

“Nietzsche vs. Jesus Christ”

Dallas Willard - Veritas Forum - 3/2/02 [1:35:30]



[“Nietzsche Vs. Jesus Christ”](#)

**Scribe’s Comments** - The session was transcribed from the recording 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.



Veritas stands for openness and the willingness of

That is the spirit of philosophy and of Jesus Christ.

I am not here to attack Nietzsche or Jesus Christ but rather to try to give them voice as it concerns fundamental matters in the contemporary world.

**Freedom & Truth** are not easy to talk about because they are so important and those words have been dragooned to serving causes the don’t have to do with freedom or truth. It is difficult to think seriously about them. I am going to try to not be obscurely philosophical about it.

I am going to try to say things simply and clearly about **truth & freedom** as they’ve come to meet one another in our contemporary world.

It’s not easy to think about Nietzsche and it’s not easy to think about Jesus Christ. It’s amazing how names and personalities become encrusted and the things they try to get at are lost. We will try to put a sympathetic face on both Nietzsche and Christ and try to hear what they had to say.

**Nietzsche** (1844-1900)

[3:30]

Nietzsche has become very important on the campus and culture today because He saw what coming to a head in his own day. He did not see much of his success. He has become successful in culture generally only after the Second World War. The views Nietzsche expresses are not particularly his own. He was not a driving force in culture and is not a driving force in culture today but a symbol of something bigger than himself. Nietzsche “caught a wave” - the reaction of the world of art and intellect against something we can only loosely call “Christian Culture”. Nietzsche experienced it deeply not only in his own family life but as he prepared himself as a young scholar and later as a member of the faculty at the University of Basel, Switzerland.

What was happening at that time was there was a great wave of reaction against the power of a Christian ideology that was without real spiritual vitality. That perhaps came most clearly to a head in England in the form of

the controversy over the allegiance to the 39 articles of the Anglican Church which people had to swear to to be faculty at Oxford & Cambridge. The institutions in Christian society and government were to a large degree not based on what they professed.

“The Reality of God” - Everyone said as we say on our coins today - “In God we trust” - but it was clear they did not trust in God. They trusted in their own abilities, in their capacity to form cliques and power groups and move in ways they wanted to, often about trivial matters. Nietzsche saw that. The culture professed to live for love of God and of neighbor but as he looked at life as it was really lived around him in the Universities and the towns, it’s very hard for us today to capture a culture that was explicitly and thoroughly Christian.

Nietzsche saw the irrelevance of God to what was actually being done, to knowledge, morality, academic and cultural life. It was a really a revulsion against a system of hypocrisy, even hypocrisy about knowledge and truth that led him to a point as a young man to resign within a few years. He gave as his reason health but [scholars] said it was not health but a revulsion against a social system he could not bring himself to be a part of.

“Knowledge” in this period was more and more divorced from theology, the church and God.

\* Noah Porter, Yale President [1871-1886] & William Graham Sumner

Sumner decided to use a sociology book in his course by Herbert Spencer. President Porter [[married the daughter of the founder of Yale Divinity School](#)] read the book and realized that it had nothing to say about God. Porter questioned Sumner about the book’s absence of teaching about God. Sumner responded in a way deeply reflective of academic structure at the time.

*“The reason the book has nothing to say about God is because God has nothing to do with the subject matter.”*

It doesn’t sound shocking to you today because today we have acclimated ourselves to the idea that you can be the best educated and informed person about the world and know nothing about God. Up until this period of change, it was assumed as the medieval said,

*“Theology is the queen of the sciences”.* [[Thomas Aquinas et al](#)]

Descartes’ *Mediations* - he reworks that and says,

*“You can’t know anything until you know God.”*

What Nietzsche does is to recognize that this has happened and people are not being honest about it. This is the meaning of his famous phrase, “*God is*

*dead.*" Nietzsche was not declaring that God was dead or prove He did not exist. He was saying, "As far as European culture goes, if God were dead, it would not make any difference."

Nietzsche stands for a certain representation of academic life and knowledge that came out of that period and culture now it is almost automatically assumed. That view of knowledge is called "**Constructionism**".

