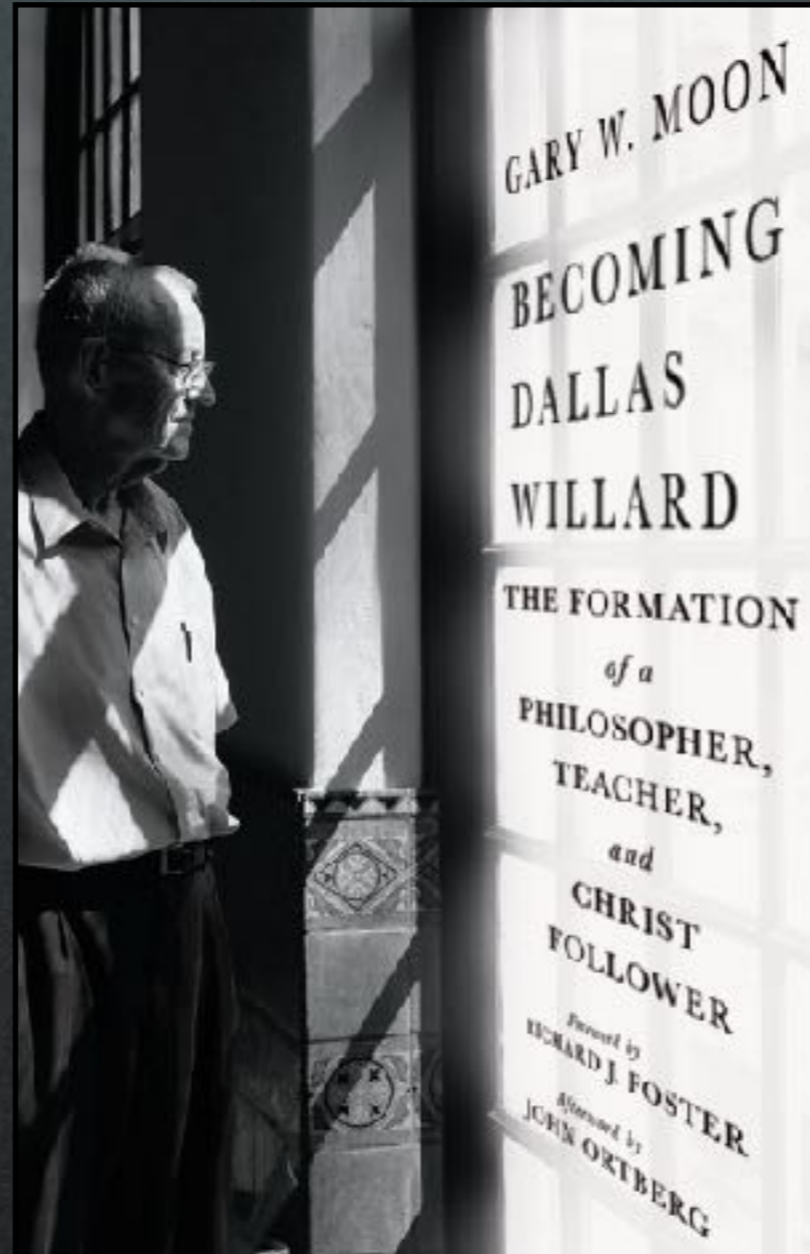


BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Chapter 10

Session 5 - "Formation at Home"



SESSION 4 REVIEW - BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

The USC Years

Before, during, and after his time at USC, the strongest impression on his mind has always been the person and teachings of Jesus Christ. He saw that Jesus provided answers for classic big picture questions about life that broke the horns of the dilemma of either-or and both-and.



BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Chapter 10 - "Formation at Home"

"Where do you find God? www.endofyourrope.com"

Dallas Willard, *Life in the Spirit*



They arrived in LA at the time of the Watts riots in 1965. (110)

~ ~ ~

“All these circles are autobiographical, inspired by the journey that I took during the late 1960’s. I felt as I had lost consciousness of my purpose, life was losing meaning for me, and my world was falling apart. It was only later that I could see that world was a cocoon being stripped away so my life could emerge unfettered. But God was gracious. He revealed my heart. What it was and what it could be. I entered a journey of knowing the truth and being set free.”

