

“Transformed by the Renewal of the Mind”
Dallas Willard, Trinity Henry Center



“Transformed by the Renewal of the Mind”
Video 1 of 7



Scribe’s Comments - The session was transcribed from the video in good-faith effort but it is not verbatim. The **bold** and underline offer the scribe’s emphasis and the [brackets] refer to other Willard teachings.

Romans 12:1-2

[4:55]

“Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

We’re going to have to do a little anthropology because we want to understand the role of the mind in spiritual transformation. This is not an academic subject for me but it is an academic subject I am constantly involved with.

There is a widespread sense that this is not happening. Over our churches there hangs a cloud of failure. Whether an illusion or reality, I leave it for discussion. Trying to come to grips with what the public sees, the church leaders or the lack of transforming power of Christians in our society. I’m helping groups that seem to be stalled out not seeing in the sense they are not seeing transformation in their lives you we read in the New Testament. The secular world often beats up the church with its own stick trying to apply the standards of righteous they have picked up from Jesus Christ to the behavior of the church.

I do not think anything can replace the Church. On the other hand, I believe we can do much better. I believe firmly that there is nothing wrong with the church that a clear minded, resolute application of discipleship to Jesus Christ would not cure. We have fallen into a period where discipleship is not the norm and not much understood. We have the accepted situation of multitudes of Christians who by their own admission are not disciples of Jesus. If that’s the situation you have, the remedy is to turn to discipleship. You are going to be turning to means. We’re talking about Scripture as a means to personal transformation.

Paul admonishes us in this passage not to be conformed to the world, that’s the option, but to be transformed by the renewing of the mind. Give a grip on how it relates to the use of scripture in ministry.

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[10:25] The old mind holds before it a certain picture of REALITY and the workings of that mind are tied to how they think the world works. The renewed mind goes with transformation into conformity with God’s world - that is the Kingdom of God.

The transformation we are talking about is out of conformity to a way of occupying the mind and using the mind into a different conformity - a conformity with God’s world - **the kingdom of God** - with thinking conformed to the realities of the Kingdom of God.

1st Point - We are talking about an alternative REALITY - the world on the one hand and the Kingdom of God on the other. They have different views of the things that matter most. Scripture comes to help us master, not just intellectually but practically, life in the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God (def.) - the range of God’s effective will.

Where what God wants done is done. *“Thy Kingdom come”* and we spell that out, *“Thy will done on Earth”* which is the only place the Kingdom where other kingdoms conflict with it.

“Hallowed by thy name.”

All the problems in humanity come in thinking wrongly about God. His name is not held to be a wonderful thing. The importance is why Jesus puts that first in his model prayer, the first request is *“Hallowed be thy name.”* When you get that right, everything else follows after that.

The world is organized around human desire. That is why John says, *“Love not the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in them.”* What’s in the world - *lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life.* They are all expressions of human desire.

The will of God is towards what is good not what is desired.

LOVE is not the same thing as DESIRE.

Love is meant to govern the will which contemplates alternatives.

Desire contemplates objects and says “I want that.” Desire is obsessive, it is blind. *“It is deceitful”* **Ephesians 4:14** Desire is always deceitful because it promises satisfaction and fulfillment if it gets it way.

~ ~ ~ Part 2 of 7 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7BbFSguq3No>

Love looks for what is good . Unfortunately for human beings, often it is not what is desired. The human catastrophe is the we often desire what is not

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good. Love comes to replace that under God but the world is formed around human desire.

“The world is passing away along with its desires...” **I John 2:17**

The real problem is intensive desire. In the world, the mind is set on the flesh. [\[see Willard’s “Battle Between Flesh & Spirit”\]](#)

Romans 8 - *“living in the terms of the flesh mind the things of the “flesh” -*

“Flesh” (def.) - “natural powers of the human beings.”

“World” (def.) - “the flesh organized historically and socially”

The mind and the spirit is what characterizes those who live in terms of the Spirit. The Spirit is primarily God.

Spiritual Transformation (def.) - *The process of moving from the conformity to the world to the conformity to the Kingdom of God.* [01:55]

It should always be called transformation. The problem is not formation. Everyone gets one. It’s like education. The problem is the one we got. The difficulty is to move from that to conformity to the Kingdom of God.

This is new language for many folks. But “Spiritual formation” is old language. The word used before that is “Institution”.

