



Nietzsche vs. Jesus Course Study Guide



Dallas Willard states, “Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) has become very important on the campus and in our culture today because he has come to stand for something that was coming to a head in his own day. You are the heir of a Nietzschean culture. The question is whether or not you can find freedom in that world. You have another world which is presented by Jesus Christ...an intelligent person who would be at home on campus.”*

The course is based on a Veritas Forum* presentation by Dallas Willard in 2002 at Stanford University offering keen observations and relevant wisdom to encourage and equip a vibrant pursuit of Christlikeness in a postmodern, un-Christlike culture.

In this course key themes and quotes from Dallas will be presented through interactive teaching, open Q&A, and practical application. Additional resources are provided for further personal integration and group study.

This free webinar is the 29th course offered by Jesus College (JesusCollege.com) engaging over 2800 participants in 57 countries. We trust the Holy Spirit will bring biblical and insightful teachings through Dallas to guide us further into our central purpose - Christlikeness.

You will be joined by fellow apprentices of Jesus from around the world forming an encouraging, supportive community of inspiration and accountability each week.

Jesus College — *“Learning from history’s greatest teacher how to do what He taught”*



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Your “V-I-M”** Participation

We encourage you to make your course experience more than just a free webinar added to your Christian study routine. An intentional discipline for spiritual growth—ideally with a partner—to better learn, apply, and grow in Christlikeness, will provide a launch pad from the sessions.

Here are a few suggestions to maximize this course.

- 1) LISTEN to the designated section before each session. Capture notes from Dallas’ teaching, read the scriptures referenced, then review your notes again before the session.
- 2) INQUIRE - Bring questions to digest the content and engage the presenters & other students. Linger longer for the “Q&C” after each session.
- 3) VIEW - Complement your learning with other “Worldview” teachings by Dallas Willard available in the JesusCollege.com library including “Jesus Worldview” 3-session course as one of 18 ready-to-learn courses as part of hundreds of resources and over 5500 pages of guides, slides, notes, and links to audio/video resources.
- 4) RETREAT - As part of your practice, invest one hour weekly solo with Jesus discussing with Him your key discovery from the session.
- 5) 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.

** V-I-M = *Vision-Intention-Means* — Dallas calls VIM the reliable pattern for spiritual change, or any change. As you envision a life of hearing God and truly intend to want to hear God, you will seek and find the means to practice a life of hearing God. For more 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

2024 Session Dates & Listening Schedule

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SESSION</u>	<u>VIDEO SECTION</u>	<u>SESSION TITLE</u>
June 20	Session 1	0:00-35:25	Nietzsche Worldview
June 27	Session 2	35:25-53:45	Jesus Worldview
Optional*	— — — —	53:45-1:35:30	Q & A with Dallas

* This 42-minute section following Dallas’ presentation is not discussed at length in the course, but it could be a session. We highly recommend listening to it to engage Dallas’ insightful, illustrative, and relevant responses. You will not only benefit from Dallas’ breadth and depth of knowledge, you will hear his love for people in his warm, winsome way.

If you miss a session, want to study more, or teach others the material, recorded sessions + slides are posted in the [Jesus College library](#) with many free Dallas Willard resources including 18 other ready-to-learn courses from Jesus College.

Session 1 - Nietzsche Worldview



[“Nietzsche vs. Jesus”](#) Time Code — 0:00-35:25

Introduction - Freedom & Truth

Thinking about Nietzsche or Jesus Christ - *What do they have to say?*

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) [3:25]

The Setting — Christian Ideology without Christlike Believers

The Irrelevance of God and Teaching at Yale University

“Constructionism” thinking about reality - “*The will to power*”

The Judeo-Christian ethic — Power play by weak people to control

“Phenomenalism” - Perfectionism of the individual will

Modernism [24:20]

Rejecting Church, Bible, Jewish & Christian history

What is left? — The Individual will [28:00]

Desire is a reason for doing what you want

Truth Becomes Another Passion [31:20]

The Disappearance of Moral Knowledge in our Culture

Session 1 Meditation & Application John 8:31-32

1. What did Nietzsche articulate to change the view of what is “real”?
2. What is lost when Christians are seen with merely good intentions?
3. Where is the “Individual Will” presented today as the source of truth?

Session 2 - Jesus Worldview



[“Nietzsche vs. Jesus”](#) Time Code — 35:25-53:45

Jesus Christ [35:25]

A serious person in the area of information on how to live life.

The heart of the issue between Nietzsche and Jesus Christ is truth and its relation to human freedom, well being and fulfillment.

The Prison of Nietzsche — Freedom means only “*Freedom from...*”

Desire as a reasonable human capacity defaults into impulse.
We wind up in a world where we desire to desire.

Pre-Modern “Freedom” of the Christian Tradition [43:00]

Intentionality - Openness of mind to the inner light of God

Freedom Step 1 - Submit yourself to reality defined by truth

Truth & Community [47:20]

*Human fulfillment comes through community of trust and truth.
The will is takes in what is not part of itself and makes that a part of its life.*

Jesus - John 8:31-32 - His students find freedom in truth

The Rematch of Nietzsche vs. Jesus...in Your life [50:25]

Put the words of Jesus into practice!
Be as incisive as Nietzsche minus his nature of the mind and will.

Session 1 Meditation & Application Romans 12:1-2

1. How do I compare Jesus to the smartest people in history?
2. Where is “intentionality” missing for me to live what I believe?
3. How am I engaging my faith community to build trust to know truth?



[“Nietzsche Vs. Jesus Christ”](#)

Dallas Willard, Veritas Forum, Stanford University, March 2, 2002 [Total time = 1:35:30]

Presentation Transcript

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.

Introduction – Freedom & Truth

[Time code - 0:40]

Veritas Forum stands for openness and the willingness to face the hard questions and perhaps to say you don't know when you don't know.