[Constructivism]. Nietzsche very clearly expresses this view.

(def.) *"The world as we know it is a construction of the human mind - language, social structures."*

The identities in which we think and live are products of certain processes of living. They have a history. We count things as the same or different, we classify them in the way they do because it enables us to realize our purposes. Nietzsche thought this was also oppressive. The idea that constructions that are formed are then oppressive on individuals. The lines that are drawn give expressions not to truth but to power. Once you abandon the mind to grasp a real world, which was coming to a head in Nietzsche and since Descartes on, then what is to determine how the mind organizes the world and it's life? It's just a show of appearances and how we arrange them in terms of our will.

For Nietzsche, "The will to power" becomes the ultimate principle of everything including the academic, ecclesiastical and government.

*"In every animal including the philosophical beast, [human beings] every animal strives instinctively for the optimal conditions under which it may release its power. It abhors all interference that might conceivably block its path to its optimum. (The path I'm speaking of does not lead to happiness but to power). Happiness is not what life is about. Power is what it is about."*

Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, Essay 3, Section 7

(He called the form of tehcs most prominent in England - Hedonistic Utilitarianism a "pig's philosophy".)

His general theory - "The Will to Power" - The path we are leading to anyone is simply realizing our power. Anything we do is a manifestation of the same instinctual drive. What people want is the exercise of power. Whatever they call - holiness, truth, or whatever, is the drive for power. Out of that comes the "Constructionism" - an exercise in constructing a world that will be suited to the use of our power.

Nietzsche states the Judeo-Christian ethic was a power play by weak people to convince the powerful that they were wicked because they were strong.

And actually, you were better if you were weak. *"Blessed are the poor; They that mourn..."* He has a theory about how these things came about through the exercise of the will to power. The "slave morality" of the Bible was a clever device through the exercise of power. Among the aesthetics, the monks of the Christian tradition - obedience, poverty - were some of the greatest exercisers of the will to power.

Once you have accepted the view that the mind is not capable of grasping a reality that exists independently of itself, that is what came through the history before Nietzsche, there is nothing left but some internal principle to explain why we think the way we do and why we live the way we do.

The version of the mind that Nietzsche accepts is "Phenomenalism" - All there is that we can grasp consists of appearances or Nietzsche likes to use "perspective". There is not anything more other than the will to organize them in a certain way.

(Hume, Will, John Stewart Bach, AJ Ayer, Nelson Goodman)

All that is left is the perfection of the individual will. That means life lived with a will at its greatest strength, it's most intense integration of self aggrandizement. Only that gives a point to life.

\* For example, Nietzsche said - *"Build your house under the volcano."*

That sort of defiance of the individual to the whole world and finding in "the individual will" the only value. He is not a nihilist. He had a healthy form of values. It was all tied to the degree to which one succeeds in bringing the whole of life under the will is the degree one is a good, healthy person. Similar to writers such Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky and others in the 19th Century. A period with the growth of science and technology is the increasing sense of the loss of individuality. In reaction, then people saying, *"I will defy the whole world and causal law."*

Dostoevsky, *"What are the laws of arithmetics to me?"*

The a general tendency that comes out of Constructionism which locks the mind in its own little world and leaves the "will" with nowhere to go except to turn back on itself and find itself in its own self-assertion.

Do I need to you Nietzsche won? Watch TV commercials. It will be almost 100% on the realization of self. Buy this kind of car or smell good then you'll be unique...along with several other million people.

[22:30] Nietzsche leaves us in a position where, for example, in the University setting, about the only thing we can appeal to in recommendation

to our university is the degree of personal success if you come and study with us. A few remarks may be made about community. Almost nothing will be said about family. A lot will be said about individual creativity and the capacity to exercise judgments that will be valued and people will pay you a lot of money to work for them. That's a natural outcome of the picture of the closed mind and the will turned back on itself will come out of Nietzsche.

