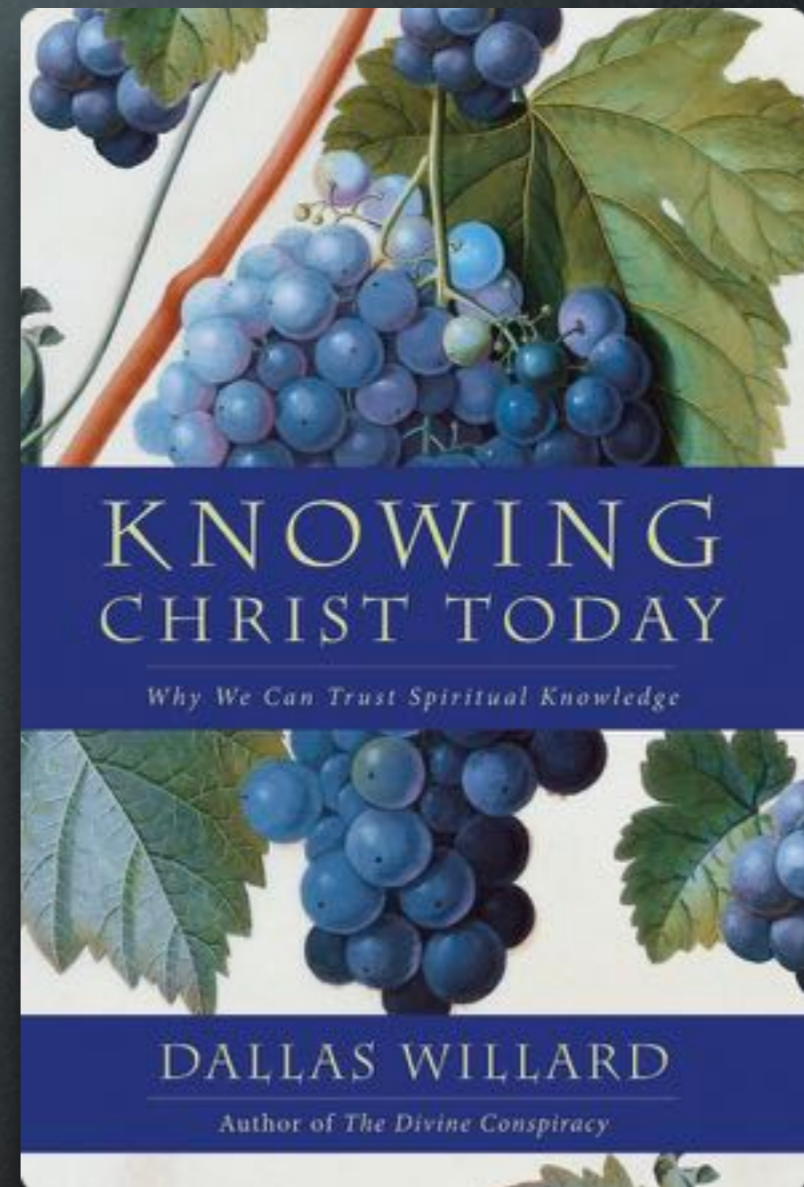


WELCOME to an 8 week Course sponsored by
Dallas Willard Ministries & Jesus College



Session 4 Review

We can know that an intelligent creator thoughtfully willed the physical universe into existence thereby confirming the words of the Apostles Creed, “I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth” as knowledge of truth.