That is the spirit of both philosophy and I think the spirit of Jesus Christ.

We are going to talk about some things that have come to a head in our time. I've used the names of [Friedrich] Nietzsche and Jesus Christ to try to represent that. I really want to emphasize that I'm not here tonight to attack Nietzsche, or for that matter, Jesus Christ, but rather to try to give them voice as it concerns fundamental matters for the contemporary world.

Freedom and truth are not easy things to talk about because they are so important and also because those words have been dragooned in to serving causes that do not have to do necessarily either with freedom or with truth. And so it is difficult to think seriously about them. This evening I am going to try to not be obscurely philosophical about it. And that's hard you know. Philosophers are supposed to be able to go down deeper, stay down longer and come up dryer than anyone else. I feel as though my reputation is at stake.

I am going to try to say things very simply and clearly about **truth** and **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 and concepts become encrusted so that sometimes the very thing that they were concerned to get at is lost. But, this evening we're going to try to put a sympathetic face on both Nietzsche and Christ and try to hear what they had to say.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

[3:23]

So let's begin with Nietzsche. Nietzsche has become very important on the campus and in the culture today because he has come to stand for something that was coming to a head in his own day, though he himself did not see much of the success that was to come to him later. Really, he has become successful in culture generally only after the Second World War.

The views that 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 much deeper than he himself. Nietzsche, we might say in California language, “caught a wave.” And that wave was the reaction of the world of art and intellect against something that 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 he became 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 allegiance to the [39 Articles of the Anglican Church](#) which people had to swear fidelity to to be faculty members at Oxford or 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 that 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 very trivial matters and 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 in the towns...and it's very hard for us today to recapture the extent to which the discourse of the university well into this century, not only in Germany and in France, but here and in England, was so explicitly and thoroughly Christian. It is difficult for us to capture that. But that's the way it was.

Nietzsche looked at it and saw the irrelevance of God to what was actually being done to knowledge, to morality, to academic and cultural life. And it was really a revulsion against a system of hypocrisy, even hypocrisy about inquiry and truth. I will read a few quotations from him in a moment about this that led him to the point to where as a very young man, he was I think the youngest man to be appointed to a position of professorship for which he held, within a few years to resign. He gave as his reason health but

[scholars] are quite sure that health was not the reason, but rather it was a revulsion against a social system that he simply could not bring himself to be a part of.

God & Yale University

[7:58]

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

There is a very interesting story about Noah Porter, the President of Yale in the 1880’s [1871-1886] and William Graham Sumner. Sumner decided to use a book on sociology by Herbert Spencer in his course. President Noah Porter [[married the daughter of the founder of Yale Divinity School](#)] read the book. Presidents in those days read the books that were used and had a responsibility to the board to say whether or not it could be used. Noah Porter read the book and realized that it had nothing to say about God. The subject was sociology or political science. So Porter went to Sumner and said, “why is it that this book that you selected says nothing to say about God?” Here is the reply that Sumner gave and it is deeply revelatory of the deep structure of academic life at the time and the change that was coming. Sumner said to Porter,

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

Now, take a moment and just think about that phrase. It doesn’t sound shocking to you today that someone would say that but that’s because we have now acclimated ourselves to the idea that you can be the best educated and best informed person about the world and know nothing about God. I suspect that many of you feel kind of a resistance of thinking God has any relevance about the subject. What I am saying is that up until this period of change, it was simply assumed as the medieval said,

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

Those of you who have read Descartes’ *Meditations* will know he reworks that so that he also says, “*You can’t know anything until you know God*” because that’s the only way you could possibly know that even your clear and distinct ideas were true as God guaranteed them. Now this was an assumption.

Nietzsche - “God is Dead”

[10:40]

Now we come to a period. What Nietzsche does is to recognize that this has happened and that people are not being honest about it. Now, this is the

meaning of his famous phrase that, *“God is dead.”* Nietzsche was not declaring that he had killed God or proven that God was dead. He was saying rather that, *“As far as European culture goes, if God were dead, it would not make any difference.”*

Now Nietzsche stands for a certain representation of academic life and knowledge that came out of that period and now in our campuses and in our culture, it is almost automatically assumed on the sides. That view of knowledge I shall call “Constructionism.” [Constructivism].

Nietzsche very clearly expresses this view in his writings.

Constructionism is the view that,

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

The identities in terms of 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 we do because it enables us to realize our purposes. Nietzsche thought this was also an oppressive thing. We are very familiar with that today - the idea that constructions that are formed are then oppressive on individuals. The lines that are drawn give expression not to truth, but to power. Once you abandon the capacity of the mind to grasp a real world, which was what was really coming to a head in Nietzsche and it had been developing for a couple of centuries from the time of Descartes on, you lose the capacity of the mind to grasp a real world. Then what is to determine how the mind organizes its world and its life? There’s just a show of appearances and we arrange them, and we arrange them in terms of our will, and all there is is appearance and how we arrange them under the direction of our will.

Nietzsche – The Will to Power

[13:45]

For Nietzsche, “the will to power” becomes the ultimate principle of everything including the academic, and of course, the spiritual, ecclesiastical, historical, government or whatever life. I just want to read one line or two from him from the *Genealogy of Morals*, Essay 3, Section 7:

“In every animal including the philosophical beast, [Willard - which is his name for human beings] every animal strives instinctively for the optimal conditions under which it may release its power. Every animal instinctively and with a subtle flare that leaves reason far behind, it abhors all interference that might conceivably block its path to this optimum. (The path I’m speaking of does not lead to happiness but to power). [Willard - This was very crucial for Nietzsche. He called the form of ethics that was most

prominent in England namely “Hedonistic Utilitarianism”, he called a “pig’s philosophy”.] [Nietzsche quote continued] Happiness is not what life is about. Power is what it is about.”