Jane Willard

(141-142)

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Chapter 10 - "Formation at Home"

"[Jesus] teaches us that He accepts us. He doesn't just deal with us in terms of what we do or don't do. But He deals with us in terms of who we are. And I see in His love and His death on the Cross for me His acceptance, not of my façade but of the real me...the one that has lied...cheated...stolen...as egocentric as a peacock. That's the one He died for. And in that knowledge I can stand up and I can be me. And this is why confession is such a tremendously important part of all true movements of God, because it is in the moment of confession that we move beyond the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees. And when we do that we step into the flow of God's life."

Dallas, Wheaton College, 1997

The military-style haircuts

1969...By this time father and son had developed a pattern of relational struggles.

When John was 13, Dallas said, “I am not going to discipline you like a child anymore, and I’m not going to tell you when to cut your hair. I trust you will show good judgment in keeping it conservative.”

John said, “I gathered my hair into a pony tail like many of my contemporaries and didn’t cut it until I was twenty-one years old.”

Dallas and John’s relationship continued to be frustrating and stressful. The relational fissure was a grief they both carried with them always.

The Long Lasting Emptiness

They were thinking that both of the twins would live. It was not to be. The first son was stillborn. Jane winces when she recalls the doctor telling her and adding.

“Jane, I don’t even think it is normal.”

The second little boy lived for a day.

Dallas named the two boys Stephen and Stirling.



(145)

“I just remember there was just such emptiness for a long time.”

Jane said,

“It had not been a good time. But this began to snap us out of it. Dallas and I had to come together and deal with our pettiness. It shook us up and brought us back to the reality of what is most important.”

(146)



“Slug him, Dallas. Hit him.”

“A world exists where people are trying to save their lives and they can't. And of course that makes them all the more desperate and hopeless, and all the more obsessed with themselves. And finally the anger and desperation lead to the way we attack one another.”

“When we try to deal with our children, with our loved ones, and when something is wrong we're apt to get very uptight. That uptightness reflects something very simple: we have not surrendered something to God.

I am not at peace in trusting the Kingdom of Heaven.”

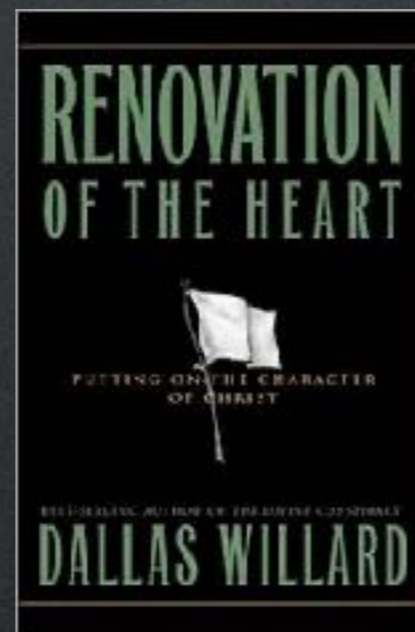
(146-147)

“Feelings live on the front row of our lives like unruly children clamoring for attention [and] are on few exceptions, good servants. But they are disastrous masters.”

Renovation of the Heart p. 117,122

“We must understand how love, joy and peace can be our portion in every state of life and can lead us into a radiant eternity with God.” (ibid, 139)

(148)



BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Chapter 10 - "Formation at Home"

Following the death of the twins, Jane remembers seeing a change in her husband. They were drawing closer in their relationship.

"I learned to pray the Lord's Prayer during a period in my life when I would wake up at 2:00 in the morning. I was in graduate school and I would go into the room where I could be alone. And sometimes I would spend an hour and never get through hallowed by thy name."

Memorization became an important and consistent practice for Dallas.