St. John Cassian, *The Institutes*

John Calvin, *Institutes*

The same meaning of “formation”. That dropped away.

We had a period from post-Reformation up to the present where we have been talking about this. The one constant idea is “spiritual growth”.

“Growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

II Peter 3:18

For the Christian spiritual formation is the procession of the individual taking on the character of Christ.

Spirituality in our world today has taken on thousands of forms. People hungering and not getting it where they were. Most commonly understood as “New World” but it is the oldest world on human record all the way back to 4000 B.C. in the Eastern World.

What does that look like in practice?

[6:20]

A version of spiritual formation **Romans 5:1-5**

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.

Parallel Passages:

Romans 8:1-11

Col. 3:8-14

II Peter 1:4-10 [See “Faith, Virtue & Knowledge”]

These are descriptions of a process humans beings go through as they live as disciples of Jesus Christ. Everyone gets a spiritual formation.

* Hitler had a spiritual formation.

Formation has to do with the character that is developed in people.

Christian Spiritual Formation is the process through which inner and outer dimensions of human personality take on the character of Jesus Christ himself.

What would that look like? Someone who...

[8:25]

“Loves God with all their heart, mind, soul & strength and their neighbor as yourself” would be the outcome of spiritual formation in Christ.

1st Reaction

We do have a theological background at the present which leads people to say either, “This is impossible. You can’t do this.” A substantial part of our theological climate holds the view that “brokenness” is the top rung of the ladder of spiritual growth. That’s as far as you get. Brokenness is an important stage to pass through and once you pass through, you carry with you no confidence in the flesh. (Philippians 3)

Beyond that, you place confidence in the Spirit, in God, in His Word and as a result the transformation goes forward by working with each of these dimensions of personality that are set forth by Jesus in **Mark 12**. He answer the lawyers’s question as to what is the great commandment. Here in the teachings of Jesus and later in the teachings of the apostles LOVE is set to be the first commandment. We often don’t understand the importance of looking to LOVE as the landmark of the disciple.

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That’s Jesus’ idea! In the process of telling His disciples He was leaving, He tells them to love one another as He had loved them. Then He says, “there is one mark of a disciple of Jesus - how they love one another”, not the world nor their neighbor. The mark was to be the love of Christians toward one another in their community.

You might search to see if that is the mark that is held up for membership in our groups. Is it there or is there something else that is the mark of the Christian? He said “disciple” but we don’t think in terms of “disciple”.

What is the mark of the Christian?

I don’t think the answer is very obvious.

We want to say Christians are not ones who have arrived at the pinnacle of loving God and their neighbor as themselves.

* Bumper Sticker - *Christians are not perfect, only forgiven*

That is true that they are not perfect. There is a large difference between only forgiven and being perfect. That is the area of the process that one goes through in coming to fullness of Christ.

Colossians 3:10-14 - The New Person

10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him— 11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. 12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

II Peter 1:4-10 - One of the clearest statements of the process you will find in the New Testament.

~ ~ ~ Part 3 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jkzeUcnzYbM>

One of the older texts and probably explains a process that had been learned from 1st Century Christians.

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2nd Reaction - *“This is works, not grace.”*

Grace is not opposed to effort. You won't see anyone put out effort like someone who has been touched by grace. Grace is opposed to earning not to effort. Earning is attitude. Effort is action.

If we are going to be transformed into Christlikeness and out of conformity to the world, it will be because we have done certain things. Spiritual transformation is not a passive process. It does not happen to people.

Christian spiritual transformation is the process that happens to people in the status of disciple.

Disciples can often be very green. Being a disciple is not an advanced spiritual status. You pick this up clearly if you read the Gospels. Thank God for that. We come into discipleship with Christ with no credentials but our need and our understanding that He has welcomed us to life in Him in the Kingdom of God. That's where the life of the disciple takes place. Jesus' teaching (John 3) is a life from above. You enter into the Kingdom when you are in a position as a student of Jesus Christ.

As a disciple of Jesus, I am learning from Him how to lead my life in the Kingdom of God as He would lead my life if He were I.

For each of us, the emphasis is on our lives. Now we have a basis from which we can begin to talk about the process of Spiritual Formation.

Often it is set aside because it is assumed to be a discarded form of religion of where people did strange and fantastic things in the past to gain favor from God. Much of it needs to be discarded such as monasticism as a preferential or high form of life. That's an old form - See Eusebius in the 3rd Century.