The path that we are leading to for anyone, now this is his general theory—is simply realizing our power. And anything we do is simply a manifestation of that same instinctual drive. This is what he calls “The Will to Power.” What people want is the exercise and use of their power. Everything else they do, if they call it by the name truth, or holiness, or whatever, is actually an expression of this drive for power. And so, out of that then comes the “Constructionism.” The Constructionism is merely an exercise in constructing a world that will be suited to the use of our power.

Some of you will have studied Nietzsche more and you know for example that he has, for example, a whole account of how the Judeo-Christian ethic became dominant. It was a power play on the part of weak people who were resentful and clever enough to dupe the strong people into thinking they were wicked because they were strong. And actually, you were better if you were weak. And so, “*Blessed are the poor; Blessed are they that mourn...*” No blessed are they that are strong. So, he has a theory about how these things came about through the exercise of the will to power. The “slave morality” of the Bible, as he called it, the “slave morality” was simply a clever device through the exercise of power. Nietzsche recognized among the ascetics, the monks of the Christian tradition—some of the greatest exercises of the will to power, to forgo life, and to pledge oneself to poverty, and to obedience and to celibacy - were things that exercised a great will to power.

Well, you may sense that is a very contrived explanation. But you see, once you have accepted the view that the mind is not capable of grasping a reality that exists independently of itself, and that is what came through the history before Nietzsche, then there is nothing left but some sort of internal principle to try to explain why we think the way as we do and why we live as we do.

So cognitive constructivism and moral and social constructivism are perhaps a way of answering the question. The version of the mind that Nietzsche accepts is actually what we call “Phenomenalism”. It is a way of saying that all there is that we can grasp consists of appearances, or Nietzsche likes to use the word “perspective” and all we have are perspectives and there isn’t anything more other than the will to organize them in a certain way. Those of you who have read Hume, and others such as John Stewart Mill, or Ernst

Mach, or in this period AJ Ayer, or Nelson Goodman will recognize that position.

The Perfection of the Individual Will

[19:03]

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, and only that gives a point to life. Some of Nietzsche's most characteristic sayings are derived from that. For example, one of things he says is, "Build your house under the volcano."

You think about that. That would do something for your will, wouldn't it? But, that sort of defiance of the individual "will" to the whole world and finding in "the individual will" the only value because Nietzsche is not actually a nihilist as he is often called. He had a very healthy form of values. It was all tied to the degree to which one succeeds in bringing the whole of the individual life under the will is the degree to which one is a good, a healthy person.

You may recognize in this things that are similar to writers such Kierkegaard, or Dostoevsky or others in the 19th Century. Indeed, the 19th Century was a period in which with the growth of science and technology, though it does not look like much to compare to what we have today. With that growth was the increasing sense of the loss of individuality. In reaction, then people saying, *"I will defy the whole world. I will defy causal law."*

Dostoevsky says in *The Underground Man*, *"What are the laws of arithmetics to me?"* If that's all you know are these general truths and your will is shriveled, then you are nothing.

That is 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 fulfillment itself in its own self-assertion.

Do I need to tell you Nietzsche won? Remember what I've said when you watch the commercials on television and watch where the focus is. It will be almost 100% on the realization of self-will. How if you buy this kind of car or the kind of smell good or whatever, then you'll be unique...along with several million other people.

Nietzsche in Today’s Universities

[22:27]

Nietzsche leaves us then in a position where, for example, in the university setting, about the only thing that we can appeal to in recommending our university is the degree of personal success which you may have 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. You see, that’s a natural outcome of the picture of the enclosed mind and the “will” turned back on itself that naturally comes out of Nietzsche.

I want to say again that I don’t want to dump on Nietzsche. I want to say again that Nietzsche was not so much an instigator, as he was a person who expressed what had already come to realization in his culture. He was ahead of his day, so he was regarded as dangerous, loonie or whatever for a long while. He really comes into his own especially after the First World War because the first and second world wars were a revelation of a culture which Nietzsche had already decided was hopeless. His insights into that is something that we really do need to treasure.

Modernism

[24:18]

What we see in Nietzsche is a natural outworking of what we’ve come to know it as “Modernism.” Now Modernism stands above all. It’s a very complicated concept. (And please forgive me for being overly simple minded. We are going to have questions and comments after a while and you can save me from as much as you can, and I do invite you to do that. Anyone who talks for 45 minutes is bound to say a number of things that are badly mistaken.)

Let me just put it this way:

Modernism comes to stand for the rejection of the past as a guide to the present.

I will say that again because it is so central:

Modernism 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, and that is the outcome of philosophy from Descartes to Nietzsche. Once that is established, you got rid of the past, at least you called it seriously into question that it can no longer be used as a guide. If

we had time tonight, we would spend a lot of time talking about how that happened, especially in relationship with the Church, to the Bible, to the history of both the Jews and Christians, and how history was lost. The modern philosophers tried to regenerate morality on the basis of eternal truths that they can find by thinking, and that is what modernism tried to do. They tried to take the religion of the past with all of its history and get rid of it because that was divisive. I am addressing this is because this is so relevant to today. The way around the divisiveness it is to recognize, it was thought, that if you just set the history aside and instead think about the moral truths which the history was supposed to illustrate in one way or another, then there would no longer be divisiveness. Of course, one of the issues that gave rise to modernism was an attempt to get out of the religious wars and strifes of Europe.

We have these moral truths that come up now, but then, once you begin to examine the mind and you find that all you've got is your mind, then you begin to ask the question,

"Where do these universal truths come from?"

"How can we say we have universals when we can't even escape our own mind?"

