

The Theology of Spiritual Formation in Christ – Part 3
Renovaré Institute Series Video #1 – Eternal Living Now
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Spiritual formation is founded in God's nature. It is founded in His life. It is founded in His activities. That is why our lives become eternal. When we enter the community of the Trinity, through the grace of God, our lives become eternal. So:

When you think about eternal life, say instead, eternal living.

1. Eternity is now in process

It has been in process forever. We are _____ to _____ in eternal living – that means to make ourselves a part of what _____ is doing. That's how our lives become eternal.

What is "being saved"? Being saved is being _____ in what Jesus is now doing on Earth. That's how you become a part of His life and your life becomes _____.

Spiritual _____ is a matter of increasingly being caught up in what God is doing on Earth. There is a big future to it: *"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father..."* (Matthew 13:43).

2. God hides Himself

Jesus himself did not shine like the sun except on one occasion. In Matthew 16:28, Jesus tells his disciples that some *"will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."* He then took the three up the mountain: "Now six days later, Jesus took with Him Peter and James and his brother John, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as light (Matthew 17:1-2). They saw the kingdom coming in glory.

God is not always hidden, but most of the time, He *is* hidden – in the Latin, *Deus absconditus*.

Isaiah 45:15 *Truly, You are a God who hides Himself, God of Israel, Savior!*

God hides so that we can hide from Him if we want.

He is so big that, if he didn't hide, we couldn't hide. He lets us hide. He gives us that _____.

"Adam, where art thou?" (Genesis 3:9) is the perennial human _____. The _____ person is the person who doesn't know where they are.



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When we bring our lives into God's life, then we begin to have _____ and _____.

3. The world needs knowledge

Renovaré Institute emphasizes knowledge. Why? Because we are in a world that needs _____. It doesn't need leaps of faith; it needs knowledge.

Knowledge is interactive relationship, but this is what comes out of it. _____
For example, if you want someone to work on your car, you would like for them to have had an "interactive relationship" with cars – maybe with the kind you have – and that interaction would enable them to represent your automobile, as it is, on an appropriate basis.

KNOWLEDGE
Our ability to represent things as they
are on an appropriate basis of
thought and experience

Knowledge is not _____. A part of the strategy of Satan is to get people to think that knowledge is esoteric – that it rarely happens. Knowledge happens all the time. It happens every day.

People constantly _____ that they do or that they do not have knowledge, and they demand that people have knowledge to serve them.

Knowledge gives you the _____ and _____ to _____, to direct _____, to formulate policy and supervise it, and to _____. That's what knowledge does; nothing else does that. When we talk about spiritual transformation in these sessions, we are going to be _____ knowledge. We need to base our life on knowledge.

TRUTH
A thought or statement is true
if what it is about is as that thought
or statement represents it

Knowledge involves _____. Belief doesn't. You can believe all sorts of things that are false. Belief doesn't involve method. Truth is an obvious thing. Children know what it is. They will pick up on you if you don't say what is true that concerns them. They will object, and they will learn how to manipulate truth.

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4. Everyone is being formed

Spiritual transformation means the transformation of the _____ nature of human beings. Everyone gets one. You can't avoid it. It's just a question of which one you will get because the need is so deep, and it always concerns identity and power. If I know who I am, then I know what to do. And if I know what to do, then I need the power to do it.

All of the spiritualities around us offer _____. What does Christ offer? Spiritual formation.

Christ comes to us and brings God to us. He offers us the treasure for our vessel.
And He brings us into a process of constant renewal and restoration.
The outcome of that is eternal living.



After Dallas concludes his teaching, he answers a couple of questions about living in a culture that has such different ideas about spiritual formation and change. Dallas' answers include the following thoughts and insights:

- At the heart of the matter is the issue of human control. The need to control human behavior is what drives the current ideology. The human being apart from God can only turn to themselves for control. If you abandon values and freedom, you will turn to controlling human behavior.
- We have to question the basic ideology [of contemporary culture]. The universities are now the authority centers of our culture and like to be known as "secular universities." This is a huge presumption. Is reality secular? The battles are fierce because the real issue is "Who has authority?"
- When you turn away from God, you will eventually turn away from what is good to what you desire. So, the mind apart from God always turns to either sex and/or violence.
- The questions become, "Who controls?" and "What controls them?"
- The idea that a human being is a spiritual being with a spirit, which is a will and a capacity to initiate, drops out of our explanations; therefore, we always look for causes. When a couple

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divorces, we look for the causes, rather than saying, "One person made a decision and chose to leave the marriage." The common approach to every problem is to look for causes. Your brain and DNA are commonly referred to as a cause because you are your brain and DNA, not a spiritual being with a will.

- Sadly, the Church is not immune to the ideology of control. The drive to control expresses itself in religion almost more than anywhere else. It produces the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees and that is outward conformity. Then, religion as a force becomes an institution, and the question becomes, "Are you going to conform, or not?"
- A great task for us is to identify what is actually being said in the religion. It turns out that religion is on the side of the vessel. You must have a vessel; the vessel never takes the place of the treasure.
- The treasure Christ offers is walking free in the kingdom of God by the grace of God. You can do that and be religious, and you can be religious and not do that.
- Let's don't be mad at religion. We need to be compassionate and understanding. In our religious context, let's don't declare a revolution. Let's live a revolution. **Our basic call is to love those who are with us.** If we do that, then there's the possibility of things opening up.