Nietzsche was not an instigator, as he was a person who expressed what had already come to realization in his culture. He was ahead of his day. He was regarded as dangerous or loonie. He comes into his own after WWI. The World Wars were a revelation of a culture which Nietzsche had already decided was hopeless. His insights into that is something we really do need to treasure.

### **Modernism**

[24:20]

What we see in Nietzsche is a natural outworking of what we've come to know it as "Modernism" - what comes to stand for the rejection of the past as a guide to the present.

Once it is clear that knowledge can not find a basis in the individual consciousness, that is the outcome of philosophy from Descartes to Nietzsche. Once that is established, you got rid of the past, at least call it into serious consideration, (the Church, Bible, history of the Jews and Christians) it can no longer be used as a guide. History was lost. Modern philosophers tried to regenerate philosophy from thinking after getting rid of the religion of the past because it was divisive. The way to get around the divisiveness, so they thought, if you just set the history aside and instead think about the moral truths the history was supposed to illustrate, there would not longer be divisiveness. One of the attempts of modernism was to get out of the religious wars in Europe.

But once you begin to examine the mind and you find that all you've got is your mind, then you begin to ask,

*"Where do these universal truths come from?"*

*"How can we say we have universals if we can't escape our own mind?"*

Descartes did not succeed with that except to his own satisfaction. Almost no one was. Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud and others picking it up.

The whole idea of truths upon which you can base your life disappeared.

## What is left? Individual will

[28:00]

\* Alistair MacIntyre - *Whose Justice and Whose Rationality?*

The basis of practical reason is shifted to the point that mere individual DESIRE is a reason for doing what you want.

Today we're apt to say, "What else?" That's how thoroughly we have been formed by this. Mere individual desire is thought to serve as a basis for action. That was not so until the period comes in modern thought where you have this artifact - the individual on their own.

Nietzsche saw how this was working. He went so far as saying it was not just religion. Our philosophers are actually fooling themselves when they talk about truth. He used words like antichrist, skeptics. What about these people themselves? These earnest scholars, scientists, philosophers...

*"These are the ones - the professors, writers, scientists - represent the ascetic ideal today - not preachers, monks, not Holy books. They are the ones who deny themselves for the sake of truth, but these men, too, are a long way from being free spirits because they still believe in truth."*

But Nietzsche said they don't actually act that way because what they are pursuing is really their own self-will. They use references to truth to hide that to keep us from seeing what is really going on. One of his favorite words for himself was "psychologist" but if we really come to understand what they are doing, we see unvarnished will to power.

## Truth Becomes Another Passion

[31:20]

It is no longer something we can look for guiding ourselves. It is just an expression of our self-will. The 20th century joins Nietzsche in affirming that truth is \_\_\_\_\_ (what?)

We put the word "Veritas" in Latin. It's much more dignified done that way. If you say "truth" is most place on campuses I'm familiar with, people will immediately say, "*Whose truth?*"

This is the deepest revelation of how thoroughly Nietzsche won the first round of this battle between Christian teaching, Christ if you wish, though I hope you pick up what Nietzsche was criticizing had very little to do with Jesus Christ but that is how it was represented. Truth is lost. Any sort of universal is lost - Pragmatism, existentialism, Positivism, Linguistic Constructionism, Deconstruction Hermeneutics, and probably several others

things we can mention as currently important for our discussions on the campus, become ascendant.

**There was now no accessible body of moral knowledge that currently functions in our culture.**

**If someone wants to know many things in mathematics, history, etc. - you know where to send them. If someone wants to know how to be a good person, where do you send them?**

Would you send them to Stanford for that purpose?

I hope you won't send them to USC for that purpose.

This is where Nietzsche comes in. Because if there is no body of moral knowledge, then all that is left is “will”, all that is left is impulse.

After a while, nothing that can be called “will” is left.

Now the process is over. We've been through off-loading all this burden of the past. Call it Christianity or whatever you want to call it. Now we can have battles over whether or not we will post the “Ten Commandments” in a courthouse. But, it is not about knowledge, it is about symbolism on both sides. No one would dare to enforce them by grading. You could never grade someone on whether or not they thought the “Ten Commandments” were true. That is just a way of saying we don't treat it as knowledge.

