one day. And then we may say, "Well, what happened?" That's appropriate. And we need to follow and find out. But you can guarantee it was not something that

happened that day, but what had been going on all along. They were not solid. They were not operating on the basis of knowledge.

So, you believe something when you are prepared to act as if it were so and if that belief is solid, and it's true, you're on good ground, you can almost say it doesn't matter whether you know or not. The problem is, you can rarely get there with belief, and yet, unless it's founded in knowledge.

### **Knowledge Beyond Belief**

[26:45]

That's why it's important, not just to believe that Jesus rose from the dead, but to know it. That's why it's important not just to believe that God exists and created the world, but to know it. And now that drives you back and look at knowledge and you work on it, you say, "Well, maybe you don't know it." Could you know it, if you wanted to? Are you willing to pay the price to know. See knowledge is like that, it doesn't jump down our throats. If you want knowledge, you have to seek knowledge. You have to do things like pay a lot of money and read a lot of books and sit around and hear a lot of people talk. Knowledge doesn't jump down your throat. And if you don't want it, you don't have to have it. You can reject the knowledge. And if it's getting getting in the way of Your kingdom, you probably will. That's why people fear knowledge today and don't want to hear people say they know because if they do know, that has a claim that if they say, "Well, I believe!" it doesn't have.

**Q:** [27:58] What part does experience play in knowledge?

**Dallas:** Confirms knowledge advances it, right? I mean, that's, that's...we know most of the things we know on authority.

\* For example, you all know the multiplication tables, you do. But, you know them on authority, and you do know them. But it is rare to find anyone that has worked out the multiplication tables, by experience, to find out that even  $3 \times 8 = 24$ .

**Q:** [28:35] If you know it but haven't experienced it? How? How solid is it?

**Dallas:** Well, there's, one of the problems is that people try to give completely general answers to those kinds of questions. And we know that some people know some things better than other people do. And then some people don't know them at all. Typically, what happens with the learning process is you have some people who know things and others who don't, maybe they just believe them. And then as they proceed, the people who didn't know them come to know them.

## Commitment

[29:15]

Commitment (defined) — *Choosing and implementing a course of action.*

You can commit yourself to something you don't even believe in. If you're in the woods and lost, you may not know which way to go. But after a while you will decide you'd better go somewhere. And you will commit yourself to a direction and try to hold to it, and that's one of the things that human beings can do. We can extend our action beyond our belief, just like we can extend our belief beyond our knowledge. And all of that is extremely important because of the context of finitude that we work in. So, we start out with beliefs. We come to knowledge of certain things, then we can test our beliefs by experience, in some cases, some cases, it isn't exactly experience, may be thought, or logically weighing them against other things that we know. So, that's how that's what we generally do in school. But profession is saying that you believe something. You may believe it and profess it, that's good. Or, you may not even be committed to it, and still profess it.

So, you need these four concepts — knowledge, belief, commitment profession. And you need to understand where you where you stand, where I stand, and then you need to help others deal with that. And what you're aiming for in making disciples, and in guiding them, is that fundamentally, everything would be based on knowledge as much as it can.

Now, again, you don't have to know in order to believe there are a lot of things you better believe, even if you can't know that. God is at work in all of these areas, not just in one of them.

Knowledge has drawbacks. Paul talks about these. The two main drawback drawbacks is, you never know anything as well as you could right?

Drawback 1 — You never know anything as well as you could. If anyone thinks he knows something, Paul says they don't know anything the way they ought to know. That is to help you not get carried away with arrogance. Because knowledge has a tendency to do that. You tell a little child who's just learned to talk something they did not know and they are most likely to say, "I know." You test it. Now that's because knowledge is a really big thing in the substance of the self. To not know is to be left out. To know is to be in. Everyone wants to be in. So Paul teaches us we never know things as well as we could.

Drawback #2 — He also tells us that knowledge puffs up. Love builds up. Knowledge puffs up. So should we throw away knowledge? No, we should subordinate knowledge to love. Always knowledge subordinate to love. Don't let it puff you up and it'll help you to remember that you never know anything as well as your mind. To have to keep it in its place, and it is among the things that **I Corinthians 13** tells us, it will pass away because it will pass into sight. And one of the great things about knowledge, of course, is it enables you to do things with realities that you don't see. Truth is designed by God to help us negotiate reality. If you have true beliefs, and your wits are about you, you will be able to negotiate reality well, as far as it's dealt with by that belief.

### Disciples Made on Knowledge

[34:15]

Now, knowledge is important. So, if we're going to make disciples, we want to make sure that insofar as we can, we're basing it on knowledge, and that we present the way of Christ to people, the preaching of the Kingdom of God and all of that, we present it to people as knowledge of reality. Knowledge of reality. *Ingrid...*

**Q:** [34:45] When you're talking about profession there, all of a sudden it hit me that all of those things are practical, are also when we're back to...our own kingdom. A lot of times people will profess that they love someone without the commitment, without the belief, without without the knowledge. (Dallas, "Right.") to take that all the way back up that way.

**Dallas:** See profession is often done to manage our kingdom. And sometimes it's deadly serious. Because if you don't profess something, someone may kill you or deprive you of your job and your opportunities. That has happened over and over, right? That's one reason why profession has come to play such a large role in Western religion. But, it actually plays a large role in all religion. So, people may profess things that they don't believe, nobody knows, and they're not committed to. And that's why I gave you those four things. I want you to see how it changes as you go up.

Now, a lot of this I don't want to get into but you want to think thoughts like this, "*you can actually not believe some things you know.*" Because belief involves the will. If you believe something, you're ready to act as if it were true. Typical case of a person who, as we used to say, is under conviction. They know something they don't believe. That's why they're "convicts". They're captured. They know something that they don't believe. Now, maybe they're just persuaded of something. But they don't want to believe it. And so they reject it. And you can analyze that in terms of William James.

Because the tension that is set up by that conflict is where a person who is under conviction is living.

That's what was happening with St. Augustine. If you know his story. He was sweating under conviction because he had met some people and learned about some people and he was just practically out of his wits.

That's what happened to Paul on the road to Damascus. So, we can believe things that we don't know and we can know things that we don't believe.

For example, the people who were watching the game last night and were pulling for Texas were in a period where they knew something that they didn't believe.

A person who gambles is typically a person who knows something, they don't believe. They know they're not going to win. But they believe they are.

So that's just, I have hardly begun. Okay. My only reason for doing this is I want you to know the difference before those four things and the effect they have on making disciples and on spiritual growth.

### **Summary of Knowledge and Spiritual Formation** [38:30]

It's important for you to think the thought that in your program with [Class Professor] Howard and your school [Denver Seminary], that what you are receiving about spiritual formation and so on, at least is potential knowledge. It's potential knowledge. You don't have to have it, but you could have it, and if you did have it, then it would change your whole approach to spiritual formation.

### **Teaching People to do What Jesus Said — 1 on 1 & Programs** [39:15]

Okay, now I want to talk about teaching someone to do what Jesus said. Hey, we're doing pretty well. [time in class] Yes it did and helped a lot. Okay, now we're going to talk about teaching someone to do what Jesus said.

You have to think in two contexts:

1.) One on One — One is your one on one with someone. And very often, that's the only way you can approach it because the other way is where you are in a program in a church or religious group teaching people how to do what Jesus said. These are very different contexts.

2.) Group — And by far, the second is the one that is intended by Christ and is best for teaching people to do what he said, that is the context where you have a group. And ideally, this would be a group that is under a ministry of

preaching and teaching and example that is committed to spiritual formation in discipleship. By the way, the difference between those is...

discipleship is a status and

spiritual formation is the process that you undergo in that status.