I don't think it is very common and don't think it is the normative form for the Christian life. Jesus was not a monk and none of His disciples were. He lived in the ordinary world. For most of His life He was an independent contractor, a blue-collar worker. He didn't start practicing the Sermon on the Mount when He preached it. He had been practicing it for a long time before that as an ordinary person in the world making a living.

It is important to know that. The apostles did not adopt that form. When we think about spiritual formation and associate it with a discarded form of life, we want to remember the facts of the case were simply misunderstood in

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the form of life and walk out from the misunderstanding but keep the essence of spiritual formation in discipleship. Now you have to understand discipleship in terms of your whole life and what you are learning to do and be wherever you are.

In my own case, I was raised in Dispensational Theology. The Sermon on the Mount was not for today. They made a few exceptions: Forgiveness and Divorce. It was not assumed that you would become Christlike or take on His character. This was presented as a gospel as a version of the gospel for another time. Paul, John & Peter were thought to be preaching a different gospel. It took me a while to work out of that. It finally became clear to me if you could do Colossians 3, you can do the Sermon on the Mount in a walk. It is all of a piece. It was a misunderstanding about the gospel that led to that unfortunate circumstance.

[8:15] - Are we going to do what Paul says in Romans 12 - to be transformed by the renewal of the mind?

Do we hold doing what Jesus said as an objective?

If the answer is YES, what Paul says is the legitimate objective of Christian living. I don't see how anyone can disagree with that but some do.

How?

[9:30]

How do you come to the place that the things Jesus commanded would become routine, easy obedience? What are the methods?

Setting aside an issue: It isn't going to happen without the grace of God. That's not in question, *"Without me, you can do nothing."* That's granted. But we need to think the thought, *"If you do nothing, it will be without Him."*

Now, what am I to do? How do I submit my body and renew my mind and become transformed because of that?

Dimensions of the Human Personality

[10:40]

We need to think about where does action come from?

Action comes out of **the inner dimension of human personality**

Dr. Jesus tells us, *"Love God with all our heart, soul, mind & strength and our neighbor as ourselves."* **Mark 12:29**

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Jesus really knew what he was talking about. He is telling us how to move toward the renewal of the person. He is saying we need to come to love God with those dimensions.

Biblical Psychology

[11:50]

The HEART - Your will and also the human spirit. The heart is the Executive Center of the self. It's where decisions are made. The fundamental role of the will in human personality is to rely on God. That's how it comes into contact with a source that enables it to fulfill its vocation given to it from God in creation.

The MIND - [12:55] Your capacity for thought and feeling. Your ability to represent things, the response of your feelings to what is represented and the primary source that the "Will" has in view when it acts. The Will as it acts must respond to something that it is thinking of and must have some feeling about what it is thinking about then it can act. It's important to understand, when the Mind goes wrong, the Will is enslaved. Read Romans 1 and you'll see how this works. The Will can only act from what is in the Mind.

Ironically, sometimes something is not in the Mind because the Will has rejected it. There is an interplay between the Will and the Mind that becomes extremely important when you think about the use scripture in spiritual formation.

The BODY - [14:25] Your little power pack. God has given you an energy source that enables you to even act in rejection of him. Your body is extremely important in the spiritual life. You're meant to live from what your body already knows to do.

* Speaking a language; Driving a car

~ ~ ~ Part 4 of 7 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xxgu0h_-9LU

BODY (continued) - Responding to someone who has cursed you, normally that comes directly from your body. That's why your body has to be retrained and why Paul says submit your body a living sacrifice. All spiritual disciplines are bodily.

SOCIAL [0:20] Inhabiting the social relationships in a fallen world is primarily two fundamental modalities of brokenness in social relationships in Attack & Withdrawal. That has to be redeemed so that love takes the place of distancing and attack.

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SOUL [1:15] - Takes all of the elements of our experience and makes one life out of it. You have a fundamental layer of the self that scripture often treats the soul as the second person. *“Why are you downcast oh my soul?”* Your soul is not directly accessible to you. The soul is like the computer that runs the whole operation. You don't want to hear from it.

If it's cast down, you have a problem. Your apt to talk to it.

“Hope thou in God” addressed to the soul.

The Role of Scripture in Spiritual Formation

[2:40]

Once you have made the choice to be transformed by the power of God but by your action as well, you have to decide where you can take a hold of the process.