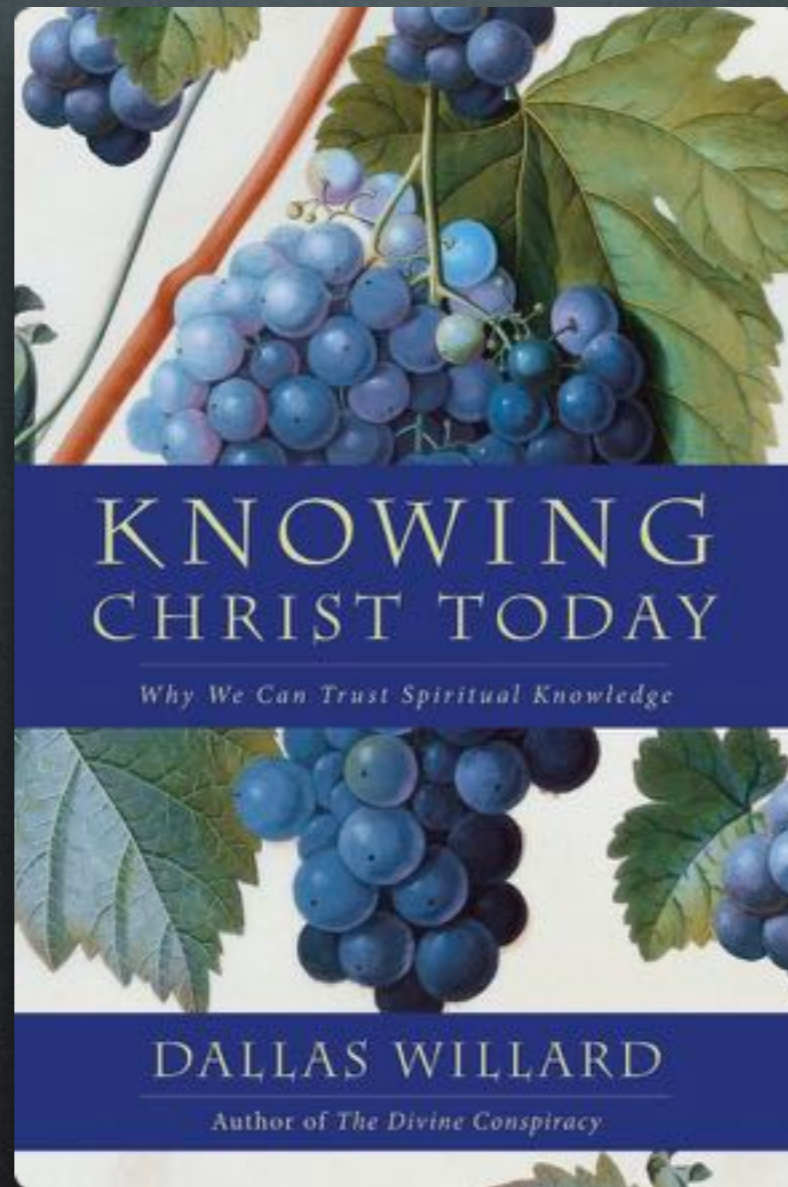


This does not give us the loving Father God of whom Jesus spoke, but it does give us a magnificent “Creator”, though not yet a personal presence in human history and in individual lives. (115)

KNOWING CHRIST TODAY

Session 5 - The Miraculous, and Christ's Presence in Our World

Chapter 5



p.117-138

Evidence strongly favors Christ's resurrection and continued presence.

HERE COMES EMMANUEL...GOD WITH US



So what kind of intelligent Creator is here...or there?

Chapter 5 Introduction

REVIEW — We have now have found a firm basis for knowing that there is a vast nonphysical being underlying—perhaps also interpenetrating—the reality of the physical universe.

Although this is a knowable fact, no one has to know it. (117)

“What is behind the [physical] universe is more like a mind, but it is like anything else we know.”

CS Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p. 17-18

“The whole frame of nature, bespeaks an intelligent author; and no rational inquirer can, after serious reflection, suspend his belief a moment with regard to the primary principle of genuine Theism and Religion.” David Hume *Knowing Christ Today*, 118

Deism and a Distant God — God is “There” not “Here”

Deism - Those who believe in “God, and no more”.

God does not intervene in human affairs.

Deists believe in God. Theists believe in an acting God.

In practical terms, Deists are indistinguishable from atheists.

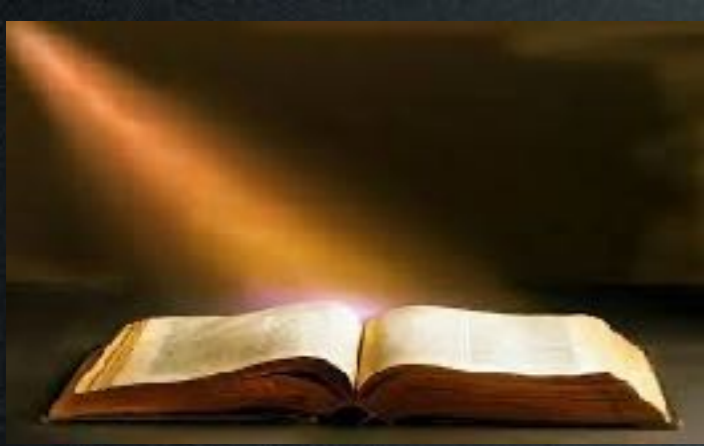
Resistance to those who speak and act for God with authority.