You become a disciple by committing yourself to Jesus Christ as your Lord, Master and teacher, and throwing your crown at his feet. And you may in that position be very green. Disciples are often very green. Discipleship is not an advanced spiritual position, but it's a hopeful one. Because now you are as it were, "signed up for the course". And things can begin to move. And that's intended to be a communal thing. It isn't intended to be just an individual on their own. But, in many circumstances you're in, you may have to do it with individuals and it can be done.

Now, if you're starting one, you might try that. Start it on the basis of discipleship. But, if it's not started on that basis, you're going to have a hard time turning it around. And people are going to be mad at you if you try. Of course, that's not the end of the world. But you need to expect it and not say, "I thought I was doing something good. I thought everyone would just get up and say, 'whoopee, let's do it!' " They won't. But, in any case, those are the two contexts and I want to say something relevant to both of them.

### Putting Things in Order

[

Okay, so now, let's, let's put a few things in order. In order to teach someone to do what Jesus said, they have to be disciples. So [writes on board], okay, "Disciples Made". So if you're going to teach people to do what Jesus says, they have to be disciples and someone has to make them.

Now, do you have clearly fixed in your mind how you would help someone become a disciple? We must go slow here. And I don't mean to push anything on you in answer to that question or expect you to give an answer to it right now. But if you're going to teach people to do what Jesus said, they must be disciples. And if they're disciples, they must have become disciples. So now how did they become a disciple? You know, it's possible that Jesus met them. There are all sorts of ways that could happen. But is there a way that we could make a steady part of our operation? So let's take a few moments here now. *How would you know a disciple if you met one?*

**Student:** [44:21] Trying to follow Jesus. They're trying to follow Jesus.

**Dallas:** Would that be enough? They're trying to follow Jesus. Don't we have to go a little more into the details of what that means.



**Speaker:** Don't assume what I didn't say isn't included.

[Repeating what Dallas said in an earlier session. Students laughed.]

**Dallas:** But I'm trying to get I'm trying to get you to say what you didn't say. So what was it you didn't say? [More student laughter.] We have people every week stand up, *"I have decided to follow Jesus, I have decided to follow Jesus, I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back."*

What's on their mind?

**Student:** [45:12] They have to have knowledge of whom they're following.

**Dallas:** So they would have to know something about what following Jesus involved. And they would have had to decide to take that on. Now, compare it to being a disciple in other contexts.

Let us suppose that you decided to learn French. And you now have selected a teacher. What have you decided to do with reference to that teacher? Sorry? [Student responds.] Pretty good. Was that in what you didn't say? [Students laughed] Now, I like to try to put that by saying, *"I'm going to be with them, learning to be like them."* That's what I'm going to do. I'm going to go to my French teacher, I'm going to be with them. Now, of course, today, we can use tapes and all sorts of things. But basically, when you are a disciple of someone, you are with them learning to be like them. Now, in this case, it's a certain respect like them in their capacity to speak French. A child in third grade is with their teacher learning to be like them in their capacity, for example, to multiply and divide numbers. They're taking on the character of the teacher in that respect. So now, maybe we could identify a disciple of Jesus as someone who has decided to be with them, learning to be like Him. They've decided to do that and they are arranging and rearranging their affairs to make that happen. There, let's let's add that on now. Okay, they've decided that I'm going to be with them, learn to be like them. And I'm going to arrange my affairs to do that. Simple cases, I show up for class. Yes.

**Student:** [47:50] Not just be with them, but be attentive to them.

**Dallas:** You're going to have to be attentive to them if you're going to learn to be like them aren't you? You don't sleep through class. You do the exercises. So, this will become more and more specific.

Now we have to pause over this to make sure we got something. A disciple of Jesus is someone who has decided to be with Jesus learn to be like him. That means they are arranging their affairs so that will happen all the way down to paying attention. And if you see someone like that, you're looking at a disciple of Jesus.

Now, how could you get someone to do that? But that's where you have to go back to the Vision model — the VIM model. [[Session 10 @ 8:00](#)] You only make disciples in the light of a [[Dallas writes on the board](#)] Vision.

A person who is going to disciple themselves to someone to learn French is going to be someone who is convinced it would be wonderful to speak French.

So the vision here is the [[Dallas writes on the board](#)] Gospel.

And for a moment, we can stop there and go back and realize, "Well, which gospel?" We want a gospel that will provide a basis for making disciples. Okay? [Dallas writes on board...]

*"...of life now in heaven with Jesus life now in heaven with Jesus."*  
Life now...in Heaven...with Jesus. If you want to go to heaven, don't wait. Go now. If you do, then it will turn out you never die. We got to make sense of that somehow.

**Q:** [50:34] So in the context of teaching people to do what Jesus said in the setting that we're talking about, we need to first assume that they are disciples, which on the VIM pattern...

**Dallas:** That's why we're starting here, yes.

**Student continues:** I'm asking, they would have the vision and the intention, and now we're discipling them in the means?

**Dallas:** Absolutely right. And this is why because you can't go down that road, if you don't start here. And this is messy. This is a messy business, because people hear so many things. And this is going to take a lot of straightening out in most people's minds in our culture, because what they they've heard as the message of the church. God only knows because it isn't just a function of what was said, it's a function of how they heard it. And you, Jesus in the gospels, you know, Jesus had a constant problem with people who heard a message and got "whoopie-d" it up, and but they weren't on for what it was really about. And you know, how that causes problem, cause problems over and over. So, one reason why he would say when he'd heal someone, very often, "Don't tell anyone." Because he knew that they would take that wrongly. Because what they had in their heads was something about the Kingdom of God and the Messiah that was false. And it wasn't just people wandering the streets. I mean, he had the trouble with his own apostles to get that straight. And then he had problems when he fed people with getting them to understand that it wasn't just about bread. "*Labor, not for the meat that perishes*", he said then, "*but for the meat that lasts unto everlasting life.*" [John 6:27] And so this is really a difficulty.

Now, look, we don't have to be perfect in any of this. We don't have to have it all perfectly straight. We have to have enough of it that will allow us to make enough of an intention to start seriously practicing being with Jesus learning to be like him. That's the focus, okay? That's the focus of the disciple. And I really want to emphasize because so often, we get stuck on getting it all just right. You don't have to have it all just right to be a follower of Jesus. Your intentions do not have to be perfect. Not required. But there has to be enough substance at both of those levels that will enable us to arrange our life to become like him.

**Q:** [54:05] Could you clarify something? I know a lot of like the prosperity gospel does concentrate on what God is doing now and not just when you get to heaven, but what emphasis is going wrong on there in that gospel?

**Dallas:** What's wrong with that gospel is it really says nothing at all about becoming like him. Now, that's not fair to some people who preach it. But generally speaking, that's the tendency. That's exactly the response of the people around Jesus in his day. You could get elected real quickly if you could turn a few biscuits into a bunch of bread. And they came to make him king by force. Nothing wrong with prosperity. But if that becomes what is at the center of your hopes, you're on the wrong train. Yes.

**Q:** [55:15] So connect what we started with this hour. A disciple is someone who has knowledge, belief, commitment and profession...

**Dallas:** No, no, no, wait, wait, wait, wait. I want you to fit those together. But you're apt to start a way up the line from where discipleship begins if you aren't careful with that. Now, what I'm saying to you is this, if you're going to make disciples, please operate out of knowledge in doing so. That will involve belief, also, some commitment and profession. But you do need to have knowledge as a basis for you making disciples. And that will involve you communicating knowledge to the individual. And that will be partly miraculous. And it will be partly because you've worked real hard to be able to present that to people as knowledge.