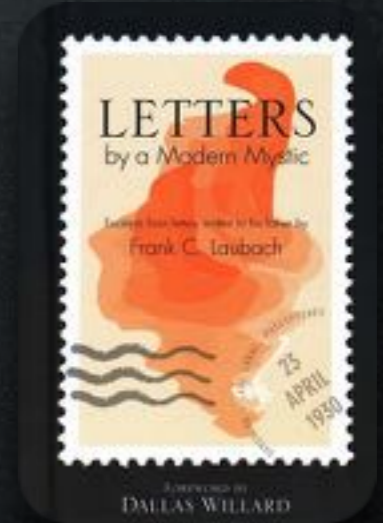
(148-149)

Jane added about Dallas with spiritual disciplines,
“Like his career, it was more of a career.”

Practicing Spiritual Disciplines

Dallas' prayer life was deepening. He was very inspired by the life of Frank Laubach and his writings *Letters by a Modern Mystic* and *Game with Minutes*.

"You can train yourself to do that and then you'll have the habit. And it will work."



Dallas found it difficult to journal.

"Prayer is asking and receiving, and talking to God about what you and God are doing together." (149) [The Divine Conspiracy, 243]

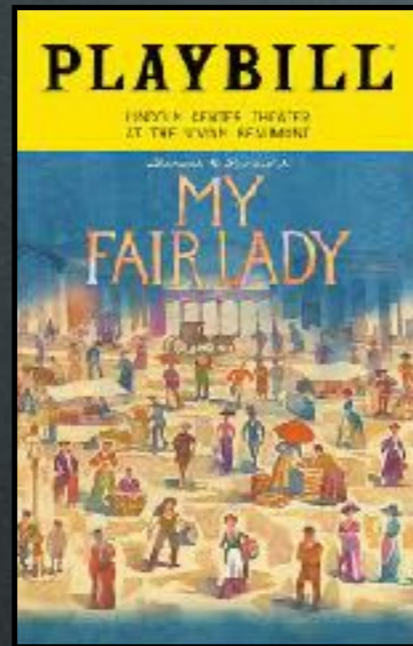
Both Dallas and Jane started to learn, at an even deeper level, how to "die daily."

"You have to learn to discipline your egoism."

(150)

“Lord, lift this feeling in Jesus name.”

One day in London on a trip around 1980, they went to a play.



♪ *“Why can’t a woman be more like a man?”*

At that point Dallas reached over and held his wife’s hand warmly. For Jane it seemed like a light had turned on in her husband’s head.

“My prayer was answered.

*Dallas’s demeanor toward me totally changed,
and it became for me a magical evening.”*

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Chapter 10 - "Formation at Home"

Dallas' Journey with Prayer

"When you pray, Jesus will walk right up to you and He will listen to you." (Chapter 9, 131)

Jane's Journey with Prayer

Prayer Therapy Groups — *"At least once every day for over a year I did this twenty-to-twenty-five-minute meditation. In this way I became established in who God is and who I am in Him. Those verses began to seep into my soul at a deep level and became part of my very core." (152)*



BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Chapter 10 - "Formation at Home"

Dallas Bumbling into Christian Disciplines

"The disciplines of abstinence didn't make sense for a while. *Well, a little too Catholic for me.* And then I began to understand that if I didn't practice the disciplines of abstinence, the disciplines of engagement would be mighty thin...a path to burn out. I was told,

'It's better to burn out than rust out.'

It took me several years to figure out that you didn't have to do either one of those."

(153)



More on spiritual disciplines...

Dallas and Jane experimented a few times with doing devotions together during their fifty-seven years of marriage, but over the last twenty years they quit trying.

The discipline of solitude was another practice Dallas experienced and recommended often.

The discipline of fasting for Dallas became more systematic. For many years he fasted on Wednesdays and he also fasted for the entire travel time on international flights.

Two Important Events Dallas' Formation

ONE — The Ideas of Agnes Sanford - Encouragement for Christians to pray for an increased capacity for God.

TWO — Being overwhelmed with the goodness and majesty of God. Bring the Word of God as a living substance into us, it really does change us. I see myself differently.