Besides, this “Majestic Creator would never “tinker” with His work.

And Jesus? — Opponents to God in the Roman world said that Jesus was really a mere human, much like many New Testament scholars today. “Religious studies” in academics today is secular understanding of religion.



(119-121)



The Bible is Secular

The Bible: Historical artifact in human terms. (121)

If there is no “divine intervention”, a supernatural presence is not permitted as an outcome. (122)

There is no God, or if there is, he has nothing to do with the Bible.



But is Reality Secular?

Secularism, as a view of reality and knowledge,
cannot stand as an unquestioned truth. (123)

Reasons for ruling out God's intervention = "Miracles"

- 1.) It is foolish.
- 2.) It is beneath God to interact with humans. (124)

So, those who state miracles are impossible...

Because natural laws that require regularities in events of the physical realm are unbreakable, impossible to interrupt.

Therefore, Christianity cannot be true and be known.

What is a Theist's response?

Yes, there are general regularities in physical events rarely, if ever, interrupted.

- Births aren't "virgin". The dead don't resurrect.

Water refuses to turn into wine even when spoken to.

However, unusual events do occur like iron floating in water or injecting dying people with substances to prevent death.

How does the Impossible become Possible = Miracles?

Common regularities need certain conditions that lie deeper in reality, and if those conditions are modified, then the regularities are interrupted. (125)

What about the “ultimate conditions” upon which nature’s regularities depend? They lie in the “nonphysical source” of the physical universe – the intelligent Creator.

These “natural” laws depend upon the source - the Super-natural. Laws of nature are not explained by the laws of nature, only the source of the laws.

* Examples: Refrigerate food; water a withering plant.

The nonphysical being of great proportions (Creator) could modify the conditions of the well-known regularities. The Creator has the power to enter the system “he” made.

Do miracles violate natural law as David Hume stated?

There is something other than nature that accounts for nature and irregularities of nature. The laws of nature are his or its arrangements. Nature is, simply, not on its own. They are part of a larger system of reality, including both nature and the special purposes of God.

To repeat, physical reality is not a causally “closed” system. The possibility of genuinely miraculous interventions into human life is secured. (127)

~ ~ ~

In simple terms, an intelligent creator was powerful enough and creative enough to make the physical universe so “he” or “it” can surely modify the natural laws to intervene.

So, Miracles are Possible, but are they Actual?

CAUTION: Claiming miracles gives great power and influence in human affairs!

The Evidence — Written and institutional testimonies
“Did you see that?” The bizarre seldom produces belief.

The interpretation of unusual events requires some sort of community and traditional framework within which they might make sense, if they are to make sense at all. Believing it is not something you just up and do all by yourself. Testimony works only if at some point it transcends itself, and finds corroboration in the experience of events in the world. Otherwise, it is only hearsay.

(128-130)

Causal Consequences of the Event (130-131)

Testimony + Evidence + Consequences in Reality

Present facts = past realities.

Miracles leave the “testimony” of real consequences.

Few are prepared to determine if the consequences are an “act of God”. If they are caused by human speaking to God or directly to the situation, this is not natural causation.

The Pattern of the Process



1. Assume the event occurred.

2. Estimate the probability of it being “natural”.

If “highly improbable”, it’s good evidence of a miracle.

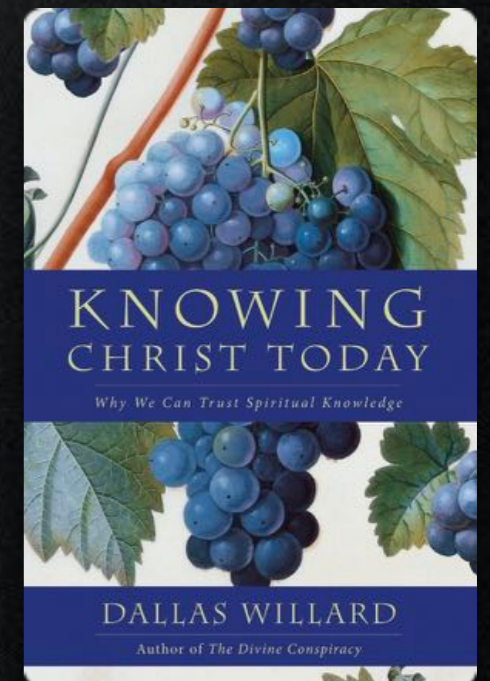
In pursuing knowledge, no stone is to be left unturned.