*In the corner and then next.*

*I have a real hard time hearing out of that corner.*

**Q:** [56:45] At what point does the surrender of the will, your will not mine, your kingdom not my kingdom? At what point does that happen speaking of a disciple?

**Dallas:** It happens when you become a disciple. You cannot become a disciple unless you do that. Now later, you will find out that you did you had no understanding of what it meant. So that's why you remember, discipleship is a status. Now, and thank you for asking the question. This is why Jesus says, *"If you don't hate your mother, and your father and blahdy,*

*blahdy, blah, in your own life" also, "If you don't take your cross daily and follow me, you cannot be my disciple."* That's very important to understand. But, now then, you understand that discipleship, as I say, is a status in which the process of spiritual formation occurs. And that's going to mean that you will be led into dimensions of surrender of your will, that you now have never even thought about. And God in His mercy, "*tempers the wind to the shorn lamb*"\*, as we used to say, doesn't just dump it on you all at once. But there has to be a decision, I will do what Jesus says. And that's why we need to be very clear about the vision underlying it. It has to include that.

*The lady next to you, and then this gentleman here.*

*Go ahead, gentleman here.*

\* - 'God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb' (i.e. God is especially gentle towards those who are very vulnerable) is a French proverb popularized by Laurence Sterne (1713-1768) in his novel *A Sentimental Journey* (1768).

**Q:** [58:25] I'd just like to comment. It's a lot like marriage in that sense. We are making these commitments to this person...and I don't even really know...you have a vision...but...

**Dallas:** Yes, yes, yes, yes. Very good, very good. Yes, absolutely right. And really any serious commitment. You know, would you commit yourself to a degree program, if you really knew what it was going to involve? So, you step in, and grace helps you step in, and then grace is with you as you go along. And that's how it works. Great. Yes.

**Q:** [59:10] Yesterday or the day before, you mentioned that not all Christians are disciples, and I'm having a hard time with that.

**Dallas:** Haven't you known some that weren't disciples?

**Student continues:** I would say if you're not a disciple, you're not a believer.

**Dallas:** Okay. I would say don't say that too loudly, or you're gonna have a bunch of people on top of you like that.

**Student continues:** But I can't make that judgment. I don't. I look upon somebody, I probably can at some level.

**Dallas:** Now, why can't you make that judgment? You can tell whether or not a person is a disciple? Okay, let's go. Now what is a disciple? A disciple of someone is someone who has decided to be with a person learning to be like them. Could you tell whether or not someone is was a disciple of a French teacher? Could you tell that? Suppose they...suppose they never go near them, don't listen to them, don't practice what they say practice and so forth. Would you say they are not disciples of the French teacher? Now, I appreciate your sensitivity. But one of the things you have to do to help

people is to make a judgement. Many people are disappointed in the Christian life because they are expecting from it what only comes to a disciple, and they're not a disciple.

**Q:** [1:00:54] But I want to ask a clarifying question. You may be living in a place of commitment and belief....that's the only way I'm able to make a judgment based on what is seen by observing them. For me to be able to look into, peer into their heart is another issue. I take it up on character..

**Dallas:** Okay? Well, I'll just leave it. I appreciate your sensitivity. And just leave it with you. I understand what you're saying, we can look at the heart, "*Man looks on outward appearance, God looks on the heart.*" [I Sam. 16:7] In a position of leadership, you are apt to have to decide whether or not a particular individual is a disciple or not. The consequences of being a disciple are different from the consequences of being someone who is committed or professing. The consequences are different. Yes.

**Q:** [1:01:52] I'm just wondering if in theory then you cannot have a bad disciple?

**Dallas:** You can have very bad disciples, Jesus had crowds of bad disciples.

**Student continues:** They weren't really intending to live like him...

**Dallas:** No, you have to add the time factor in there. Whether they become not bad disciples depends on what they do. So, a disciple, as I said, can be a very green disciple. Peter was a very green disciple. Jesus even called him Satan. Now see where in our concerns today we're apt to say, "Well, suppose he had died, right, then would he have gone to heaven?" See, we tend to think of Christian as someone who's going to go to heaven when they die.

**Student:** [1:03:00] Well those disciples did end up progressing beyond that.

**Dallas:** They did they did pretty well didn't. They did pretty well. It's a great study to study as best we know what happened to them. There's a wonderful little book by AB Bruce called *The Training of the 12*. It's a wonderful book because it talks about who these guys were. And they were not beggars off the street. They were not debauched souls. They were solid citizens. But they had none of the advantages that people thought religious leaders should have. And a great old text is from Acts 4 [v. 13] The leaders got Peter and John up there and giving them the business. And it says, because they, they, as it says, "they perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men." They sure weren't acting like it. And so "they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." You could preach that.

Now, that's one of the things...I'm bound to run out of time...when we think about the church, the local congregation, we want to think of it as a hospital.

And you've got some people being dragged in and put in ICU. Others operated on emergency. Some people getting up and walking down the halls, others rolling out in a wheelchair. That's the church. And if it's a church where there's discipleship, not all the niceties, don't worry about that. That's okay, that's good. That's the way it should be. So it should be. *Jake.*

**Q:** [1:05:08] Two questions: I wonder if you could just finish that thought you said, "*we tend to think of Christians as people who are going to heaven...*"

**Dallas:** That's what I'm just saying I think that's normally what people think. And then they have to decide that whether or not they're going to do that.

**Jake continues:** Okay. Secondly, I think a lot of our culture, we look at the Jesus teachings on judgment totally in the wrong way, is like, I mean, there's multitudes of different ways people people take that. I was wondering, you could maybe clarify what that particularly is saying, "*Do not judge less you be judged.*" [Matthew 7:1]

**Dallas:** Okay. Well, let me refer you to chapter 7 of *The Divine Conspiracy*, but talk about it a bit. What Jesus says is, don't get in the condemning game. In Matthew chapter 7, he's talking about what I call "condemnation engineering". And that is, give the holy stuff to them in a way that will make it clear to everyone that they are worthless. And then you do that, and they'll give it right back to you, which is exactly what happens. So, get out of the condemning game. Judgment, unfortunately, has two meanings.

One is discernment, and the other is condemning.

And we have managed by a clever perversion of Jesus's teaching in our culture to turn discernment into condemning, so that we can condemn the person who's making good judgment about us. And that supposedly will shut them up. But that's a perversion. Jesus is not talking about discerning in Matthew 7, he's talking about condemning. He's talking about people who try to help people by condemning them. That's a human trait. Just condemn them, make them feel guilty, worthless. That'll motivate them to do what we know they ought to do. So those verses that open chapter 7 in Matthew are about engaging, indulging in condemnation. There are many ways of doing it. One is to give them really good stuff that won't help them. And then say, "well, you're worthless because I gave you this and it didn't help you." The dog was hungry. And I offered it a Bible. The dog didn't eat it and it was still hungry. I had pearls and I took them out and put them in the trough for the hogs and the hogs didn't eat them. And then one day, I stepped in there to give them another bucket of my pearls and they saw something edible. It was my leg.



Jesus is teaching us in that passage, "Don't get into condemnation. Don't go there. Don't even get into it in the way of giving your "precious pearls" to people who can't use them."

Okay? You can't make disciples or help them by condemning them. "Condemnation Engineering" — you want to take that out of your repertoire.

Okay, now, this is really important because unless you get these established, you can't go anywhere with teaching people how to do what Jesus said. Once you have got a student with a Vision who really does believe this would be a wonderful thing, then you can begin to teach them.