Take something as simple as,

“For God so loved the world He gave His only son...”

That comes to your mind. You don't have to receive that. Many people who hear about it, don't receive it largely because their Will is set in a different direction. The Spirit of God comes into the Will through the Mind and the Heart has a choice to respond. If the heart responds by trusting God in Christ, there is a reconnection with God.

Now you have resources for spiritual transformation. You don't have that before. Now you have a choice of what you're going to do to carry through with the process of transformation. The miraculous events of conversion and birth from above are a special time in the life of anyone who has lived through it.

* Dallas' conversion at 9 years old. *“Everything looked different.”*

The question comes, *“Where do I go to from there?”* I can't just stay there. I have to grow. I can't just stay there. Reaching out to scripture and scripture reading out to me. Those around me can bring before my mind the content of the Bible.

* Flannel Graphs. Simple Sunday School brought to me the contents of the Bible and through them the reality and nature of God and human beings, both as lost and as saved and in the process of growth. In that way, the grip of a worldly vision which leaves out God, is ignorant of how he works, of what goes on in the human soul, the grip of that worldly view is broken.

The **Will** has a way of working. The **Soul** can come back together.

Psalms 119 - *“The Law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul.”*

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If you walk in the Law, your world comes together as a coherent whole, you are now living from the Kingdom of God.

Law is not opposed to grace depends on how you use it. If you use it as God’s expression of what is good and right, it brings us closer to Christ. It instructs us to what is good and make us turn to God. Anyone can find God just by trying to live the Ten Commandments. Ten Commandments - You need the power of God to do them. The Law helps restores the soul.

The Good Shepherd restores my soul and He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. The restoration of the soul helps the person come back together.

- The Scripture keeps before our mind what must be there if we are to surrender ourselves to God.

That’s one side, the other side is...

- The Word itself now is a power that enters us as we take it in. It isn’t that it just stands before the mind, it becomes a powerful force in us.

Jeremiah 23:29, *“Is not His word like fire and like a hammer that breaks the rock.”* That comes from a testimony of experience.

Romans 1:17 - The gospel is the power of God to salvation.

It is a power. When we take it in, not just a matter of being in our mind but spreading through our whole personality.

Paul to Timothy, *“Scriptures are to make you wise unto salvation.”* II.3:15
Salvation is deliverance. When you take it in, it is a power that works.

Hebrews 4:12, *“The word is quick and powerful.”* Quick means living. It takes on a life of it’s own. When you take it in, it takes on a natural process of transformation.

John 15 - *“Abide in me and my words in you, ask what you will and it will be done.”*

It will mean you’re going to ask for things that God wants. The entry of the Word in you changes your wants, changes your will. The Word of God as we take it in becomes a primary resource for the renewal of the mind and that leads to transformation.

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We live in a world that is very much set against this. The teaching of the world about what is **real** is totally different from what is real in the Word of God. The World does not want you to say as a Minister of the Word that you are conveying **knowledge**. They want you to say that you are just doing **faith**. The displacement of the teachings of the Christian church from the area of knowledge into the domain of faith has done and is doing indescribable harm. Every minister needs to check their attitude about what they are doing when they present the scriptures.

Do I regard myself as conveying knowledge of reality or am just trying to entice people to make a leap of faith?

You are in a world that brings constant challenge to this point. Do you bring knowledge of reality, of human life, is that what we have in scripture or or is it just a book of fairy tales of teachings that people can leap towards but can never know?

Re-Think our Services

[13:35]

Are the services that we count as “having gone to church”, are they ones that effectively convey the Scripture and it’s content into people’s hearts, minds, souls, bodies and their social relations?

Is it possible that the widespread conviction of a lack of transformation is due to a failure to apply the scriptures effectively to the lives of people?

Having a high view of the nature of Scripture is not enough to ensure that we are conveying the Scripture and its content to the live of our people.

Do we have enough time in our services to do that and do we use that time that to honor the Word?

How much time is spent reading the Word in our congregations?

~ ~ ~ Part 5 of 7 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DzIIM6iT_Ew

People don’t bring their Bibles because they know that they are going to see some scriptures are going to be put on the screen and that’s enough. Is that adequate?

What do we do outside the services as we recognize them?

Are we identifying those who are ready to do more to take on the scriptures in their lives?