Be thorough & honest. Did it happen and who knows?

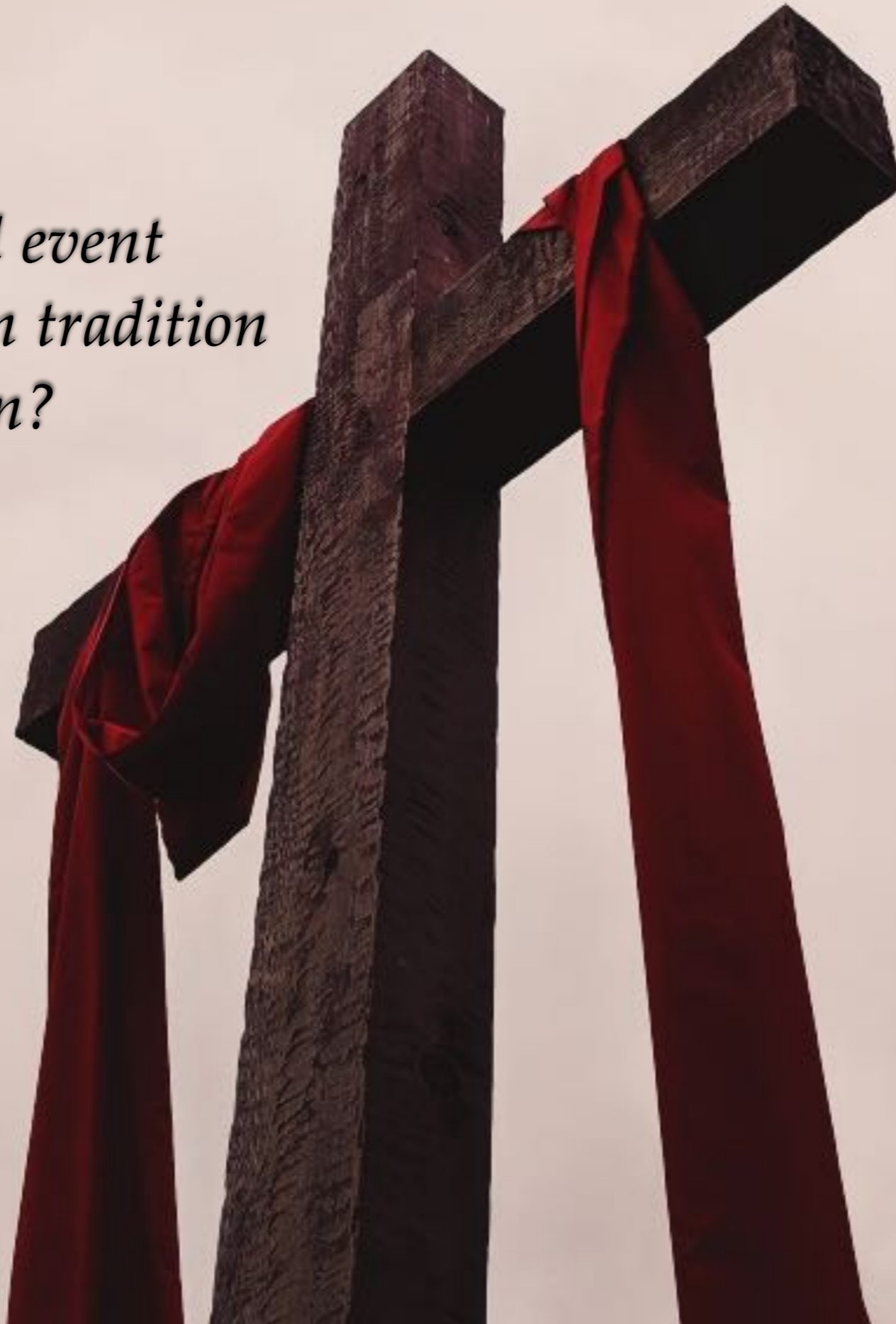
The main point of this book...