### **Teaching Someone to Get Rid of "Anger"**

[1:09:51]

You need to start with where they are and what they're concerned with. Now, this could be anger. That's a good place to start. Contempt. You have a man who means well, but he can't keep from yelling at his son. That'd be a good place to start, wouldn't it? Very likely, if he is a Christian, he thinks he ought not to do it. But, that child is so exasperating, so stupid, and really wants to hurt me. And after about two moves and a conversation, I suddenly hear the volume has gone up. And the more it goes up, the more I'm locked into it. Actually, that's a typical progression in anger and dealing with others in anger, and then they deal with you in anger, and there you go. It's one of Jesus's standard lessons about how interactions develop.

So now, you have a man here who wants to learn something. Can you teach him? One of the things you can say, "Well, we have a counseling department in the church." And that's not bad, because what has actually happened is, Christian counselors have been forced to take up the slack that is left in a situation where the ordinary course of events is not teaching people to do the things that Jesus said. And it's not an altogether bad thing by any means, and a lot of good is in it. But it does depend on whether or not the counselor is going to be able to help them or, and how they helped them. And in particular, whether or not the person will be able to learn how to do not do the things that are causing him trouble and to do the things in the absence of which are causing him trouble.

Have you got a way now of teaching someone not to be angry? That's the general idea of Jesus's teaching. So now, what are you going to do with him?



**1.) Help them understand what "Anger" is**

[1:12:50]

The first thing you're going to do with him is help him to understand what anger is. That's the first thing you're going to do with him. And actually, for some people, that will be enough. Because a lot depends on the individual, but many individuals are well enough put together in the grace of God and in their general health that once they see what anger is, they will drop it like you drop a hot poker. They'll drop it. Now, there will be others who will not want to give up on anger. And they may want to say, "Well, you know, it's really righteous indignation." And then you have to go into that. Your teaching now is a really important part of this. Whether it's lusting, anger, using language to say a yes that is no, or any of those things. The absolutely next stage after this is to help them understand what it is.

Now, if you've got a group, and I would work for that, and it's possible, especially if the pulpit is teaching about this. It's not always the case, because you may have the preaching pastor who's not on board for any of this. He's got something laid out, he or she does, and they've been doing that for decades, and they're not going to do this. But, if you've got a pastor who's on board, then they can teach about anger, they can teach about lusting, they can teach about all of these things that Jesus refers to and help people make a start.

**2.) Offer a short-term small group on how to not be angry** [1:15:00]

And then they could say something like this, they could say, "We're going to have a 8 week, 3 month course on how to deal, how to not be angry. I would put it that way, not in anger management. Okay, that's...I'm not knocking that. I'm just saying that's not what actually...you're not going to be doing the thing that you would be doing in a course that would be recognized as a course on anger management. You'd be doing some of the things, but not all of them.

So you have, so you say, we're going to have a course. Who would like... there's a limited number of places, and it should be limited, you don't want these kinds of things to get over more than 6 or 8 people. Because you there's going to have to be real individual attention to these people. And you say, "Now, following up on Jesus's suggestion that we teach people to do everything he said, we're going to have a course or seminar for eight weeks, three months, (or something like that. Make sure it's not too long and not too short, you'll have to make a judgement about that), and if you take this at the end of it, you will no longer be unable to not be angry where you are now unable to not be angry."

And the most important place where this application is in the family. Now this won't solve everybody's problems, or anybody's all of their problems, you focus it on the one thing.

So then you begin, you get your 6 or 8 people, and you begin to meet with them. And the first meeting I would devote to further explanations or explorations of what it is that they would like to stop. Whether it's pornography or a certain way of conducting their business, or whatever it is, you want it focused and say at the end of this period, you will be able, in brief, you will be able to do what Jesus said in this particular area. Okay, so that's the next stage now after explaining helping them understand what anger, or so forth is, is you get them together in a group, you try to help them make clear that they understand what it is.

Now then, you send them out for a week, to identify anger — maybe if you like this specific form of cursing and blessing, bless those who curse you — you have them to observe cases of anger to just watch how it works. Doesn't need to be in them. They can do that. But, watch it in other people. Come to know how anger actually works in real life.

### **Debrief with the Group the Causes - the Roots**

[1:18:41]

And then, you may want to take a couple of weeks at that they come back you have discussions. All of this, of course you're prayerful and thoughtful. You're expecting the Holy Spirit to work in it. But, we're just talking about the human side of it now. So you have them come back and you have them talk about the cases. You really want to get the stuff in front of them where they see it. And then when you feel like you have got them clear on that, you begin to deal with the roots of anger. Why do people get angry? Start with the cases.

~ Driving A Car — Here's a case: Someone's driving down the freeway and someone cuts in front of them and now a little festival of finger flicking breaks out. Why? Why? What made that happen? Now see you can only proceed beyond this by identifying the causes. You identify the causes, and you deal with the causes. And that's what allows you to step free of anger. That's true of pornography. That's true of any of these things that people tend to just get so hung up on. And so beat up on that they feel like they can't make progress. So that next stage after understanding is looking at the causes the roots of it. People don't get mad for nothing. It doesn't light on their head like a bird. It comes from somewhere. Where did it come from? And that's where they will be able to identify something probably much broader than just the issue they're dealing with. Because you see, you have

individuals who practically undergo a personality transformation when they get in a car. What's that tied to? It's tied to increased power. So then when they are crossed, their will is crossed, there is in them a greater reaction.

~ Advertising Cars — Now then, you may want to talk about advertisements for automobiles, at that point. How do people sell automobiles? What do they appeal to in selling an automobile? Power? Power. And that is ego stuff, isn't it? Where egos, I go. Power enhances ego. Ego is about kingdom. It's about ruling. It's about reigning, about having my way. And seriously, I mean, you can take a week or two and just have people look at advertisements for automobiles. Because that's directly related to anger and driving. Directly.

~ Why do I need to have my way? — Now then, the next stage would be to get them to thinking about why do I need that? Why do I need that? Because it's rooted in their need. Why do I need to have my way. And now at last we are to the root of the problem. And if you can turn that, so that a person not only in their head, but in their body doesn't have to have their way you will have cut the roots of anger.

~ What if I don't get my way? — Now you have to deal with issues like, "Well, but if I'm not mad, people will just run over me." There are other ways of handling that You have to re educate some people. And if the other guy in the car starts the finger flicking you don't you just wave that on because you're probably not going to be able to do anything about him unless you run into him and have to spend some time with him. So but really, we do have to re educate people have to leave time for that. Because if they are used to running, more or less with anger, then they won't run without it. And they will think that if you don't get mad, you don't mean what you say. They will think if you don't get mad, maybe they're gonna get to have their way. But those are different issues.

~ Pornography — Now if you're dealing with pornography, you've got different sets of issues at that level. Like for example, how am I going to manage to have enough joy in my life if I don't do this? And that is answered by a different route in terms of the Kingdom of God and your life in the Kingdom of God. Take some instruction but it can be answered.

## **Summary of Training**

[1:25:10]

Okay, so now, that's sort of the way you go with training. If you have to do it with an individual, it's a little more difficult. I think it takes longer, but it still can be done. You always have to start with this, individual or not. But I have

I have watched it, I've seen it for years, it works, it can be done. You don't have to have a list of things like I went through, because a lot of it will be taken care of, by the intelligence and grace in the individual that's doing it. Basically, for many people, serious mature Christians especially, as we would understand that, taking allowance for the fact that they may not have been disciples, they tend to move quite quickly. And very often is simply a matter of saying, "you know, there's a way you can do this. Would you like to be rid of that? Or would you like to be able to do that?" "Yes, I just didn't know you could." Right? And once you say, make sense of that, give them a little progress, they take off. And they come to the place to where the things that used to tie them in knots, or send them off like a rocket, they simply look at and say, "Who needs that? Who needs that?" Walk by the pornography on the 7/11 shelf and say, "Who needs that?" Look at the donut and say, "Who needs it?" Not defiantly, not whistling in the dark, they really realize they don't need it because they've got something else. And then you've got a person who will easily and routinely do the thing that Jesus said.