—> **The heart of the issue is TRUTH.**

**Jesus Christ**

[35:25]

I'd like to ask you to try to think of Him as a serious person in the area of information. That's the burden of human life:

**To find an adequate basis for human action in knowledge.**

We accept that naturally in our courses. I can't be too sanguine about that.

\* I ask students - *Did you believe what you wrote on the test?*

They laugh. We are a culture where what is important is to know the right answers but not necessarily to believe them.

—> The heart of the issue between Nietzsche & Jesus Christ is TRUTH in its relationship to human freedom, well being and fulfillment.

\* “*Thou Shall not Steal*” - What does it have to do with freedom?

The assumption of Nietzsche and the modern tradition which he completes - and then represents, perhaps, more effectively than anyone else after the second World War - is that we are closed off individual and socially, or just our mind, and we can not find our way out to an other that is reliably there that we have not made by our own thinking and feeling or by our culture's thinking and feeling. The inability to do that turns us back on the individual will, back on ourselves and our will as the ultimate reality in our life.

Freedom then means only "Freedom from".

Descartes in his mind found he was free from a world but then how does he get to that world? But how does he get to that world? The declaration of freedom that we make in a mind that is closed off and lost in itself is actually an imprisonment of a kind. The modern attempt to deal with it's world and the backside is the increasing emphasis on freedom of "freedom from". We are condemned to our aloneness. Self-preoccupation is our only possibility. Doing what we want our only conception of human fulfillment and well being.

Here is how the prison works. Someone says,

"What shall I do?" We reply, "Do what you want?"

The honest person says, "I don't know what I want"

What do you want? What do you really want?

That's how Nietzschean freedom traps us. Now we don't know what we want. In this structure, **DESIRE**, as a reasonable human capacity defaults into **IMPULSE**. Because as living beings we have to act. Curiously enough, we wind up in a world where we DESIRE to DESIRE.

\* We have a "Viagra" society. Viagra is about desiring to desire.

An **addiction** in its many forms is an attempt to escape the loneliness that is enforced by a WILL uprooted from a world of TRUTH & REALITY.

\* Ernest Barker, English Political Theorist [1874-1960]

*"The core of democracy is choice and not something chosen."*

That's how the will turns back on itself.

T.H. Green

[41:35]

*"When we speak of freedom...we do not merely mean freedom from or freedom to do what we like. Not freedom from what we like. We do not mean a freedom that can be enjoyed by one man or one set of men at the loss of the freedom of others. When we speak of freedom that is to be so highly prized, we speak of a positive power or capacity of doing something worth doing or enjoying and that something we do in common with others. Each man exercises by the help and he secures to his fellow men."*



That is a freedom that is appropriate to a mind that is open to a world.

There is another tradition about the mind that existed long before the modern period represented in the Old Testament, New Testament, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Levinas, Edwin Husserl, Martin Heidegger.

The primary word used in "intentionality". It refers to the openness to the mind - a mind which does not create a world. A world a mind inhabits through intentionality. In the Christian tradition, a world that God inhabits, God is always already there.

Augustine - The inner light is God and it is interacting with the mind and enables it to reach out to a world which God and not the mind created and to find in that world with others who are there the proper support of a will that is capable to moving to genuine freedom.

If you want to see **freedom**, you don't look at a kid jumping around with nothing to do. Freedom is an accomplished artist doing what they do. How do they get there? Not be turning in on himself. The first step in freedom - to submit himself to **reality**. For that you need **truth**.

Truth is what guides you to reality. Reality is what you run into when you are wrong. Truth can help you avoid those unpleasant occasions. Truth enables you to represent how things are without running into it and to submit your will to reality through truth.

I don't think you'll have a hard time thinking about it in ordinary life. The basic idea of truth is very simple.

\* A child picks it up easily. Promise them you'll do something and then don't do it. They know what truth is. They know falsity is and they what it is to try to manage reality with falsehood.