We are dealing with this cultural calamity of displacing, the central point of Christian knowledge into the domain of mere “faith”, sentiment, traditional ritual, or power.

If this displacement is correct, then it is, in some important sense, improper to believe that the central events of the Christian tradition actually happened. And it would be wrong to speak, or teach them with the aim of eliciting belief in them on the basis of knowledge of reality. (132)



*Did the central event
of the Christian tradition
actually happen?*





The Resurrection of Christ

The Christian story is a story of human redemption from sin, and from the power of evil. It is a story of the power of Jesus to overcome evil, without engaging in it—of how He lives beyond all that evil can do against Him or us. He has to be victorious in this battle.

“If Christ has not been raised... You are still in your sins.”
1 Corinthians 15:17

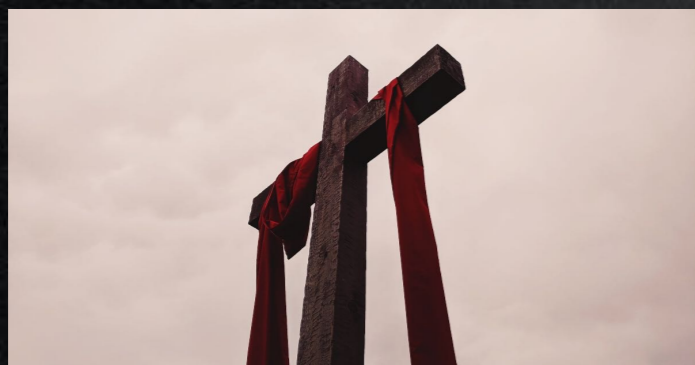
Can we know this to be true?

If we can know it, then it actually happened. (133)

Getting a Grip on the Resurrection of Christ

- 1.) He interacted with His friends by visible presence and usual, human communication.
- 2.) He had a body with both human and unusual traits with amazing abilities.
- 3.) He continued to act in the world with His contemporaries up to the present time.

(133)



Can we know Jesus rose from the Dead?

The evidence is mainly the transformation of His followers from a small group of highly unqualified and socially marginalized individuals, disgraced and hunted by the authorities, into a force for moral and social regeneration that, within a few generations, was present throughout the Roman empire, and, within a few centuries, had become the dominant form of religion in it...without special advantage or force. (134)

Can we know of Jesus' resurrection?

Yes, if we simply but do the math. (134)

Why people deny His resurrection...

- This is a religious question not facts and knowledge.
- It is boring and irrelevant so don't bother me with it.
- If yes, life and destiny are entirely different.

If Jesus rose from the dead...

Suddenly, reality is no longer safely secular.

“God will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this He has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.” Acts 17:31

It looks as if we are all going to be held responsible to God for what we do and who we have become. Suddenly the whole educational outlook of “modern” humanity is called into question and may be radically inadequate to reality. You can see why our “education” would use every available device to evade knowledge of the resurrection of Christ. (134-135)



Removing the Stone Blocking Belief in Easter

We have shown that miracles, including the resurrection, are not a physical impossibility. But socially driven prejudice, especially in the fields of scholarship, blinds even some of those to understand the inherent openness of physical reality to transcendent power. (135)

A dead Jesus was placed in a tomb.

The Tomb was empty.

Jesus met with with His friends.

“The resurrection of Jesus does, in fact, provide a sufficient explanation for the empty tomb and the meetings with Jesus. I think it is also a necessary explanation.” NT Wright, *Surprised by Hope*



Q&C

Your Questions & Comments are welcome!

(Use the Q&A on the bottom of your Zoom screen)



Q&A

80:00 + 10K

Meditation — *1 Corinthians 15:12-17*

Application for Knowing Christ in Your Next 10,000
Minutes → V-I-M*

VISION — Where have I seen God intervene in the course of nature?