**You Do Not Have to Teach Everything Jesus Said** [1:27:15]

Now, just this one other point, we'll take a little break. You don't have to teach them everything that Jesus said, by the time you've done two or three, they will have gotten the idea and the heart of their difficulties would have been broken and they will do the rest. They need a little instruction, little helps from time to time. That should be ongoing, especially in a community of believers, and I know this is an ideal situation, and then we'll talk a little bit more about this after the break. That's why when you come to the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Plains, Matthew 5-7 and Luke 6, they don't say the same thing. Now that's a dead giveaway that it is not law. When you do law, you say the same thing. Go to law school and find out what it means. Now you may purposefully try to develop something, but law is essentially where you say the same thing. So you don't mess with the Ten Commandments. Actually, the versions you get in Deuteronomy are a little different. But you're into a life and a spirit here. So when you read Galatians 5, and you read Ephesians 4 & 5, they don't say the same thing, and you read Colossians 3, they don't say the same thing. Why? Because all you need to do is get the thing going and the details will take care of themselves. So if you could do...one way of stating it, let's say in Colossians you can do the others, and you probably will without thinking about it. Now this is Christian liberty under the Spirit of God in its fruition in life. Well, I think I'll stop there. We'll take a little break and then we'll wrap it up.

~ ~ ~ **End of Session 16 @ 1:29:44** ~ ~ ~

**Session 17 — "Discipleship in Local Congregations"**  [47:38]

**Introduction** — Okay, now I want to spend some time talking explicitly about the problems bringing this into the local congregations. God apparently isn't going to give us anything as an alternative to local congregations. I don't have any hope or wish. Now, they can take a lot of different forms. And we certainly don't want to mistake the church for the building. And it's important for us to draw distinctions. It's important for us to love the church, and to be able to make judgments about it and to discern, we do not have to get into condemnation. But actually, there's no way around it. We're either going to be able to pull the local congregations into what we've been talking about, or they are going to oppose it. And a lot of that happens. And we have to learn how to be wise and loving and be in the midst of that. And keep talking and keep teaching, and where possible, work something like this. And so just a few remarks about the local congregation.

**Two Problems in The Local Congregations** [1:50]

First of all, a couple of comments about what is the problem? And I want to just list two things that are the problem.

**1.) The Distracted Local Congregation**

Local congregations are distracted. They are distracted from the thing which you, if you probably asked them, they would say should be central. Because if they understood and were confronted with the choice, most of them would say "yes, of course, we ought to be disciples making disciples." But then when it comes down to it, and you can watch what is actually attended to and what is taken to be important, it's something else. That's what I call distraction. In the last chapter, of the *Renovation of the Heart*, I quote a statement from Leith Anderson which I thought was just wonderful. He says,

*"While the New Testament speaks often about churches, it is surprisingly silent about many matters that we associate with church structure and life. There is no mention of architecture, pulpits, length of typical sermons, or sermons. (It doesn't say anything about sermons. Talks about preaching.) Rules, we're having a Sunday School? Little is said about style of music, order of worship, or times of church gatherings. No Bibles, no denominations, no camps, pastors conferences, board meeting minutes."*

None of that. Now what I mean by saying that we're dealing with distraction is precisely what he's pointing out here is that what we wind up paying

attention to is stuff that has nothing to do with what we probably in a sober moment, would say, we're really here for. And frankly, this is one reason why a lot of pastors and others involved in ministry wind up heading for the exit. Fuller [Seminary] took a survey some years ago, and found that within five years, their average graduate in pastoral ministry was out of the pastorate in five years, on the average, and actually it turns out since then, that that's better than the average generally. And it's somehow you just have people look at it, and I've talked with pastors of very successful mega churches and so on. They just say, "It isn't worth it." What they're doing.

One of the most famous pastors of mega-churches in this country has told me that there was a time when he was when he was on an airplane and that was in turbulence. He was praying it would crash, because that would get him out of his job, which looked like it was just not worth it. And this was a man who is fabulously successful. So that's one problem — distraction. We need to recognize it as such. Why do we put our attention and effort into the things we put our attention and effort into?

## **2.) The Problem of Tradition**

[5:45]

The other issue is tradition. We wind up...we wind up devoting our efforts to sustaining a tradition. We don't make disciples, we make Baptists, or Christians. Now I'm just stating two things here, which I hope you will meditate on think about, consider. Because they stand in the way of doing what we started with - *Making disciples, gathering the disciples in Trinitarian fellowship, and teaching them to do everything Jesus said.*

~ The Vessel Trap

[6:45]

That is what I call the vessel trap. Because we wind up taking care of the vessel. Not a bad thing to be a Baptist or Christian. Not a bad thing to have someone devoting their time to raising enough money to keep the building functional. Not a bad thing at all. Nothing wrong with the vessel. The problem comes when the vessel begins to replace the treasure and the treasure is left begging, or isn't really considered. Now, one of the outcomes of that is you build a membership of people who are not formed in the likeness of Christ. And, that's where you get multitudes of mean Christians, Christians who are ready to hurt you, and spend a significant amount of their time hurting other Christians. What else? I mean, their character has not been transformed. Now, why has it not been transformed? Well, you can say many things there. The devil made them do it. But the real fact is, that has not been a project for them. And it has not been a project for them because the message and the leadership has not made that a project for



them. They didn't know that was a part of the deal and maybe they were given a theology that says you only stopped being mean when you die. So, I'm mean, and my dad was mean, and my grandpa was mean, and we've been members of this church, and that's just us. So, there are all sorts of ways of addressing that. But basically, you have to have a decision on the part of leadership and the teaching that says, "No, we can take care of the vessel, honor the vessel, but not let it get in the position of the treasure." And then, you know, it's getting in the position of treasure when you see people getting mad about it or when you see people devoting all of their efforts to supporting. One of our finest Christian college presidents recently devoted his periodical mail out, you know they all now have these things, they mail out, to the question, "Why are Christians so mean one to another so often?" And he quotes another leader, both of these I know, and they're wonderful people, who was heading up a particular denominational organization, and he said, the college president quotes this guy,

*"As a leader of a Christian organization, I feel the brunt of just this kind of meanness within the Christian community, a mean spirited suspicion and judgment that mirrors the broader culture. Every Christian leader I know feels it. It is difficult to be Christian in a secular world. But it's sometimes more difficult to be a leader in Christian circles."*

There too, you can be vilified for just the slightest move that is displeasing to someone. And this guy said, "When I am finished with this job, I'm going to write a book on the topic. Why are Christians so mean?" I actually I know this fellow and he didn't write the book. He took a position in another organization, where people were mean to him. Maybe he's writing the book now.

So, there is an answer to the question and the answer, of course, is because the, in our organizational setting, Christians are routinely taught that the vessel is more important than the treasure. That character is not what you look for in a leader, you look for technical efficiency, and then you judge them against their capacities to use their technical efficiency for the pre-established objectives of the organization.

### **The Fundamental Mistake of the Western Church** [11:51]

Now, I must say something here, which would make a lot of people mad with me, but that's okay. I'm beyond hope and reconciled. And I want to refer you to page 238 [*Renovation of the Heart*] and following on this because this to me comes to the heart of the matter. I must say that a fundamental mistake of the conservative side of the American church today, and I'm not addressing the other sides, they have their own issues.