Do we do enough with **memorization**? Memorization is fundamental to spiritual transformation. In retreats often I ask retreatants to memorize Colossians 3:1-17. Do we have groups memorizing together?

Do we teach people to **pray** the Word? Many people don’t know what to pray. It’s a great relief to teach them how to turn the scripture into prayer.

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Do we teach them to **apply** the Word to what they are doing in their ordinary lives?

The big thing is for us to understand is that we can change the minds of people by bringing the Scripture into their lives and that will transform their minds. Problems like pornography are solved by training the mind differently. They are hopeless if they don't retrain the mind. They have their mind in the wrong place. They must put their minds in the right place before God before they can step free from obsessions. Scripture will help us do that.

Are we going to find the ways in using the Scripture in the personal lives in those in our ministry that will lead them into transformation into Christlikeness?

~ ~ ~ **End of Teaching - Video 5 @ 3:25** ~ ~ ~

~ ~ ~ **Q & A** [videos 5-7]

Q - Give an autobiographical sketch

A - [4:25] I was a young Southern Baptist Pastor. After a while, I recognized the most serious people were the ones who constantly came forward to rededicate themselves. I realized after a while I was not saying anything that was actually helping them. That made me begin to re-examine the New Testament and the teachings and the practices of Jesus. Then I began to see more broadly the practices of Christians through the ages, things if rightly used would help people change. That took years of understanding and growth. Finally I began to teach on this stuff and give series on it. Richard Foster and I worked together.

Personally on memorization - Jet lag take me out for days.

The Lord said to me, "Fast, memorize scripture and pray."

I took a long passage, memorized it, prayed and didn't eat and I got off the plane in Johannesburg as fresh as a daisy.

A **Discipline** (def.) An activity in your power the enables you to do what you can't do by direct effort.

Then I began to memorize more and more by way of passages.

Colossians 3:1-17; I Corinthians 13; John 14

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Q - [8:22] - How does the renewal of the mind solving the problem of pornography?

A - [8:40] Two things need to be changed:

- 1) What is before your mind
- 2) How you think about it?

If God is before your mind, then everyone else, including yourself, looks differently. The main thing you're practicing is keeping God before your mind. * Frank Laubach - *Game with Minutes*

This is not Law, this is wisdom. If you have a hard time with any discipline, you have not sinned. You are learning experimentally how to do things. Not everything that is wrong is a sin, not everything bad is a sin.

* Hebrews - difference between "weights" and "sins"

Now in a situation when I am in danger or receiving treatment where I don't think I am being treated right, my mind doesn't go to how am I going to deal with that. My mind goes to, "*God is in charge and caring for me.*"

What is before your mind is primarily what happens in renewal.

* My Grandma - Worst = "Shucks & Tobacco"

She was a person whose mind was filled with God.

Where does your mind stay and how your mind works. What inferences you draw. Memorization transforms that. When you memorize passages they settle in your body and your soul.

Q - [12:35] - More on definition of "Flesh" and "Desire"

A - FLESH is the natural powers of the human being. What you can do without God's direct assistance.

* Abraham & Sara and Abraham & Hagar (Galatians)

- Ishmael - "Child of the flesh"

- Isaac - "Child of the promise"

Abraham and Sarah still had to do something unlike Joseph & Mary

There is a part for us.

Philippians 3 - "*Anybody glory in the flesh? I more...*

I despise all that in order that I might know Christ."

~ ~ ~ Part 6 of 7 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALcP9bUd8rw&t=329s>

FLESH is not bad, it is not evil. It is not the same thing as meat - the stuff on your bones. Your flesh is what you can do without God's direct assistance. Of course you can't do anything without God's indirect assistance.

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DESIRE - Is not bad but desire is obsessive and it does not consider the broader scene. That is the role of the Will which is supposed to act for what is good not just what is wanted. Love puts us in the domain of what is good and the will is supposed to follow that.

Buddhists & Stoics taught that you have to eliminate desire. Desire is not to be eliminated, it is to be subordinated to what is good, then desire is fine. If it is not subordinated, it will tear you apart.

James 4:1 - *Where do quarrels come from? Your pleasures & desires.*

Desire is conflictual. It has to be subordinated to good.

Don't use Desire & Love in the same way.

They don't mean the same thing.

* You may say you love Chocolate cake.

Love is subordinated to good. Desire is a matter of *"I want that!"*

* Child buying something that they want.