Descartes didn't really succeed with that except to his own satisfaction and that's one of the occupational hazards of philosophers—is to be satisfied with their own line of reasoning. Almost no one was. Through a period coming up to Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Marx, and Nietzsche, and beyond that Freud and others picking it up, the whole idea of truths upon which you can base your life disappeared.

This is what I want to try to emphasize.

What is then left? The Individual will

[28:00]

As Alistair MacIntyre has portrayed so very well in his writings especially in his book, *Whose Justice and Whose Rationality?* All of a sudden the basis of practical reason is shifted to the point that mere individual desire is a reason for doing what you want.

I pause over that statement again because 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 of the individual on their own...the individual on their own.

Nietzsche saw how this was working. He went then so far as saying it is not just a matter of religion. Our philosophers are actually fooling themselves when they talk about truth. He used words like antichrist, skeptic, nihilist, and so on. He characterized the people who went about destroying beliefs in the name of truth. Then he says, what about these people themselves? What about these earnest scholars, philosophers, scientists of today? He says,

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

Interesting. 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. But he said, one of his favorite words for himself was “psychologist”, but he said when we really come to understand what they are doing, we see unvarnished will to power again.

Truth Becomes Another Passion

[31:20]

It, too, 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 [Dallas pauses] _____ (what?)

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

This, I think, 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 from this that what Nietzsche was criticizing may have had very little to do with Christ, but at least that is how it was represented.

And Nietzsche won the first round.

Truth is lost. Any sort of universal is lost. Pragmatism, Existentialism, Positivism, Linguistic Constructionism, Deconstruction, Hermeneutics, and probably several other things that we can mention as currently important for our discussions on the campus, become ascendant.

There was now no accessible body of moral knowledge. I pause again to let you think about that. There is no accessible body of moral knowledge that currently functions in our culture.

If someone wants to know many things in mathematics or history—you know where to send them. Now, 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.

Maybe Stanford is better in that regard.

I just want that to soak in a moment. 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. Really, after a while, nothing that can be called in a very serious sense “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, but we've been through that. Now we can have battles over whether or not we will post the “Ten Commandments” in a courthouse or something of that sort. But, it isn't 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, of course, we don't treat it as knowledge.

The heart of the issue here really is truth. The issue between Nietzsche and now I am going to talk about Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ

[35:25]

I am not going to try to spit and start all the hairs that have to do with Christianity and so on. I am going to just talk about Jesus Christ. 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. The burden of human life is:

To find an adequate basis for human action in knowledge.

We accept that naturally in our courses. I hope we do. Though, in fact, I can't be too sanguine about that. I often ask my 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.

Still I think we need to simply say that the heart of the issue between Nietzsche and Jesus Christ is truth and its relation to human freedom, well being and fulfillment.

Since that is a major turning point and we are heading for home, I am going to say that again:

The heart of the issue between Nietzsche and Jesus Christ is truth and its relation to freedom, and human 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 more effectively perhaps than anyone else after the second World War, is that we are closed off individually and socially by our language, our culture, our history, or just our mind, and that we can not find our way out to an "other" which is reliably there, which we have not somehow made by our own thinking and feeling or by our culture's thinking and feeling. The inability to do that is what turns us back on the individual will, it turns us back on ourselves and our will as the ultimate reality in our life. Freedom then means only "Freedom from".

Descartes in his mind found that he was free from a world. But, then, 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 the mind and its grasp of the world has its...the backside of that is the increasing emphasis on freedom as merely "freedom from". We are condemned to our aloneness. Self-preoccupation is our only possibility and 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. Is 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. What is Viagra about? It 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 and reality.

Ernest Barker, a well known political theorist of the last century [English Political Theorist 1874-1960] said,

“The core of democracy is choice and not something chosen.”

I say that again.

“The core of democracy is choice and not something chosen.”

That’s how the will turns back on itself.

Representing a different tradition, I read from T.H. Green at the end of the last century [41:35]

“When we speak of freedom, we should consider carefully what we mean by it. We do not merely mean freedom from restraint or compulsion. [Willard - you see, that’s freedom from] We do not mean merely freedom that sets us free from things. We do not mean merely freedom to do as we like, irrespective of what we like. We do not mean a freedom that can be enjoyed by one man or one set of men at the cost of a loss of the freedom for others. When we speak of freedom as something to be so highly prized, we mean [Willard - “ta da!”] a positive power or capacity of doing something worth doing or enjoying and that too, something that we do or enjoy in common with others. We mean by the power which each man exercises through the help and security given by his fellow man and which he in turn, helps to secure for them.”

That is an entirely different conception of freedom. That is a freedom that is appropriate to a mind that has a world, that is open to a world.

Pre-Modern “Freedom” of the Christian Tradition

[43:05]

There is another tradition about the mind that existed long before the modern period. It is represented in the Old Testament, and New Testament, and St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, and comes all the way up to present. Yes, there are people today in the 20th century who represent it. People like Levinas, Edmond Husserl, and even Martin Heidegger.

The primary word that is used there for those of you who are into these things is “intentionality”. Intentionality refers to the openness of the mind to what is there—a mind which does not create a world. A mind which the world inhabits through intentionality. Of course, in the Christian tradition, a world that God inhabits, so God is always already there. That is the basic Augustinian teaching about the nature of the light.

The inner light, the inner teacher 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 of moving to genuine freedom.

If you want to see freedom, you don’t look at a kid jumping around with nothing to do. You see freedom when you see an accomplished artist sit down at the piano and play something so beautiful that you can hardly stay in your seat. That’s freedom. When [Pavarotti](#) steps up and does what he does, that’s incredible magic. That’s freedom. How did he get there? He didn’t get there by turning in on himself. He took the step that is always first in freedom which is to submit himself to reality. That is the first step of freedom, and for that you need truth.