*"A fundamental mistake in much of the Western Church is that it takes as its basic goal to get as many people as possible ready to die and go to heaven. It aims to get people into heaven, rather than to get heaven into people and this requires that these people who are going to be in must be right on what is basic (and you can't really quarrel with that.) But it turns out that to be right on what is basic is to be right in terms of the particular church vessel, or tradition in question, not in terms of Christlikeness."*

So, actually, the project is self defeating, because the way to get more people into heaven is to get heaven into more people. And if you don't do that, then you wind up with a group of people that are testimonies against Heaven. And so this does not really turn out as a good way of doing it.

"If you want to get people into heaven, you want to get people into the genuine spiritual transformation, full throttle discipleship that spills out of them all around them wherever they are, so that people cannot avoid it."

**Q:** What page?

**Dallas:** *Renovation of the Heart* 238 & 239. I encourage you to have a look at that and see what you think about it.

## **What Should We Do? – The Great Commission** [14:15]

So now, what should we do? Well, I think it's very important that we do whatever we do from a biblical basis. And that anything we cannot bring out of the Scripture as a direction for us to go on a fair and full interpretation, anything like that just don't do it. But we have material to work from, and this goes back to where we started. The Great Commission is in the Bible, not only in words, but then it's there in reality. And so what could we do? We could put this up front and say this is what we do.

## **I. Make Disciples** [15:15]

Now, this will cause us enough trouble however it goes. Because that means that we're going to make a primary objective of our organization the making of disciples. That's going to put us into concern about the vision upon which we make disciples.

You start with the message, "All power is given to me and Heaven and in earth." Now, if you don't recognize that, that is the announcement of the kingdom of Jesus. "All power", I have been given say over, actually the word there is "exousia" not "dunamis" - "Authority". I have been given the right. All right. As I translated it on the transparency, "I have been given say over

everything." That's what we that's what we operate from. And we live in that context. And then we preach that, that message. That's the first part.

Can our group commit itself to that? That's the first challenge. It will challenge us in many levels of theology and many levels of tradition. We will have to live in the Kingdom of the Heavens in order to sustain that. And in many cases, sustained against people who are Christians that we are drawn together with in a congregation. But on the basis of that, we can begin to make disciples.

Now, I am very concerned that someone not walk into a local assembly of any kind and say, "now we're all going to be disciples". Don't start there. Start with the message. Give people time enough to realize something different is being said. Because at first, they will, utilizing the translation dictionary that they have, when you say "the heavens", they'll say "heaven". And everything you say about the kingdom of the heavens or the heavens, as the invisible landscape\*\*, they will translate it into "heaven much later, and far away."

[\*\* "Two landscapes" - Video #2 @ 2:25, 6:15, 8:53, 17:10, 26:58, 28:38; 48:10; #4 @ 40:40; 58:00; #5 @ 56:10, 57:55; #6 @ Intro, 7:05, 33:29, 38:55; #7 @ 11:48; #8 @ 58:25, 1:04:20; #10 @ Intro; #12 @ 11:35; #13 @ 21:00, 23:00, 24:30; #17 @ 18:00]

You have to give people a chance to get their dictionary reading a little differently in the light of their allegiance to the Scripture. So that patience, love, persistence. And then you will begin to see, I believe, people emerging out of the woodwork as we like to say, saying, "I want to become a disciple of Jesus in the Kingdom of God." And believe me, there are multitudes. And in every group, there will be a number of people who have been waiting to hear. They are waiting to hear. They're waiting for someone to make sense of eternal life. And they have language about fellowship with Jesus and so on, but it doesn't work for them because it doesn't have a content that they can put into practice. They haven't answered the question of how is Jesus here? And what is he doing? And how can I be a part of that? And the language of the Kingdom, you take it in the gospels, and the letters and the book of action, you begin to bring out of that, a way of making sense so that they can stop just using the language about being one with Christ and begin to translate it into real life terms.

So now, when you see times when the church has really moved forward, it has been times when a substantial number of people were living as disciples. And also on the negative side, when you see when it's not moving, or when it's engaged in battles, like for example, the battles that Churches get into

over charismata is a is a great illustration of an attempt to come to grips with religion as a kind of formal way of saying and acting that has nothing of divine action on it. It's all postponed to the other world. And then people who begin to get something going right here now. And that's heady stuff when you get into it and it tends to create all kinds of problems.

Peter Wagner wrote a book that was initially titled *Healing in your Ministry in Your Church Without Making it Sick*. Because when that stuff begins to go, then people get edgy about it. And senses of superiority and conflict and charges and countercharges, "you're not faithful to the Bible. You think God talks to you", and so forth. You heard all that anyway.

~ Opposition to Implementation of the Great Commission [21:15]

So, now then implementing the plan that we put on the board and recall the Great Commission in the local congregation. That's, that's where you need to put the pressure and until you're able to move something on that level, the local congregations will turn out mainly in opposition, because they will be working their program. And they will feel self righteous about it and ready to be mean to anyone who threatens them. So, when you get this group of people who have decided to be disciples, and they're going to do something about it, you have to teach them that one of their main lessons is what to do with people who are mad at them because they're causing problems. And they're causing problems, because now they're taking a different path and becoming substantially different in the midst of a people that aren't set on that path.

## **II. Trinitarian Ministry not Performance** [22:19]

So, you have to keep your disciples together. Focused on what is important, ministering to one another, sharing the burden, bringing the gifts of the Spirit to bear in the assembly of disciples and that is what I call "Tremendous Trinitarian ministry". You have to be reconciled to that. That means, among other things, that you stop running a show. That's hard to do because in most of our cases, we are doing performance and we've got we select our leaders in terms of how they can perform. And that usually, the Trinity basically says, *"Well, since we've got such good leadership, we don't need to come. We don't need to come."* You have to be really careful about that. I don't recommend just saying we're not going to have performances any longer. You have to wean people off of it. But if you don't have that, as an objective, you will keep up performances. And you will be judging the preacher by how they perform. And performance will be related to

objectives, and gradually, the acceptability of the ministry will be weaned away from character as long as they perform well.

So, if you have a preacher that is messing around sexually, but if he's very good at performing, and the money and the people are rolling in, the folks on the staff who know what's going on will say, "For the sake of the ministry, we won't deal with this." And you have probably seen this. I have seen it all my life. We used to have an outstanding man in the Southern Baptist Convention that couldn't stay in one place more than two years or so because he couldn't keep his hands off of the females in the flock. And because he was so effective, the leaders in the denomination would manage to just move him on to the next place and not deal with the problem. And see that's where we need to say, "For the sake of the ministry, we deal with the problem." We don't cover it up, we don't push it under, but performance becomes the curse of the church.

Right now, we're getting a lot of large churches that have put on big performances, and they're running out of money. And they're having to try to find a basis for going on, and probably, they're not going to be able to find a basis for going on with the operation that they have. And I'm not talking to any particular one, because there are many, most of them are, in fact, in trouble now, because they have built up a plant, as we like to say, that is so huge and cumbersome and requires so much money to support it. And you see, I mean, you look at that, and you say, "that's all, that's all gone crazy."

And then you look at the little flocks and the movements where a few people have just exploded. They didn't have anything. That was exactly the situation of the people who stood there and heard Jesus say, "Now, as you go, make disciples." They didn't have anything. In the realm of nobody, they were right at the bottom. All they had was the Kingdom of God and the Trinitarian presence.