Q - [4:00] Scripture memorization in a congregational context

A - [4:20] This comes in stages. Any discipline you're going to practice, any commandment you want people to do, you're going to want to have general teaching in the congregation. The congregation will sort itself out. You will have people who, if they could take a pill to get rid of anger, they would not take the pill. They are wedded to it. You say, "Let's lay aside anger" you are asking them to lay aside a primary instrument by which they negotiate life.

You present it in the context of what that does for them.

I always press for a group and they do encourage each other and they learn better in a group.

Memorization = Repetition, Concentration & Understanding

* "Bible Memory Association" [now "Scripture Memory Fellowship"]

You can't get the benefit by just memorizing verses. You need passages.

I would not pastor a church that did not have a memorization program. Young people will remember what they learned young. Everyone needs to be memorizing. It becomes a part of what you think about and how you think about it.

Q - [9:15] Kids memorizing scripture and Bible Quizzes then acting immorally. What's is going on there?

A - [10:00] These are cases where memorization is not tied to character development. Usually a case where people have a high view of Scripture. What you have before you is - I am first a disciple of Jesus. As a disciple, my life is organized around character transformation Scripture memorization can be a way to do that. Some think memorization is righteousness. Any time a

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discipline is tilted in the direction of self-righteousness or superiority, something has gone wrong and you need to practice other disciplines. An excellent discipline to deal with pride is service, especially serving people you don't think are worthy. Young people can learn a lot from that.

Q - [11:55] You said the “flesh” is not bad.

A - [12:15] The flesh becomes inhabited with sin. The natural abilities are taken over by the practices of sin and then the flesh is bad, but not because it is flesh but because it has been inhabited by sin.

“In me, dwells no good thing.” That is his body.

The body is the Temple of God and its natural abilities can be redeemed.

The Spirit of God will be poured out upon all flesh. The flesh if it is not inhabited by sin, which is always is until it is redeemed, is good when it is redeemed. Without it we would not have human life.

Q - [13:20] (*same question continued*) So the battle of the Flesh & Spirit is to bring the flesh into conformity to the ways of God?

A - [13:30] Many people think that can not be done and the proposal of spiritual transformation is impossible. It has caused so much trouble through the ages. The flesh is not your body. The flesh that sin inhabits is not your body, it is your abilities. Your body is not bad. That is one of the things that has gotten off-loaded on to so much of Christianity - your body is bad, evil and to punish it is good because it deserves it. We have a nest of confusion.

~ ~ ~ Part 7 of 7 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEgAAtcBzT8>

Q - What role does the social development have? Are we to do this alone or with fellow believers?

A - [0:44] You can't do it alone. That's partly because you are essentially a social being and what needs to be rectified in us is our social reactions.

For example, socially, most people are fearful of others in some degree.

“Fear of man brings a snare.” **Proverbs 29:25**

You might consider how much religion is actually practiced out of the fear of man?

The changes that are required are essentially social. So many think if you are going to seek spiritual transformation, you are going to abandon outreach and evangelism. If you do it right you won't be able to prevent outreach and mission and care for the poor.

“Transformed by the Renewal of the Mind”

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We are essentially social beings. That’s why Jesus lists “love of neighbor”. Who is my neighbor? The person next to me. Those are often the people in church with me. Learning to love others in church is a huge project.

* Why do you go to church? Jesus says “Love your enemies” and you can find some of them in church.

The church is a place when we get in a tight spot, we should not leave because, *“I’m mad at so and so.”* This is the opportunity to work out this dimension. That means we are going to have to get to know one another better.

In my latest book, *Knowing Christ* - I wrote a section on how to go to church.

The church is a school of love. It is where we go to learn how to love our neighbors, first of all our families. Then we go back into the home and bring the healing that has happened to us in community.

Then we step out of our homes and live there as persons in truth and love. That’s what the world is dying for.

The real challenge facing not only the church but the world today is whether or not the Christians will become disciples and become Christlike and lead the world by example and power that comes from God and not from human sources.

It is absolutely essential to get out of the attitude of attack and withdrawal and move into the area of love and coming together.

~ ~ ~ **End Q & A @ 5:00** ~ ~ ~

For information & resources about Dallas Willard Ministries — dwillard.org.

For a “Willard Teaching Toolbox” with dozens of teachings with A/V links & transcribed notes — JesusCollege.com