The joys of music, dance, and art in the Willard home.

And some restoration between a father and son.

“I just wanted to come over and tell you I was thinking about all those spankings I gave you when you were young...I was so wrong, I was so wrong.” Then he started to cry.

John later wrote, *“Dallas was a rock incarnate, the strong and gentle man present here and now giving me a great big hug, a rock I could always stand on, a fountain of growing wisdom and palpable love.”*

(156-157)

“BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD” - CH. 10

In honesty, intentionally and prayerfully confronting his feelings of fear and anxiety he found the grace and power of an all sufficient God.

He threw himself into the love of the Father. In putting to death the inadequate self, he learned that there was a new and better self ready to emerge.

“In my case, I had to go back and accept the sufficiency of God for all the times when I was left alone. “Lord, it’s all right.” and hear Him say, “It’s all right. It’s ok. I’ve got you. All is not lost. In fact I can even take that and make something better.” (158)



“BECOMING YOU”

- In a long, empty, shadowed valley I walked through, how much did I know “Thou art with me”?
- Do I really believe Jesus doesn’t just deal with me in terms of what I do or don’t do, He deals with me in terms of who I am?
- Will I throw myself into the love of the Father?
- What does the “discipline of egoism” look like to me?



BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

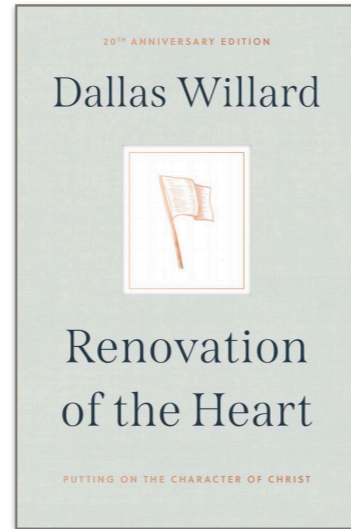
Next Session #6

Chapters 11-12 “Birth of a Movement...Doing Work Ourselves”

Pages 159-188

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Starts
next
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Willard's
favorite
Dallas
book

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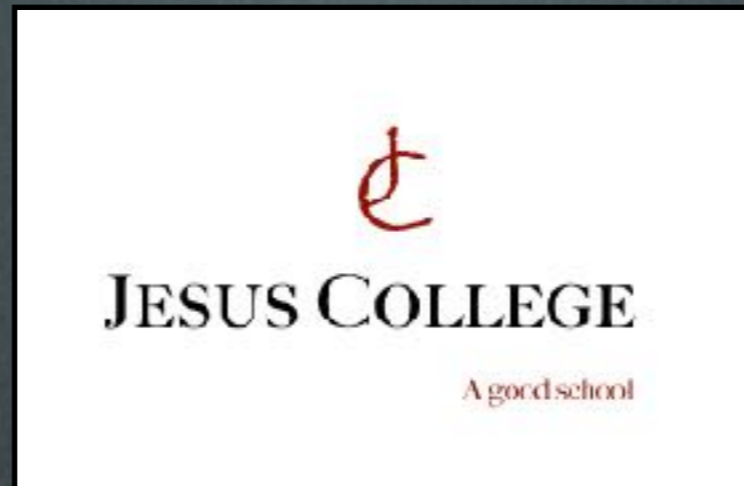


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BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Reading Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Chapter(s)</u>	<u>Chapter Titles</u>
7/8/21	13-49	1-3	Eternity...No Unwanted Child...Rural America
7/15/21	50-73	4-5	Running into Jane...Running into God
7/22/21	74-105	6-7	Academic Awakening...Which Path to Take?
7/29/21	109-140	8-9	The USC Years
8/5/21	141-158	10	Formation at Home
8/12/21	159-188	11-12	Birth of a Movement...Doing Work Ourselves
8/19/21	191-208	13	Ideas for Time & Eternity - part 1
8/26/21	209-227	14	Ideas for Time & Eternity - part 2
9/2/21	228-254	15-16	Thank You!...Healing Light