You see, truth is what guides you to reality. Reality, you can think of, is what you run into when you are wrong. That’s what that is. That’s reality. Now, truth can help you avoid those unpleasant occasions because truth enables you to represent how things are without running into them and to submit your will to reality through truth.

I don’t think you have a hard time with that just thinking about ordinary life. I am not saying all truth is easy to grasp or anything of that sort. But, the basic idea of truth is very simple. A child picks it up immediately. If you don’t believe it, promise them something and then don’t do it. They know what truth is and they know what falsity is and they know how important it is to try to manage reality by falsehood.

“Did you do that?”

“No. He did it!”

You see, that is trying to manage it. The important thing to understand is that the “real” world is there. That is the tradition that has developed out of the ancient world and up into the present until the theory of mind according to which your mind actually gets in the way of knowing the world and makes it impossible for some writers, for many writers.

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

Truth & Community

[47:14]

You need more than truth for freedom, you need community. Just a word or two about this because it is so very important. You see a little child when he comes into this world for example has to bond with another person. The period of bonding is one of the deepest and most important things that has come out of recent studies over the last decades. Children who are not able to step into a world that is already there simply can start and they will die. If you are not familiar with this, you might want to look up “bonding” and come to know it.

Because, we depend for our life. A little child comes into the world, it has to step into life that is already going. If it doesn't, it will not live. It's just that simple and it isn't just a physical matter. What goes on when the child looks to eyes of a mother and the mother into the eyes of a child. That is very deep in terms of what that child is. And then 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 there is truth and the “will” is enabled to grow so that it takes in what is not part of itself and makes that a part of its life. [48:43]

Now, if you can think just for moment of Jesus, not as a kind of sanctified religious figure, just think of him as someone who knew what He was talking about. Which, if you stop to think about it, you might think that is true of Him. He is here with his little community of students or disciples and He's telling them: [John 8:31-32]

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

Go back very simply. Think of freedom as the capacity to live fully in the world. [50:10]

- * “Let the winds of freedom blow.” What does that mean?
- * “Give peace a chance?” What’s that? How do you do those things?

The Rematch of Nietzsche vs. Jesus...is in Your life. [50:25]

You are the heir of a Nietzschean culture. I am too. I don’t mean to except myself just because I am using the pronouns the way I have. We are all in this. We have a Nietzschean world. The question is whether or not you can find freedom in that world.

You have another world over here which is presented by Jesus Christ. Think of him now for a moment as an intelligent person who would be very much 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 and the world and, in knowing that truth, you will find genuine fulfillment as the human being you were meant to be.”*

That’s the rematch.

It isn’t something that can be argued out 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. I am very sympathetic of Nietzsche. In fact, Nietzsche is 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” that he was under.

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

~ ~ ~ **End of Teaching @ 53:45** ~ ~ ~

[Q & A next page](#)

Session Q & A [A lot of the questions are inaudible] [54:00]

Q1 - Is there a place for phenomenology as a step toward humility?

A1 - at [55:15]

Q2 - You said no one has found happiness in Nietzsche teachings?

A2 - at [57:45]

Q3 - Can you clarify the steps from going from reality being your “will” to another reality?

A3 - at [59:35]

Q4 - How do you tell the difference between when a passion is something that you wish is something that is good and right and from God or it is just you...a little Nietzsche in you?

A4 - at [1:05:00]

Q5 - In your book *The Divine Conspiracy*...you made a bold statement that Jesus Christ is the most intelligent man to ever walk the earth. You alluded to it a little bit here. To what extent would you bring that into this context?

A5 - at [1:07:55]

Q6 - Why is not this just another example of self-will if I recommend Christianity on the basis of fulfillment?

A6 - at [1:13:20]

Q7 - How would you respond to somebody who claims to love others and find fulfillment without Christ?

A - at [1:17:15]

Q8 - You’ve spoken about reality outside the individual mind. What is the nature of that reality? Can you say more about Positivism as related to Constructionism?

A - at [1:18:45]

Q9 - Is dualism necessary to understand the objectivity of reality?

A - at [1:23:24]

Q10 - What Jesus meant by “You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free”?

A - at [1:27:50]

Q11 - How would Nietzsche come over against other world religions?

A - at [1:30:40]

Q1 - Is there a place for phenomenology* as a step toward humility? To say, “Ok, there’s an objective world and I do not know it but I can tell you of the phenomena.”

[* Phenomenology - how careful, first-person attention to the way things appear can bring insight into the way things are. Gary Moon, Jr. *Becoming Dallas Willard*, p. 104]

A - [55:15] Well that’s right, and we don’t need to go all the way to phenomenology, we can just recognize that position where 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 this is one of the reasons why Nietzsche took the turn that he did in his early life because he saw so many people who did not do this. Of course, that has been a problem forever because all religion when it is formed culturally, then it takes on the human conditions, and that doesn’t usually include humility. You know the famous saying about Oliver Cromwell sitting in the midst of his bickering brethren carrying on about this fine point and the other and finally he says, *“I beseech ye brethren by the bowels of Christ, believe that ye may be wrong.”*

That’s a wonderful comment. So in others words, dogmatism is not a part of the deal. I think 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.”* I don’t think you can imagine Him saying that. He stands with the truth. That’s a good point. Thank you so much.

Q2 - You said no one has found happiness in Nietzsche teachings?

A - [57:45] I didn’t get into the comparisons because the comparisons would be difficult to fill out but I would make this simple statement this way. As far as I’ve been able to find, no one has found fulfillment by following Nietzsche’s teachings. There may be someone here tonight and you will speak up. I’d like to meet you. Remember, the basic teaching here is the honest pursuit of self-will - of getting my own way.

