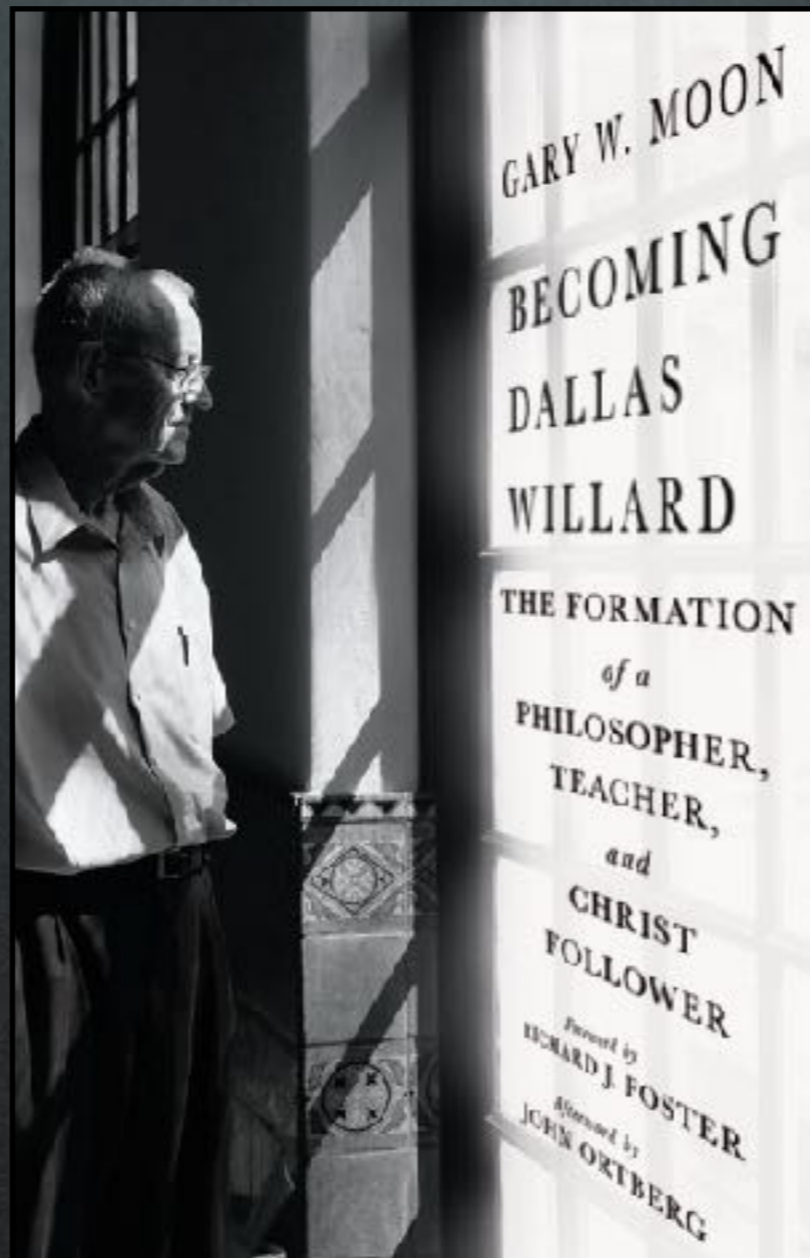


# BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

## Chapter 6-7

### *Session 3 - "Academic & Vocational Definition"*





## SESSION 2 - BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD



From migrant worker to college student

From college library to holy matrimony

From a laundromat to ancient practices  
forming a conversational relationship with God.



## **BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD**

### Chapter 6 - "Academic Awakening"

Goodbye Tennessee... "The happiest four years of my life", said Jane...to the flat rocky plains of south-central Missouri to teach at the Thomasville High School where Dallas attended.

They had electricity, no running water, and an outhouse. Thanks to sister-in-law Bertha, Jane got an electric stove instead of a wood burning stove. (75)

Dallas was ordained Pastor at the First Baptist Church where he used his loud, fast, impassioned preaching.

*"All around the church was a sea of dying people. I couldn't change things when folks were determined not to change."*

(76)





Dallas recalling fondly his time at Baylor

*"For Such a Time as This"*

Baylor University, 2004

[First 1 minute of Dallas speaking]





## **BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD**

### Chapter 6 - "Academic Awakening"

6 months later and the birth of their first child John...