INTENTION — Do I give “adequate consideration to the available evidence”? (136)

MEANS — Like R.A. Torrey, will I ask God alone to supply what I need? (137)



† Cross Fit

* - For more on V-I-M, see Dallas Willard's *Renovation of the Heart*, chapter 5

Suggested videos for Course Session 5

“Knowledge of Christ in Today’s World” *

Dallas Willard Ministries YouTube Channel

[Video 2 "Miracles" \[41:45-44:25\]](#)

["Miracles" by CS Lewis](#)

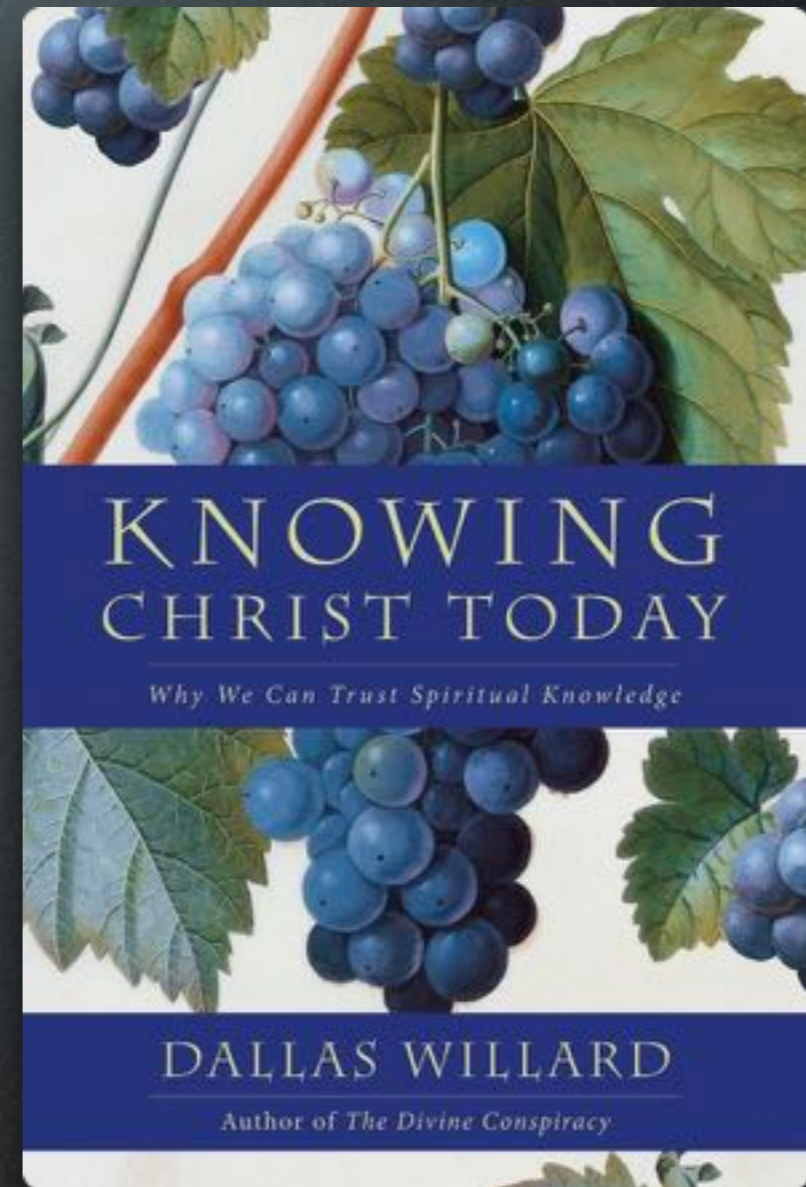
* [Full 8-session video series](#)

See the course study guide for full transcripts of all (8) video teachings



Session 5 Summary

The establish possibility of resurrection, resting upon the openess of the physical universe to a nonphysical source or creator of it all, opens the door to consider fairly the evidence that strongly favors the resurrection of Christ as an actual event and favors His continued presence in this world. (136)



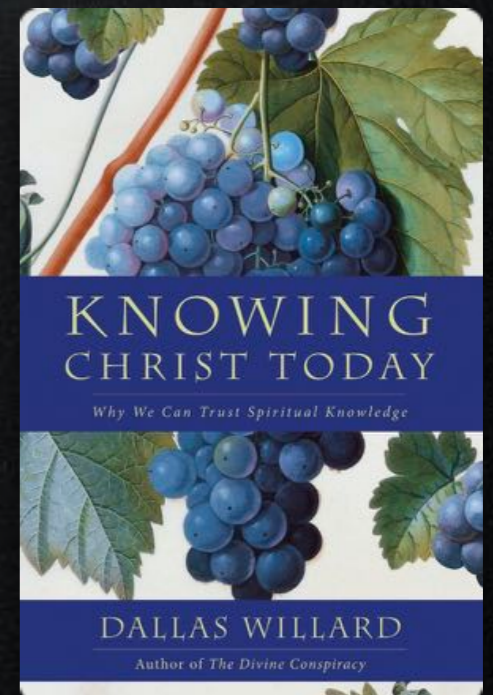
But no one has to know. (117 & 137)