Thank you for giving me the chance to be more specific. I don’t know of anyone like that and I’ve sort of had my ear to the ground. I know of multitudes of people who have made themselves completely miserable and have cut themselves off from everyone who loved them by trying to pursue that. This is where we ought to say, “Come on, let’s see what the cases are.” It is an empirical question.

Q3 - [59:00] There was a turning point in accepting Nietzsche’s point that there is no reality. Can you clarify the steps from going from reality being your “will” to another reality?

A - [59:35] Yes, let me try. Take the case of a person who is a concert pianist. When they first belly up to a piano, they experience a great resistance in locating the keys in time and all the kinds of things. As they submit themselves to the keyboard, and to hopefully, a teacher, then increasingly the keys instead of standing over against them as obstacles, become stepping stones integrated into their action to reach where they want to go. That's true of any discipline that you enter into. It's the same in the field of knowledge. It's the same when Jesus says, *"To him that hath, more shall be given."* That's the way the "will" works.

A little child comes into the world and their big job is to master their bodies. When they get here they can't do anything. They just look at you and are almost totally passive. They may suckle. As they grow, they are able to do more and more. They can walk. When they walk, they use the floor in a different way. And then 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 are a part of their "willing", because that requires mutuality in a way that the floor doesn't. There is a sort of mutuality but the floor isn't waiting to exercise its freedom. But, the other person—Momma is waiting to exercise freedom, and Papa, and brother, sister, So, they grow up and go to Stanford and they take Sociology 101 and Calculus and all these things. What are they doing? They are integrating more and more and more into their will. That is so important to understand that not subjectivity but objectivity is the path to freedom.

Normally, I will explain what truth and knowledge are when I start a class because I know that my students don't know. I will point out things like no one makes a belief true by believing it or by getting their friends to believe it or by starting a political movement or getting a grant in favor of it. You can't make beliefs true by believing them.

Now, today many people feel that is oppressive. I have people tell me, *"That sounds right but I believe in freedom and of course, that's oppressive that I can't make things true the way I want to."*

It is a total mistake. Freedom comes in truth and objectivity and learning how to interact with them. That's how the "will" grows. I hope that helps because it's a general structure and it works with everything that has to do with the will. You submit, you learn the truth, you move in relationship to whatever it is you're learning and, as you do that, you have greater and

greater freedom. So the “The Winds of Freedom” have to do with truth and the reality which is dependable and enables you to grow beyond yourself.

I don't know if you have ever heard [Pavarotti](#) talk about other tenors, and singing, and how he practices. It is wonderful to hear it. Because you see how he is taking Beniamino Gigli, and all these other tenors and he studies them and they become a part of him. But, of course, he is him, he isn't them.

Q4 - [Repeated by Dallas] How do you tell the difference between when a passion is something that you wish is something that is good and right and from God or it is just you...a little Nietzsche in you?

A - [1:05:00] I really think the idea here is to see how your passion matches reality. You do that by exploring it, putting it into action, and that will lead you into issues involving other persons, involving what you believe to be right and wrong generally.

I don't know if you remember a movie called “[Elvira Madigan](#)” (1967). It was many years back...too many years I can tell. It's a story of about a young woman and young man and they fly in the face of society to fulfill their passion and they wind up starving to death and eating grass. Not the kind you smoke.

I really think that we should assume that our passions are good but we should never follow them in isolation. We should relate them to our other passions. Part of what will happen then is the shaping of ourselves. If you are going to be Pavarotti, there are a lot of other things you are not going to be. There's a lot to be said for the Nietzschean idea of individual self realization as long as we take that in an objective framework and don't allow ourselves to be obsessed and our “will” turn back in on our self. That's the way to bondage and normally the bondage will manifest itself in the way the world closes in on us. That's what I would suggest.

Q5 - In your book *The Divine Conspiracy*...you made a bold statement that Jesus Christ is the most intelligent man to ever walk the earth. You alluded to it a little bit here. To what extent would you bring that into this context?

A - [1:07:55] Well, I would be very happy to bring it in here and discuss it at length. It's not an easy topic for there are a lot of historical details. If you just start with thinking about the place that Jesus holds in human history you're going to be forced to recognize that he was very unusual. Now, that's the way I normally go. I don't start with saying, “you know he was divine.” That's something we can come to. But there's really no point in starting there. You start with what you know about him. What you know about him is

He left his mark on human history as no other person did. Now, you can ask questions like, “*Why didn’t he give James and John the relativity equations?*” You realize immediately they would not have known what to do with them. They had other things to do. I think we need to understand that Jesus’ mission was moral revolution. Now, I am prepared to say 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 as doing in his lifetime. If you know the historical context, it is just unbelievable if anyone would even think of doing those things. He was regarded as crazy for doing them. His purpose was... and that is still going on, the moral revolution, which Jesus Christ set forward. It didn’t begin with him, it began much earlier. But he set it forward and centered it on His own person. It still has a long way to go. Would you agree with that? It has a long way to go. If you can stand just to watch the first ten minutes of a newscast. Jane and I, we like to go to movies occasionally, but we have a terrible quandary. We can’t stand the previews but if you go after the previews, you can’t get a seat. We go and sit here like this. [He covers his eyes.] And we say, “*That’s another one we won’t have to see.*”

We are surrounded with terrible, terrible things. Anyone who doesn’t believe in evil and sin before September 11 [multiple plane attacks on U.S. buildings and people causing over 3,000 deaths] had blinkers on. I’m talking about both of individual things and social things. That’s our call.

One of the many things you have to give credit to Nietzsche for—he realized the moral rot that was at the center of the Christian so-called culture and he was unwilling to overlook it. Unfortunately, I believe it turned him in the wrong direction given the basis of thought that had come to him at his time. That’s very serious. It doesn’t just affect people in other parts of the world, it is here. That’s what he was mainly concerned about.