On to Waco, Texas to Baylor University to study.

Dallas → Religion & Philosophy   Jane → Music Education

*"I did a terrible thing in my early years because I was raised on the idea that I was the preacher and the man of the house, and I was to carry on bravely with all of my stuff and just sort of let my dear wife, Jane, make out the best she could. Oh my, it's a wonder God didn't strike me dead. That was just the dumb way that I had been raised. Now I know much better, and my cultivation of her spiritual life is more important than the cultivation of my own. She feels the same way about me... You really grow together in your marriage when you practice this together." (79)*



## BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

### Chapter 6 - "Academic Awakening"

Summer, 1957 — Miller Road Baptist 100 miles North.

Dallas → Youth Pastor    Jane → Church Secretary

They moved out of a trailer in Waco. Dallas remained in Baylor student housing and he would drive from Waco on Wednesdays and weekends for family and ministry.

As one of the "Preacher Boys", Dallas learned

*"Never try to find a place to speak, try to have something to say."*

January, 1958 — The commute was too stressful so they moved the family to Waco into a prefab home in Baylor's married student housing.

(80)







## Life at Baylor, Waco, Texas

- Standing with a non-segregated, open church
- The first place Dallas, “engaged in seriously intellectual work. Preaching, Teaching & Philosophy came together.”
- Formation of Dallas “Life’s Most Important Questions”\*

What is real?

Who is well off?

Who is a really good person?

\* - pages 83, 103, 113, 214, 224





In memory of Dallas Willard

*September 4, 1935 - May 8, 2013*

Beloved Professor of Philosophy (1965-2012)

“You cannot ‘opt out’ of having a worldview.

You can only try to have one that most accords with reality,  
including the whole realm of facts concerning what is genuinely good.

The four questions any worldview must answer are:

What is reality?

Who is well-off?

Who is truly a good person?

How does one become a truly good person?



## More Influential People

Professor William Jackson Kilgore - “The face of Baylor”

Professor Haywood Shuford Jr.

The works of Josiah Royce - the reality of the invisible community of the Trinity & the Kingdom here and now.

Kyle Yates: “The Kingdom Man” - Beatitudes & Romans 8

John Bright’s *The Kingdom of God* - Rename the Bible?

“The Availability of the Kingdom of God”

Old Yale Scholars including George Barker Stevens on salvation as “union with Christ means growing in likeness to Christ, and Christlikeness is righteousness.”



## **Back to Georgia in the Summer of 1958...**

For one year they lived near Jane's hometown of Macon. Dallas was Associate Pastor at Avondale Baptist Church, Jane's childhood church.

*"I was totally incapable of making any sense of God and the human soul."*

"I was very sincere, and people regarded me as effective. But when I looked at my congregations I saw them struggling and not able to deal with issues that constantly defeated them, threw them back into guilt, and many of them would give up and just hang on and be faithful church members." (88)



## Summer of 1959...Back to School



Jane's response,

*"So we are going to move to Wisconsin so you can sit and think?"*

But Dallas knew something crucial was missing.

*"I was almost terminally ignorant about God and soul."*

*"When it came to spiritual growth, I honestly had nothing to say."*

(88-89)



## “BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD” - CH. 6

Tennessee...Missouri...Texas...Georgia...Wisconsin

*“I really learned to love and trust thought at Baylor.”*

If the Kingdom of God is a present reality, then what it means to trust Christ is different from what many think. It means trusting Him here and now with your life.

The Gospel = the availability of the Kingdom of God

People needed the direct knowledge of God.

(90)



# BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

## Chapter 7 - "Which Path to Take"



or



*"I love being a pastor and I love being a professor.  
How do you pick between two things you love?"*

*Earl Aldridge said, "Oh that's easy. If you go to the church,  
the universities will be closed to you. But if you go to the  
university, the churches will be open to you."*



## **Voices of Influence**

Department Chair William H. Hay about whom Dallas said, “Whatever success I have, I owe to Bill’s influence”, a man of “gracious intelligence”.