*"Did you do that?"*

*"No. He did it!"*

That "real" world is there and that is the tradition that has developed out of the ancient world up to the present until the theory of mind in which your mind gets in the way of knowing the world and makes it impossible.

—> That theory of mind set aside the theory of truth which made freedom possible.

## **Truth & Community**

You need more than truth for freedom, you need community. [47:30]

\* A child needs bonding or it will die.

We depend for our life. A child has to step into life that is already there. If it doesn't it, it will not live. Mother looks to a child & a child looks to a mother. That is very deep in terms of what that child is. As the child grows, it has to TRUST that world and it can not TRUST that world unless it finds TRUTH.

Human fulfillment comes through community in which there is trust and truth and the will is enabled to grow to take in what is not part of itself and makes that a part of its life.

Think of Jesus, not as a sanctified religious figure, but as someone who knows what He is talking about. If you stop to think about it, you might think that is true about Him. He is with his little community of students and He's telling them:

*"If you live in what I say, then you really are my apprentices, then you'll come to know the truth about life - here we are talking about the Kingdom of God, reality of the world, what love is, community is - and you'll know the truth and the truth will set you free."*

FREEDOM as the capacity to live fully in the world. [50:30]

\* "Let the winds of freedom blow."

\* "Give peace a chance?"

What is that? How do you do those things?

## **The Rematch of Nietzsche vs. Jesus...is in Your life.**

You are the heir of a Nietzschean culture. We live in a Nietzsche world -  
The question is whether or not you can find freedom in that world?

You have another world presented by Jesus Christ, an intelligent person who would be at home on this campus. Probably could teach us a thing or two.

He says,

*"If you put my teachings into practice, then you'll be my apprentices and I will be your teacher and you'll come to know truth about life in the world and knowing the truth, you'll find genuine fulfillment as the human being you were meant to be."*

That’s the rematch.

It is not something that can be argued abstractly or proven by words. It has to be put into practice. That’s the test. I don’t need to tell you what the outcome will be. No one has yet managed to find fulfillment in the way Nietzsche recommended. Nietzsche himself did not find it. I don’t say that to dump on Nietzsche. Nietzsche was one of the people who brought me into philosophy. (He didn’t know it.) It was because of the incisiveness with which he addressed real issues in life. We need to be as incisive as he was. But we need not to be under the false assumptions about the nature of the mind and the will he was under.

I believe the way we can escape that is to take the teachings of Jesus about life as critically, as skeptically as you wish, put them into practice and test them. That’s the only thing. If the test of life shows that actually Jesus wins the second round, there is no shame on Nietzsche, that’s our opportunity.

~ ~ ~ **End of Teaching** ~ ~ ~

**Q & A next page**

**Q & A**

[54:00]

**Q** - Is there a place for phenomenology?

[the philosophical study of the structures of experience and consciousness. As a philosophical movement it was founded in the early years of the 20th century by Edmund Husserl and was later expanded upon by a circle of his followers at the universities of Göttingen and Munich in Germany. wikipedia]

**A** - [55:15] We need to recognize in the position we are, we don’t have an eternal perspective in our own right and what comes to us we may not fully understand. This is extremely important for us. I think that is why Nietzsche took the turn that he did. He saw so many people who did not live this. All religions when they take on the human conditions. That doesn’t usually include humility.

Dogmatism is not a part of the deal. I would add on to that - if you can find a better way than the one you are in, even if you are a Christian, Jesus would be the first one to tell you to take it. You can’t imagine him saying, *“Well, you know that’s good, but that’s not Christian.”* He stands with the truth.

**Q** - Any happiness following Nietzsche’s teachings?

**A** - [57:45] As far as I’ve been able to find, no one has found fulfillment by following Nietzsche’s teachings. The basic teaching here is the

honest pursuit of self-will - getting my own way. I don't know of anyone like that and I've had my ear to the ground. I know of multitudes of people who have made themselves completely miserable and cut themselves off from everyone who loves them by trying to pursue that. This is where we ought to say, "Come on, let's see what the cases are." An empirical basis.