That’s what I talk about 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. Try to get beyond the assumptions that are apt to keep you from seeing it for what it is. Read it as a moral treatise. Read it with Plato’s *Republic*, Kant’s [title in German], Rawls’ book *Theory of Justice*, and compare them. That’s where we miss the point with Jesus. We think Jesus he is over here in a special category and we don’t ask questions and think about Him as if He were an intelligent person. And I will say that anywhere and take my licks.

Q6 - [repeated by Dallas] Why is not this just another example of self-will if I recommend Christianity on the basis of fulfillment?

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

This is where one of the deepest things of Jesus comes into play. I won't mention any names but there are well known 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.

This is just another illustration of what is called the "[Hedonic Paradox](#)" in ethical theory that says, "*If you want to be miserable, try to be happy*"

I will tell my students, especially in ethics course, 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, that includes bodily activity, creativity, the enjoyment of nature, love of others, love of our families and of our neighbors. We don't do that in order to be fulfilled. It is just that we are fulfilled only in doing that.

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

The "will" that is directed merely 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. Put a corn seed in the ground. It must crack and open up and eat dirt. That's what it does. That's freedom! It sends up little things and it eats sun and it grows. It's not reaching for growth it's reaching for sun, dirt, water...and growth comes naturally. That is I think one of the hardest lessons for those of us in contemporary culture to learn is that what we're really aiming for is something that comes as a by-product.

Q7 - [1:16:56] How would you respond to somebody who claims to love others and find fulfillment without Christ?

A - [1:17:15] I think many people do. Fulfillment is not the only story. There is also the question to what degree were they fulfilled? Here is now a

long scale: Many people have found a high degree of fulfillment with no knowledge of Christ at all. But, see what Christ does is come and introduce you to a larger community—the Kingdom of God and the resources of that community and the expanse, the extent of it in 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 just a lot more to it than that.

Q8 - [1:18:30] You’ve spoken about reality outside the individual mind. What is the nature of that reality? Can you say more about Positivism as related to Constructionism?

A - [1:18:45] - The problem that Phenomenalism has always had is that you can not reconstruct what we would call a “substance”—an enduring thing or entity—by means of its appearances. That’s why in the 30’s, Phenomenalism was given up in this country in philosophy because they simply found that you could not reconstruct the ordinary objects that we have knowledge of in that way.

The answer as far as I can give to your question is that you’ll find out what that nature is by examining any particular kind of thing. In some cases you’ll need science to help you. For example, we had no knowledge of atomic power for a long while and yet, that was there all the time in the elements—uranium, plutonium and so forth. It’s a long story to answer your question in the best that I can. 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 has never been put in the knowledge of concrete human relationships. You can only know that by living in them.

Now, with reference to physical things, we know there are a range of things called color, shapes, motions and so on, and beneath that, there is an atomic structure, below particles there are sub-particle physics. That’s the way we proceed there. We are less at home with the idea that personal beings can only be known by relating to them in certain ways: there we find thoughts, feelings, will, the body is very important to the person, of course, social relationships and if you would be willing to try it out, there’s such a thing as the soul. Those are the parts. Everything in reality consists of parts that have properties that enable those parts to fit in larger wholes that has properties and so on. That’s just the general nature of reality, depending upon what kind of thing it is.

Your question brings us to point that the philosophy of the mind that I was talking about comes fundamentally out of Descartes and the theory of ideas and up into the 20th century shifts over to language. The view is one that simply says we are only acquainted with stuff that is somehow in our minds. So, you got to be in my mind or you aren't. And the chair is in my mind. Well, how is it in my mind? We can talk about sensations and images and so on. That is just a fundamentally false description of the mind. In philosophy we have to fight that out. But, 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 we know our ideas about how they are. If you can't make that step, then none of the rest of it follows. That was where Nietzsche found himself, and that's where Ernst Mach, and Mill, and late 19th Century up into the 20th century. They could not get past that initial move that says, "No, I really can be aware of something that isn't my mind." That's a deep question. I feel bad about that answer.

Q9 - Is dualism necessary to understand the objectivity of reality?

A - [1:23:24] - If you mean by dualism by what you know in ordinary conscience is not in your mind, yes. That is sometimes called dualism. "Epistemological Dualism" is usually understood to refer to the ideas are radically separate from the world and we can never get to the world. That's a view that I think we have to think seriously about and decide whether or not we are going to be prepared to describe what we are aware of like what I am aware of right now is my "ideas". You don't think that you are my idea. I don't think you are either. The natural approach to that is that dualism in that sense is true. If you don't believe that, then you have to tell stories of how I've come to think that you are my idea.

That's what you find basically in Hume and after. Hume says that we can't possibly know anything independently of our mind then tells psychological stories about why we think we do. He doesn't deny we all think we do. If you don't believe you do, then you have a story to tell. So much of modern philosophy is taken up with story telling. You tell stories. First of all, you say something couldn't possibly be true, then you tell a story of how people come to think it is true. You tell Kantian story, a Jungian story, a Marxist story, Nietzschean story, Wittgenstein story...come all the way up. You have to be careful about stories because stories are not very illuminating accounts of what actually happened.

I don't know if any of you have ever read [Charles Lamb's "Dissertation on a Roasted Pig"](#). Have you? He tells a story about how he came to roast pigs which you might think would be puzzling. Pigs, if you never thought about,

you might not think to roast a pig. He tells back in the days when pigs lived in the house, one day a child caught the house on fire. After it burned down, he was trying to get the pigs out. And they burned his fingers and he stuck them in his mouth and he tasted something wonderful. After that, more and more houses burned down until they finally figured out you can build a fire just to cook a pig. Well you say, “Wow! That explains it!” Well, not necessarily.

Whether it’s me or anyone else, if you find someone telling stories to explain how things happen, you might want to think, “Well, there might have been another way.”