### **Two Key Philosophers**

G.E. Moore — Common Sense Style & View

Edmund Husserl — Knowledge of Reality

Dallas said, *“What Jesus taught was a source of knowledge, real knowledge, and not merely an invitation to a leap of faith.”*

*“I would never have chosen to work at philosophy as a profession but for the single — thought multi-faceted — issue of realism.”*



In three years at University of Wisconsin, Edmund Husserl\* was the bridge between the great and dark chasm of subjectivity [and] the appealing realism of G.E Moore...of our knowledge of invisible\*\* things such as the Kingdom of God.

(96)

\* - Husserl - “the other woman in their marriage.”

\*\* “Invisible” 84, 103, 104, 131, 139, 153, 198, 214, 216, 245, 248





# **BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD**

## Chapter 7 - "Which Path to Take"

A hard "reality" at home. "It was a terrible year," Jane.

Then, in February, 1962, Becky entered the family!

Then "life" again in a small C&MA Church where Dallas began teaching Adult Sunday School classes. But, it was a season of anxiety & migraines.

Professor Singer said of Dallas' work, "*You know your work is a strange mixture of humility and arrogance.*"

He made a solemn resolutions to not self-promote. (98)



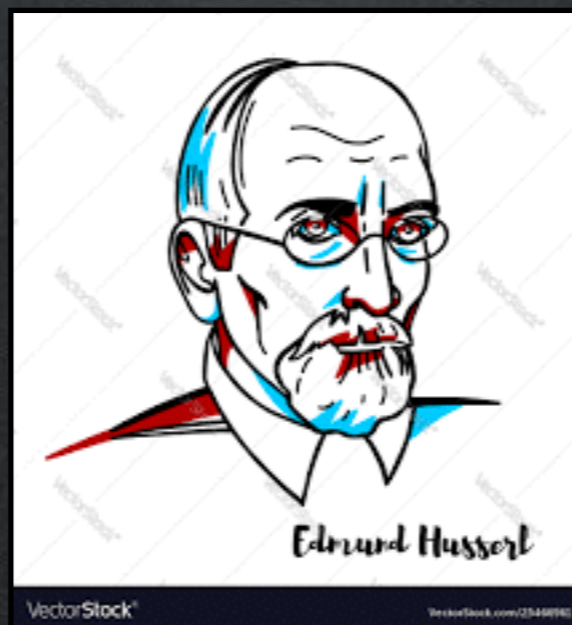
*“You know, if you can find a better way,  
Jesus would be the first to tell you to take it.”*





Dallas on language & knowledge:

“You don’t get clarity by talking about language. Nothing is gained by talking about words instead of ideas. That explains why my focus on Husserl was so important. He did not make the turn to language. He helped me understand how in religion you have knowledge. You are dealing with reality, not just some historical process.”



(99)



InterVarsity Christian Fellowship – an organization on campus committed to seriously seeking God.

*“They had a deeper hunger for an experience of God.”*

*“It was that capacity to be biblically serious, to hold to the central teachings of what Lewis call ‘Mere Christianity’, and yet to be open enough to be willing to discuss anything.”*

Dallas taught what he was gleaning from the Gospels that would later form a core of *The Divine Conspiracy*.



(100-101)



After 4 years of being out of the pulpit, Dallas began serving 2 churches in rural Wisconsin.

“As I preached the gospel I watched those churches flourish. It was almost like watching water come on parched corn in the summer.”

*“He had a way of preaching that was unique. I don’t remember him getting very loud, but I do remember him preaching from the Sermon on the Mount and the Kingdom of God being with us right now.”*

Laverne Sneath

(101-102)



## **The Self-Doubt Came Flooding Back**

Dallas was depressed immediately after he was awarded a Ph.D. Had he made a mistake in not choosing to be a real doctor?

*Jane recalls, "He started thinking about going to medical school. I never prayed as much about anything as I did then. I didn't want to start over. It took a while to get that quieted down."*

(102-103)





## **The Next Chapter of the Willard Family**

He was offered four faculty positions.  
He chose the University of Southern California.