“A reasonable next step...openness to God's intervention in other contexts, and, especially, in the events of their [our] lives today. Thus, they [we] can come to know the reality of a spiritual life for [us] ordinary humans.” (136)

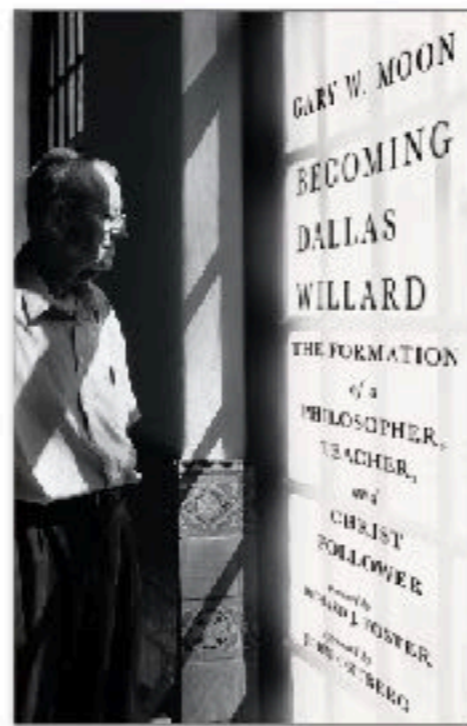
Next Week — Session 6

“Knowledge of Christ in the Spiritual Life”

Chapter 6 p. 139-167



**An Inspiring
Story**



**Started
Yesterday**

BECOMING DALLAS WILLARD

Biography by Gary W. Moon

PART 1: The First Thirty Years PART 2: Three Kingdoms PART 3: Finishing Well

A casual “Summer Book Club” read with friends of Dallas

A FREE 30 minute 9 week Zoom Webinar

Wednesdays, 8 AM - *or* - 4 PM (US Pacific = GMT -8 hours)