Likewise when we come back to our philosophers and we have Hume telling us, *“It’s just a custom.”* That leads us to think, when I look back at this man for the fifteenth time, I saw the same thing I did the other time. Hume’s view is, *“I didn’t because my sense impression was not the same and what I see is my sense impression.”* Why do I think you’re the same? He says, *“It’s just habit, it’s a custom that leads me to believe that you’re the same.”*

You know, you can probably smell roast pig at that point. There’s something wrong with that.

Q10 - [1:27:30] What Jesus meant by “You shall know the truth and the truth will make you free”?

A - [1:27:50] Jesus didn’t say that. That’s what it says on the elevator in the philosophy building at USC, “You will know the truth and the truth will make you free.” Sometimes it doesn’t even say the first part. It just says, “The truth will make you free.” That’s what it says on my building, the philosophy building at USC. I bet it says that somewhere around here.

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. If you trust him, you believe what he says, and you put it into practice. So all of his teachings about the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere, were 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. No exception. You don’t pass unless you say that.

Jesus does that. Reality is God and His Kingdom and here’s how you live in it. He gives you his teachings. And, among others things, 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. If you read John 14, you see that’s how it’s laid

out. *“If you keep my commandments, my Father and I will come and 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 that you do this by your own spiritual muscles. There is the teaching about His presence with you. Later that is commonly called **grace**. Grace is God acting in your life to do something that you can't do on your own. When you do that you will increasingly be free of something standing over against you and saying, “No!” You will increasingly be free of that, partly because of the re-direction of your own will.

Moderator: We have time for one more question.

Q11 - [1:30:20] [repeated by Dallas] How would Nietzsche come over against other world religions?

A - [1:30:40] There would be a lot of similarities. Because you see all the world religions incorporate a lot of good sense. You know, you find people often resisting something just because some other group accepts it. I'm not going to give up breakfast just because Confucians eat it. It's a good idea. That's not the end of the story. Often, in my own life, I'm often in campus settings when we are doing inter-faith stuff and discussing all of this. Occasionally there is an appropriate occasion for me to say, *“No one understands God who does not understand that God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son that whoever put there confidence and trust in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”* Which of the other religions teach that? Anyone?

You see, the religions really are different. Okay? And, we have to be honest about it. The only people who really don't believe that the religions are different are the people who don't believe anything. I watch kids come from Saudi Arabia to USC and they have someone standing there telling them now all the religions are the same. They don't believe that. There is no reason why they should. There is every reason why they shouldn't. 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 all the same. You should respect people enough to say, “that's the way it is.”

So, now then, the test is, put it into practice. Many folks come to this country and they say it is a Christian culture and they don't see a lot to admire. Now, I'm not saying it isn't 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, thinking about ourselves

the way we do, living as we do, is really superior. I would want to say that isn't the issue but that's the way the issue presents itself. 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.

Like [Frank Laubach](#), (September 2, 1884–June 11, 1970) a very great Christian and statesman of the middle of the century, was a Presbyterian missionary in the Philippines on an island where there was a tribe called Moros. The Moros were very fierce people, but they were also very faithful to Islam. Islam, you know, means “submission to God”. Submission. Laubach got to thinking, “what would it be like if Christians were submissive to God?” What an idea! I recommend to you to read his account of what happened to him when he began to put this into practice. [Frank Laubach](#). L-A-U-B-A-C-H. Frank Laubach. He is the one who started the “[World Literacy Society Crusade](#)”. God gave him a way of teaching people to read from their spoken language and it went worldwide. He was actually influential in the Truman Administration on foreign policy in Europe just because of who he was.

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

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The Divine Conspiracy - In-depth, extended study of the book (31 sessions)

“The Divine Conspiracy - An Overview” highlighting key principles (6 sessions)

[Renovation of the Heart](#) - (1) course on the book (13 sessions)

Renovation of the Heart - Whole Life Spiritual Transformation

[Courses on Dallas' Books](#) - (6) 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)

Knowing Christ Today - Knowledge of Jesus for Daily Life (8 sessions)

Life Without Lack - Living the 23rd Psalm (9 sessions)

Becoming Dallas Willard - biography (9 sessions)

[Courses on Dallas Speaking](#) - (9) courses from (9) teaching series by Dallas

“The Human Side of Holiness” - 5 days at Denver Seminary (17 sessions)

“For Such a Time as This” - 3 teachings on Ministry Leadership (6 sessions)

“Jesus Worldview” - 2 Dallas teachings (3 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

[Speaking Sessions](#) - 51 Dallas Willard resources featuring 117 teaching sessions with 785+ pages of notes (general Dallas speaking *not* Jesus College courses).

“Master’s in the Master” Spiritual Transformation 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 on (15) courses varying in length from 3 to 31 sessions per course based on the books and teachings of Dallas Willard. Choose from a syllabus of (18) courses {on the previous page} ready-to-watch today in the JesusCollege.com library. Some courses will be offered again “live” throughout the year.

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 venue 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.

Jesus College Postscript

Thank you and God bless you for venturing further up, further in the Kingdom Among Us. We trust you received a fresh hearing of Jesus through the mind and soul 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 God immersed in the Trinitarian community be pervaded with joy, relaxed with shalom, and filled with agape, as you become the kind of apprentice of Jesus who willfully seeks the good of God, others and yourself.

For more resources to follow Jesus with Dallas Willard’s wise, warm, winsome teaching:

[Dallas Willard Ministries](#)

[Jesus College](#)

[HarperCollins](#)



The study guide was prepared by Doug Webster of Jesus College. We welcome your comments, suggestions and ideas on how we might better help you strengthen your conversational apprenticeship with Jesus in the With-God life..

info@JesusCollege.com



JESUS COLLEGE

A good school