**Q** - [59:00] Clarify the steps to reality of the will to another reality?

**A** - [59:35] Take the case of a concert pianist - First, they experience a great resistance in locating the keys and time. As they submit themselves to the keyboard and hopefully, a teacher, then increasingly the keys instead of standing over them as obstacles, become stepping stones integrated into their action to reach where they want to go. That's true of any discipline you enter into.

That's where Jesus says, "*To him that hath, more shall be given.*" That's how the will works.

\* A child's job is to master their bodies. When they get here they can't do anything. They are almost totally passive before their bodies. As they grow, they can do more and more. They can walk and use the floor in a different way. That grows increasingly as they master their body and the world ceases to be an obstacle and becomes integrated in their will. Their biggest obstacle is going to be other people and learning how to interact with other people in such a way that other people are not a barrier to them but a part of their willing. That requires mutuality in a way the floor doesn't. The other person - Momma, Poppa, brother, sister is waiting to exercise freedom. They grow up and go to Stanford and take classes integrating more and more into their will. That is so important to understand that not subjectivity but objectivity is the path to freedom.

In class, I explain what truth & knowledge are when I start a class. I will point out things lie - No one makes a belief true by believing it or by getting their friends believe it or start a political movement or getting a grant.

You can't make beliefs true by believing them.

Today many people feel that is oppressive. "*That sound right but I believe in freedom and that's oppressive that I can't make things true the way I want to.*"

Freedom comes in truth and objectivity and learning how to interact with them. That's how the will grows. it's a general structure and it works with everything that has to do with the will. You submit, learn the truth, you move and as you're learning and as you do that you have greater and greater freedom. "The Winds of Freedom" have to do with truth and the reality which is dependable and enables you to grow beyond yourself.

\* Pavorotti becoming a master singer

**Q** - How do you tell the difference when a passion is something that is good and right and from God or it is just you...a little Nietzsche in you.

**A** - [1:05:00] The idea is to see how your passion matches reality. You do that by exploring it and putting it into action and that will lead you into involving other persons.

\* Movie - "Elvira Madigan" (1967) Story of a young woman & man who fly in the face of society to fulfill their passion and they wind up starving to death.

We should assume that our passions are good but never follow them in isolation. Relate them to our other passions. Part of what happens is the shaping of ourselves. If you are going to be Pavorotti, there are a lot things you are not going to be. There's a lot to be said for the Nietzsche self realization and not allow ourselves to be obsessed and turn our wills on our self. That's the way to bondage and the bondage will manifest itself in the way the world closes in on us.

**Q** - Jesus Christ is the most intelligent person in history?

**A** - [1:07:55] It's not an easy topic for there are a lot of historical details. If you start with thinking about the place that Jesus holds in human history you're going to be forced to recognized that he was very unusual. I don't start with He was divine. That's something we can come to. There's really no point in starting there. You start with what you know about Him. What you know is He left his mark on human history as no other person did.

You can ask, "*Why didn't he give James & John the relativity equations?*" You realize they would not have known what to do with them.

I think we need to understand that Jesus' mission was moral revolution.

It was a lot more than that but it was that at a minimum. You see this written strongly in the incredible things He is recorded in doing in his lifetime. If you know the historical context, you know this was unbelievable. He was regarded as crazy for doing them. That is still going on. The moral revolution, which Jesus Christ set forward and centered it on His own person, has still has a long way to go.

\* Just watch the first ten minutes of a newscast.

\* Jane and I like to go to movies but we have a terrible quandary. We can't stand the previews. "*That's another one we won't have to see.*"

We are surrounded with terrible things. Anyone who doesn't believe in evil and sin before September 11 had blinkers on. That's our call.

One of the many things you have to give Nietzsche credit for - he realized the moral rot that was at the center of the so-called Christian culture and he was unwilling to overlook it.

Unfortunately it turned him in the wrong direction given the basis of thought that had come to him in his time. That’s very serious. It doesn’t just affect people in other parts of the world, it is here.