(103)





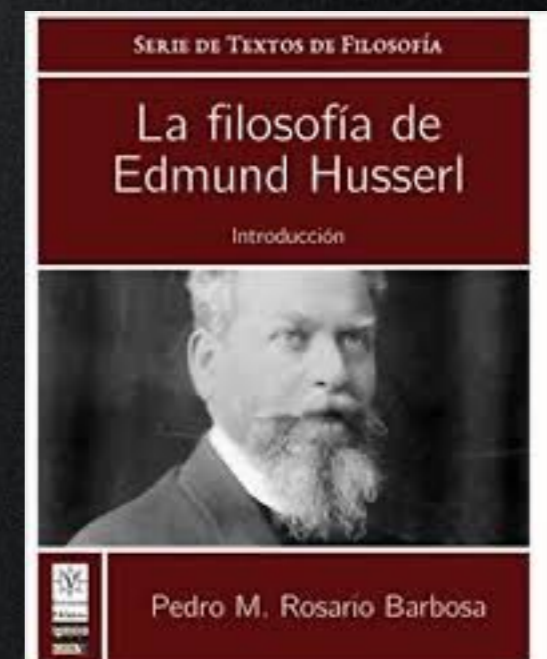
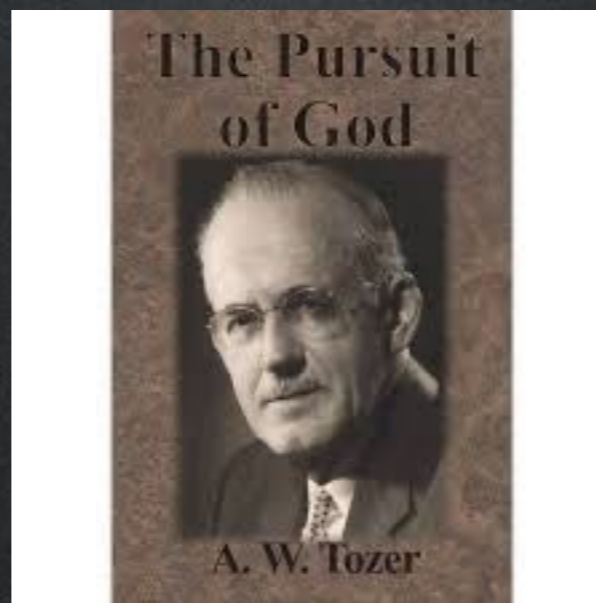
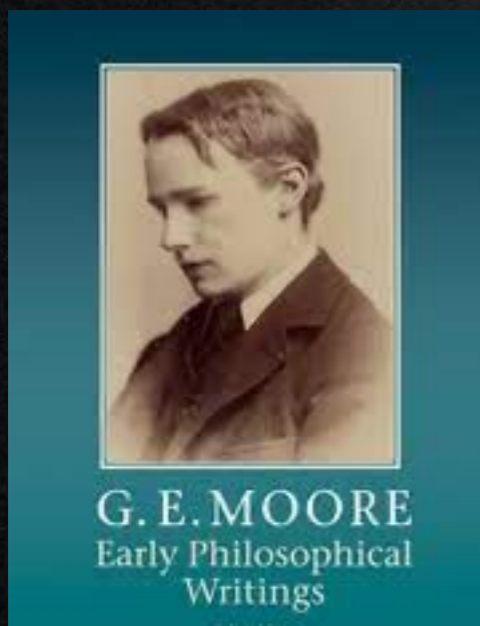
## “BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD” - CH. 7

### Voices of Influence (104)

**Moore:** Proof of an external world to interact with, learn from, explore.

**Tozer:** A deeper life and relationship with God in the here-and-now Kingdom with a happy God who is easy to live with, and can be pursued and known through interactive conversation.

**Husserl:** Reliable insights about knowledge. Phenomenology - how careful, first-person attention to the way things appear can bring insight into the way things are.





## **“BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD” - CH. 7**

### **The Gospels & Spiritual Disciplines**

*“I didn’t come to understand the Kingdom through theologians.”*

It was his own experiences and study of the four Gospels which generated his view.

*“What I had thought were merely the discarded practices of futile religion were actually things that, if rightly used, would help people change.”*

It is possible to experience the Kingdom of God in the midst of life, of pain, and difficult decisions.

(105)





## “BECOMING YOU”

- Where is the sea of dying people around me that God has called me to bring about their life change?
- What did I use to do as a “terrible thing” because I didn’t know better that has changed/is changing?
- Who has God used through my studies to alter the path of my journey with Jesus?
- How real is the Kingdom of God to me?





## **BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD**

### **Next Session #4**

Begin Part Two: Three Kingdoms

Chapter 8 - "Early Years at USC"

Chapter 9 - "King & Queen on Campus"

Pages 109-140



# BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

## Reading Schedule

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





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

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



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