July 12 - September 6, 2023

Led by Doug Webster, JESUS COLLEGE President

Registration or Information — info@JesusCollege.com

Sponsored by

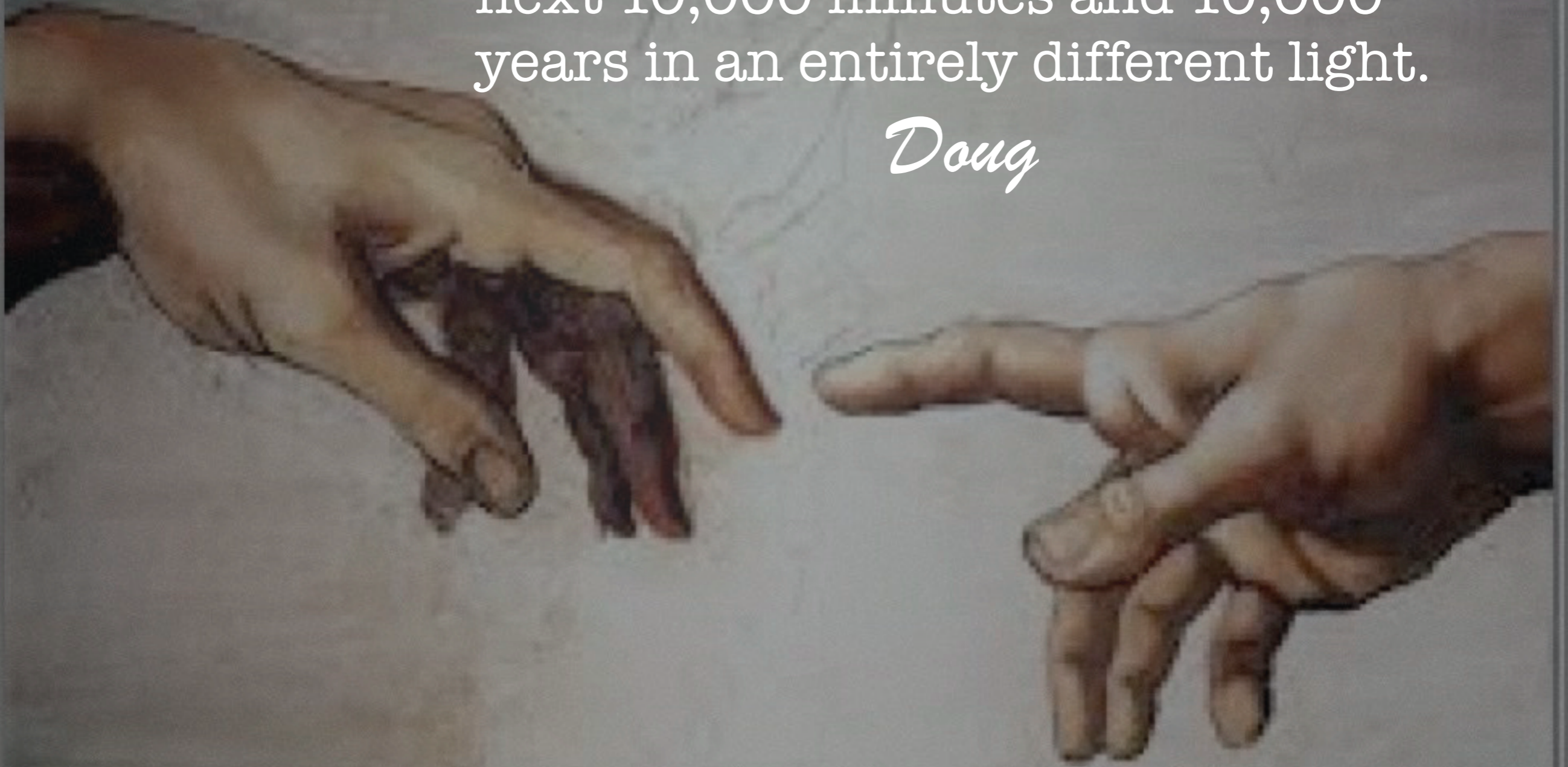


JESUS COLLEGE

Apostrophe

May your knowledge of the God
who created the world and raised
Jesus from the dead place your
next 10,000 minutes and 10,000
years in an entirely different light.

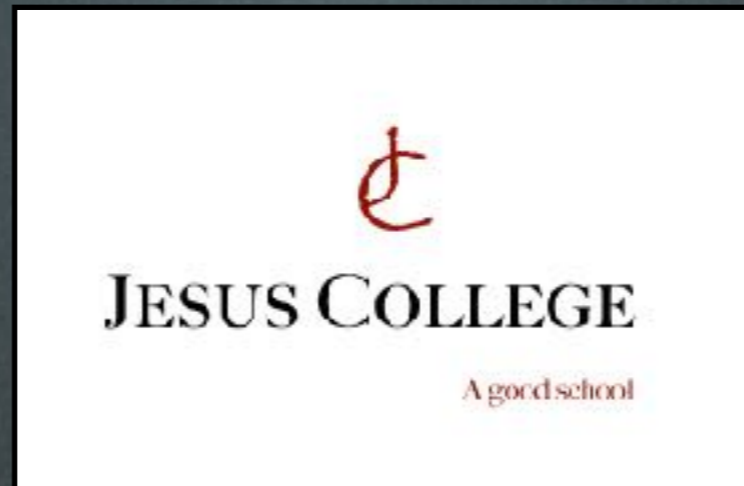
Doug



THE SCHOOL of KINGDOM LIVING



Information...Registration — JohnC@dwillard.org



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

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

The Mission of Jesus College - To Empower Apprentices to Master Love by knowing Jesus as the One, great truth and live a good life found in such truth.

The Vision of Jesus College - To equip Trainers (Ministry, Business Leaders, Parents) to mentor Leaders (Senior Apprentices) to disciple Apprentices to Master love.

The Storehouse of Jesus College - Over 410 [FREE downloadable resources & links](#) offering the good life in the person, work, teachings & life of Jesus through “Eyes to See” visual resources and “Ears to Hear” audio resources, plus gatherings live & online provided by JESUS COLLEGE.