If you want to see his brilliance, pick up the Sermon on the Mount and try to read it intelligently, give it an adult reading. Get beyond the assumptions. Read it as a moral treatise like Plato’s *Republic*, Kant, Rawls’ book *Theory of Justice* and compare them. That’s where we miss the point of Jesus. We think Jesus is in a special category and don’t think of Him as if He were an intelligent person.

**Q** - Why is not this just another example of self-will?

**A** - [1:13:20] First, I don’t recommend Christianity. I recommend you try to listen intelligently and read intelligently Christ and those who followed him through the ages and listen to what they are saying and put it into practice.

This is where one of the deepest things Jesus has to say. There are some books today that say you should love God because you’ll be happy that way.

What I will say to you is if you love God, you’ll be happy. But you can’t love God by loving happiness. You have to love God and let happiness take care of itself.

“Hedonic Paradox” principle - *If you want to be miserable, try to be happy.*

I hope you find something better in life to do than try to be happy.

Happiness is a by-product. Fulfillment is a by-product.

*It isn’t like you start out with hot tubs and graduate to Jesus in your quest for happiness.*

There are good things in this world that includes other people, creativity, enjoyment of nature, love of others, our families and neighbors. We don’t do that to be fulfilled but we are fulfilled in doing that.

That goes back to the question - *How does the will go?*

The will that is directed at myself is the Nietzschean will and it will always turn back on itself and shrivel and die because it does not nourish itself on what is beyond it. All life requires to be nourished by what is beyond it.

\* Corn seed - must crack and open up and eat dirt and sun and it grows. That's freedom! It's not reaching for growth it's reaching for sun, dirt, water...and growth comes naturally. That is one of the hardest lessons for us in contemporary culture to learn - what we're really aiming for is something that comes as a by-product.

**Q** - [1:16:55] Love others and find fulfillment without Christ?

**A** - [1:17:15] Many people do. Fulfillment is not the only story. Also the question to what degree were they fulfilled? Here is a long scale - Many people have found a high degree of fulfillment with no knowledge of Christ. What Christ does is to come and introduce you to a larger community of the Kingdom of God and the resources of the community and the extent to which you can grow. He says this is supposed to go on for eternity. You'll never stop growing. A lot of us have thought of Christianity only as a way of making sure we get in. There is a lot more to it than that.

**Q** - [1:18:30] Reality outside the human mind. Positivism as related to Constructionism?

**A** - [1:18:45] - The problem that Phenomenalism has always had is that you can not reconstruct a "substance" - an enduring thing or entity by means of its appearances. That's why in the 30's, Phenomenalism was given up on because they found that you could not reconstruct the ordinary objects we have knowledge of in that way.

You'll find out what that nature is by examining the nature of that thing. In some cases you'll need science to help you. For example, we had no knowledge of atomic power for a long while but it was there all the time in the elements - uranium, plutonium and so forth. The way you do that is by examining it, finding out how it behaves, testing your beliefs about it.

The same thing is true of personal relations. We have a real problem in this country today with personal relations. Many people don't know how to get **married**. It's a tragic thing. Their heads are full of stuff which have never been put in the knowledge of concrete human relationships. You can only know that by living in them.

Physical things - we know there are a range of things called color, shapes, motions and beneath that, atomic structure, below that sub-particle physics. We are less at home with the idea that personal beings can only be known by relating to them in certain ways - thoughts, feelings, will, body, social relationships and if you would be willing to try it out, there's such a thing as the soul. Those of the parts. Everything in reality consists of parts that has properties that enable those parts to fit in a larger whole that has properties and that's the nature of reality.

Your question brings us to the philosophy of the mind - Descartes and the theory of ideas and in the 20th century shifts over to language that simply says we are only acquainted with stuff that is somehow in our minds. You or the chair has to be in my mind...or it isn't. That is a fundamentally false description of the mind. The ordinary common sense way extended in science of approaching things is to know how they are. The point is we really know how they are not just our ideas about how they are. If you can't make that step, none of the rest of it follows. That's where Nietzsche, Mill, etc. could not get past that initial move that says, "No, I really can be aware of something that isn't my mind."

Q - Is dualism necessary to understand the objectivity of reality?