~ Eliminate Performance, Seek Christ's Word & Character [27:00]

The top of page 247, in the *Renovation [of the Heart]* is a paragraph that I think, is especially important because I'm talking here about eliminating performance. And I do urge you to do it slowly, give people a chance to adjust. But on for our sakes, we need to be understanding, as I say here, "The sufficiency of Christ to all is the basis of our efforts in gathering and service. His '*I have been given authority over all things*', that's one book end. And the other book end is, 'Look, I'm with you every moment'. That's the book end of the, "Go ye..." '*I've been given say over everything, I'm with you always*'. That's the sufficiency, that is our hope. The ministers, pastors,

teachers and others should, with time and experience, expect to receive from the Christ with them profundity of insight, sweetness and strength of character, and abundance of power to carry out their role in the local group. The minister does not need tricks, techniques. He only needs to speak Christ's word from Christ's character, standing within the manifest presence of God. That's, that's what we have. Speak Christ's words from Christ's character standing within the manifest presence. The Kingdom will manifest itself. It will do it. And when it does, it will have tremendous effects that do not depend upon our performance. Of course, we're talking about a steady life. So that's the second part of the plan.

### **III. Teach Disciples to do What Jesus Commanded** [29:15]

The third part is of course — then you take the people who are disciples in the Trinitarian fellowship and you teach them in such a way that they do the things that Christ illustrates in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere. You cannot say too many times "you do not take these as laws". You take them as I've said as expressions of the life of a person who is maturely at home in the Kingdom of God. So we teach and we set an example and we plan on it. We set up seminars to do it. That's where wisdom rules. You don't want a technique or method for that. You need to stay out of that and believe that Christ is Lord of his church and if we give him a shot at it, he will be there. And He will teach us and He will give us wisdom, and He will help us love one another when we disagree. That's his business.

### **Two Practical Things** [30:42]

Now, finally, just two things we might do practically, this will take some getting there.

1.) Expect — But first, openly expect disciples to learn to do the things that Jesus taught us to do. Openly expect. At present, there is no such expectation. If someone shows up, and they're actually doing it, they are regarded as oddities. They're welcomed, if they don't become too troublesome. But there's no expectation that people will do it. Actually, in our Sunday schools, often, we sort of expect the children to do it and they know that. And what we need to do is just to maintain that across the board. If grandson needs to do it, grandpa needs to do it, too. And we need to expect them to do that. We know in education generally, that children respond to expectations. That if you have a class, and you think they're a bunch of dummies, and they...and you don't expect them to learn, they will not learn, generally. That if you have expectations, and they're realistic, of course, and all of that, they will actually respond to them positively. And so

we need to have expectations that people would learn in such a way that they would automatically, more or less automatically, do the things that Jesus said. That would solve most of our problems that we have in the local congregations. All of the problems that churches wind up dealing with from not enough in the offering to ordaining homosexuals, or whatever you want to mention, comes out of failure at the lower level. And if we want to deal with those problems, we don't deal with them directly we deal with the roots, the causes of that. And so we need to expect.

2.) Announce [33:04] — Secondly, and this this will be a good place to begin, is announce that you teach people to do the things Jesus said to do. Now, that will be misperceived the communications will not be smooth, but you can be done.

A church that I have had some work with in Ireland, Kilmakee Marquis Presbyterian Church, I got them finally to write,

*"In Kilmakee, we teach people how to know Jesus Christ, how to be like him and how to do what he said to do."*

Now, that's a rough path, but the way you start you say it. What does your church say it does? You can't get very far with the project of transformation, unless you say, "this is what we do." Now, I would word it in various ways to keep it out of legalism. Sometimes you want to put it in a way that can get into legalism, just because people can't get what you're saying if you don't do that. But if you do it, then you quickly add, "we teach people in such a way that they do." See, that's different, isn't it?

Now just for shock value, you may want to first put on the front of your building, *"We teach people to do everything Jesus said."* I guarantee you you will have an interested community if you do that. Because that is not now expected of churches. Often what is expected is they're a bunch of rascals and often it turns out that way.

So those are two things. Now. I'm just saying. Expect people to do it. Announce that you do it. If you announce that you do it. Then you will have to make plans to do it. And you'll learn a lot in the process. And I really encourage you not to think you have to have it all worked out before you start. Life isn't like that. You start because it's worth doing, you trust God to help you and you learn as you go. You are bound to make mistakes but the bigger mistake is to stay where you are if you're not doing this. That's the big mistake.



## The Only Way the Church Works

[35:45]

So, we can do something with our local congregations. It will be a challenge, the challenge will be part of the refining that should be in the process. It will work, I guarantee you. You say, "how do you know that?" Well, I've seen a good deal of it myself, though, I must say, I've never seen a church that just did it. But, I've seen a lot of individuals and a lot of groups have done it. And I know the history of the church. And I know in fact, it's the only thing that really works. It's the only thing that does. And we look back at the times of power in the early church, and other times, and often we wonder what, how they accomplished what they did? When we wonder about that, we just have to ask ourselves, "Are we saying what they said and doing what they did? Are we saying what they said? Are we doing what they did?" And then if the answer is no, we just we simply be honest, and stick with it and come to terms with it.

## Conclusion

[37:00]

Now, just two sentences or three, winding up.

The most important thing is for you to take care of yourself.

Here is **Proverbs 4:23**, "Watch over your heart with all diligence." Because, I'm going to paraphrase it a little bit, because what your life amounts to comes out of your heart. What your life amounts to comes out of your heart. Proverbs 3:23, I think it is maybe 24 You'll find it there. "Watch over your heart with all diligence."

Now, basically, that's discipline. That's a discipline. Get a vision of what it's like to rest in Christ in the fruit of the Spirit and do the things that will hold you solidly there. You need to take care of yourself.

Paul adds on to that in a **I Timothy 4:16**, "*Take heed to yourself and who you're teaching.*" Consider what you teach. Be careful about it. Now, in this context where I've been haranguing you, that means make sure you're teaching what Jesus taught, and that would be the Gospel of the Kingdom. Paul is saying, "*Take heed to yourself and to what you teach. For In so doing, you will both save yourself and those who hear you.*" And you can be sure of it. You can be absolutely sure. And when you think about success in your ministry or your life, think about it in those terms. Don't displace success into consequences, results. Think in terms of the health and integrity of your own self and your message. That's success — what God gets out of your life is the person you become. That's what he gets out of your life. Actually, he's got plans for you that make your little successes down here look pretty small, and the issue is whether or not you're going to



be the kind of person that can step into it and how quickly you can step into it. Some people may have to wear a dunce cap for 10,000 years.

*"Take heed to thyself and to your teaching. Because if you do that you will save yourself and those who hear you."*

Paul knew what he was talking about. And the only thing I would add just for emphasis is, "Don't try to make things happen. Abandon outcomes to God. Do your best. But don't try to control outcomes."

Did you ever see someone bowling or playing basketball, they shoot the basketball, and then they stand there and go "uh,uh,uh." That's body English. And human beings tend to do that in all kinds of areas. But, when you come into the Kingdom of God, when you shoot the ball, let it go. Then, now God's turn, God's turn and you can praise him for the outcome.

Okay, we have four minutes for questions. *Yes, sir?*

**Q:** [41:25] Dr. Willard, could you speak to what seems to be your intentional choice to say, "To teach people to do all the things that Jesus said rather than teach people to do all the things that Jesus did" in light of a verse that gets used a lot that no, "we will do even greater works, Jesus said we will do greater works than I"?

**Dallas:** Well, actually, if you do, if you do the things that Jesus said, the effect will be, because now you are going to be working with the Holy Spirit and other instrumentalities that He didn't have at his service and He also had some things to do that we don't do. You know, so if you will do what Jesus said, beginning with the Great Commission, and you're able to do that in community, especially, you will wind up doing greater things than Jesus Himself did, in terms of his ministry. Now, you will not do anything greater than dying for the sins of the world. Not going to do anything greater than that. But, just think of Peter on the day of Pentecost, Jesus never had a result like that. Never. Well, of course, Jesus was there through the Holy Spirit. So, you're going to be doing things at least together, that are greater than things that Jesus accomplished. Because He has gone away, He has done His work, and He has gone away. And now He works in you with different instrumentalities. And so that, I think is the way you should take it, and you should be hopeful about it, and that would mean that whatever is good that you're trying to bring about, you would be helpful, because you know, you don't carry the load. And if you're working with God, you can bring it to pass.