A - [1:23:24] - If you mean what you know in ordinary conscience is not in your mind, then yes.

"Epistemological Dualism" - our ideas are radically separate from the world and we can never get to the world. We have to think seriously about and decide if we or not we are prepared to describe what we are aware of like what I am aware of is my "ideas". You don't think you are my idea. The natural approach is that dualism in that sense is true. If you don't believe that, you'll have to tell stories of how I've come to think that you are my idea.

Hume and after - we can't possibly know anything independently of our mind then tell psychological stories of why we think what we do. So much of modern philosophy is taken up with story telling. First you say something can't be true then you tell a story of how people come to think it is true. We tell Kantian story, Marxist story, Nietzschean story. Stories are not very illuminating accounts of how what actually happened.

\* Charles Lamb - "A Roasted Pig" story - Back in the days when pigs lived in the house, a child caught the house on fire. It burned a pig and he tasted it and tasted something wonderful. After that, more houses burned down until they realized you can build a fire to cook a pig.

Wow! That explains it! (Well, not necessarily.)

Hume - *It's just a "custom" that leads us to think. When I look back at this man, I saw the same as the other time. Hume's view is, "I didn't because my sense impression is not the same. Why do I think your the same? It's just habit, it's a custom that leads me to believe that your the same."*

You can probably smell roast pig at that point.



Q - [1:27:30]

What Jesus meant by "Know the truth and the truth will make you free"?

A - [1:27:50] Jesus didn't say that.

\* USC philosophy elevator, "Truths...set you free"

Jesus said, "If you dwell in what I say...", he was teaching about the Kingdom of God and he was presenting himself as someone to be trusted. All the teachings about the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere, were the about the reality of the Kingdom of God. You want to read him like you'd read Plato.

Every great thinker has to tell you what reality is. You don't pass unless you do that.

Jesus says reality is God and His Kingdom. He talks about how the Spirit will be with you, and how He will be with you, and God will be with you as you do these things. Read John 14 - *"If you keep my commandments, God and I will move in with you."*

If you do that, then you will harmonize with reality in such a way that your life will be fulfilled because it integrates with a world far beyond you into your own life. He doesn't say you do this by your own spiritual muscles. He teaches about His presence with you. Later that is commonly called grace. grace is God acting in your life to accomplish something you can't do on your own. When you do that you will be increasingly free from something standing over you saying "No!" Partly because of the re-direction of your own will.

Q - [1:30:20] How would Nietzsche come over against other world religions?

A - [1:30:40] There would be a lot of similarities. All world religions incorporate a lot of good sense. Often in my own life, I'm in campus settings doing inter-faith stuff. Occasionally there is an appropriate occasion for me to say, *"No one understands God who doesn't understand that God so loved the world that He gave his only son that whoever put there confidence in him shall not perish but have everlasting life."*

Which of the other religions teach that?

The religions really are different. We have to be honest about it. The only ones who believe they are not different are the people who don't believe anything. They are not the same. We don't complement people by washing out the distinctives of their faith by saying, "It's all the same." It isn't the same. You should respect people enough to say, "that's the way it is."

The test is - put it into practice. Many folks come to this country and say it is a Christian culture and they don't see a lot to admire. I'm not saying it isn't

*“Nietzsche vs. Jesus Christ”*

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there. Sometimes it’s hard to see. Generally speaking, you have to have some sympathy for people who might wonder if a consumerist society, such as we are, living as we do, is really superior.

If we can learn something from anyone, we should learn it. Truth does not respect persons. We want to be honest with ourselves about what other people can teach us.

\* Frank Laubach - A Christian and Statesman from the middle of the 20th Century who was a Presbyterian missionary in the Philippines to the Moros people who were faithful to Islam. Islam means “submission”. He was thinking what would it be like if Christians were submitted to God? Reach what happened when he began to put this into practice. He started the “World Literacy Society”. God gave him a way of teaching people to read from their spoken language and it went worldwide. He was influential in the Truman Administration on foreign policy in Europe just because he was.

**~ ~ ~ End of Video @ 1:35:00 ~ ~ ~**

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