**Q:** [43:57] I don't mean to open a can of worms, but it's kind of curious. Like when you talked about distractions in the church. I mean, one of the big ones is over charismatic churches and the apostle movements.

**Dallas:** Well, that becomes a distraction in some quarters. Yeah. And when it does, it usually is because someone is taking that as a tradition and they are thinking everything should fit into this tradition, and if you don't fit into this tradition, you're something less than you ought to be, and so it becomes a distraction. That's the point of Peter Wagner's title. Because, many times when manifestations of the Spirit and forms of spiritual gifts break out, it causes a distraction. And that is usually because attention is drawn away from life in Christ to a tradition. And people are not just exercising gifts. They're saying a lot about them that is not right. For example, this often happens, gifts are so impressive that people forget about the fruit. Now, if you've got the fruit in place, the gifts are not going to cause any problem at all. None. But of course, generally speaking, where this happens, the character of Christ has not been developed into people. And so they are apt to say, "Well, I speak with the tongues of men and angels. Hey, hey, hey! Do you?" And what the plain teaching of the scripture that love is the center of it all, is disregarded. And then others will say, "Oh, gifts are the devil" and they'll write a book and be very unloving about it and very judgmental in the sense of condemning. And they will suggest these folks aren't even Christians, for whatever that's worth. Some distraction results from not centering on the things we've been talking about. And if you're centered on these, then whatever comes up will be dealt with in the body in a way that you can stay on course with discipleship, Trinitarian fellowship, and teaching people in a way that they actually do what Jesus said.

**Benediction**

[47:00]

Well, now...

*"May the Lord bless you and keep you. May he make his face to shine on you. Be gracious unto you. The Lord look right at you, lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen."*

~ ~ ~ **End of Session 17 @ 47:38** ~ ~ ~

**—> END of THE COURSE TRANSCRIPTION <—**

## **More Courses & Resources from Jesus College**

"The Human Side of Holiness Course" is the 18th course offered by Jesus College (15 in partnership with Dallas Willard Ministries) engaging 2100 participants from 51 countries! The courses are available in the expanding [Jesus College Library](#) with over 350 free resources to enhance your Christlikeness including (15) Dallas Willard courses in 5 pages in the [Jesus College website](#)!

[Courses on Dallas' Books](#) - (5) courses

*The Spirit of the Disciplines* - Understanding How God Changes Lives (11 sessions)

*Hearing God* - Developing a Conversational Relationship with God (10 sessions)

*The Allure of Gentleness* - Apologetics in the Manner of Jesus (7 sessions)

*Life Without Lack* - Living the 23rd Psalm (9 sessions)

*Becoming Dallas Willard* - biography (9 sessions)

[Courses on Dallas Speaking](#) - (7) courses

"For Such a Time as This" - 3 teachings on Ministry Leadership (6 sessions)

"The Genius of Jesus" - 2 teachings at Ohio State University (4 sessions)

"The Problem of Evil" - 3 sessions focused on 3 chapters from Dallas' books

"Spiritual Formation & Salvation" - 1 teaching at Wheaton College (3 sessions)

"Jesus, Dallas & NT - The Gospel" - 3 sessions including NT Wright's teachings

"Jesus, Dallas & NT: The Book of Acts" - 4 sessions including NT Wright's teachings

"Advent with Dallas Willard" - 3 sessions on a sermon and devotionals by Dallas

[Renovation of the Heart](#) - (1) course on the book (13 sessions)

*Renovation of the Heart* - Whole Life Spiritual Transformation

[The Divine Conspiracy](#) - (2) courses

*The Divine Conspiracy* - In-depth 31 session course on the book

"The Divine Conspiracy - An Overview" - 6 session highlighting key principles

[Speaking Sessions](#) - 48 Dallas Willard resources featuring 81 teaching sessions with 760+ pages of notes. (General Dallas speaking *not* Jesus College courses)

## **"Master's in the Master" Spiritual Training**

The Jesus College "Master's in the Master" is a clear, realistic, practical method to foster "Christlikeness" in ordinary people who take transformation seriously. *This is not an accredited degree.* The Master's offers you a Jesus centered, wisdom guided, community\* engaged, mentor\*\* supported, daily life integrated, spiritual growth plan.

**CURRICULUM** — The Master's is built around (15) courses varying in length from 3 to 31 sessions per course based on the books and teachings of Dallas Willard {listed on the previous page} are completed and available in the [JesusCollege.com](http://JesusCollege.com) library to start today. Courses will be offered again "live" at various times.

**CALENDAR & TIME** - The Master's is an individually paced time frame based on when you start and how often you participate in "live" courses or watch recordings of the sessions. We use the word "cohort" but there is not a set group - "no freshman class" - nor pre-set time to commence or complete your Master's. This is an independent study and growth training effort. We estimate for serious participation 3+ hours per week over a timespan equal to the 3+ years Jesus walked with His disciples. *3+ hours weekly for 3+ years.* Again, this is your preferred pace NOT according to a Jesus College calendar or semester syllabus.

**COMMUNITY\*** — We are seeking the platforms to facilitate connection with other students to engage and enjoy rich diversity of Jesus' friends from 48 countries involved in Jesus College.

**COST** — The "Master's" training is offered for FREE by Jesus College. Additional personal coaching, church consulting and training, teaching or preaching at your location or virtual are available from Jesus College at pre-determined costs between the two parties. Financial donations are also welcomed for those who want to help further the impact of Jesus College.

**COMMENTS** from Jesus College Students:

- Cath from Australia, "I had another look at the website link - WOW! Amazing syllabus and I'm excited about the 3 years walk with Jesus."
- Tony from England, "In brief, these courses have changed my view on discipleship. I feel myself a new creation."
- Pastor Oladipo from Lagos, Nigeria, "I've participated in all the courses except one. It has impacted my ministry strongly because we are fine tuning our church to become a church who really does what Jesus said. The whole experience has been personally transforming for me personally and in my ministry. In time we can become the example of the kind of church Dallas has said he has never seen."
- Judy from Virginia, "I'm definitely interested and I've loved everything you have offered. Everything! The idea of experiencing this with other people face-to-face is very appealing to me."
- Don from Canada, "This Jesus College vision is on the leading edge for the future of the Christian community."

For information on the courses, a plan worksheet for your custom Master's V-I-M, or a personal consult\*\* with Doug Webster to discuss your desired spiritual training and growth, email us — [info@JesusCollege.com](mailto:info@JesusCollege.com).

## Jesus College Postscript

Thank you and God bless you for venturing into a life that is really life with Jesus as your Master and Maestro. We trust you have had a fresh hearing of Jesus through the minds and souls of a humble follower of Jesus in Dallas Willard alongside a cadre of the crucifixion of friends from around the world. May your quietly transforming, conversational friendship with Jesus immersed in the Trinitarian community be pervaded with joy and relaxed with shalom, as you willfully seek agape for the good of God, others & yourself.

For more resources to enhance your apprenticeship with Jesus...

[Dallas Willard Ministries](#)

[Jesus College](#)

[Dallas Willard Ministries YouTube channel](#)

*The Study Guide was prepared with love, diligence and enthusiasm by Doug Webster of Jesus College. We welcome your comments, suggestions and ideas on how we might better help you actually do the things Jesus commanded in your pursuit of Christlikeness.*

[info@JesusCollege.com](mailto:info@JesusCollege.com)



# JESUS COLLEGE

A good school