

Why Am I Here? - The Four Great Questions of Life
Renovaré Series Video #2 – Part 3 – Richness of Life in God
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"You are a never-ceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's great universe."

God invites us into the richness of His life, but we must engage our will in all of life.

The will has to work together with all the dimensions of the human being to bring people into "routine easy obedience to Christ." That's the range where healing, reaction and grace come together in transforming knowledge of God.

- Work is a major part of our transformation. Work is the creation of value. Take spiritual formation and discipleship out of the area of religion and put it into the area of discipleship for all of life.
- If our church is hitting on all cylinders, it is making disciples and training disciples to live in the kingdom of God which includes all of life. We surround them into the Trinitarian reality that has them in the Name (*Mat. 28:19 ...baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*).
The Name is the reality.
For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them. Mat. 18:20
- Then you teach them to do everything Jesus said. *Mat. 28:20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.* Immersed in the Trinitarian community you in a position to see the goodness in everything Jesus said and to carry out the things he said. Do not try to teach them before they are in His name and presence. In His presence, you begin to see His teaching, not as rules, but as an invitation to live in the kingdom of God.
- It's not uncommon to see leaders fall. We tend to focus on the failure. The problem is not the failure, but where the leader was living all along. They were not dwelling in the Trinitarian reality. Disconnected from the reality of God we become susceptible to temptation and begin to think we are missing out on something good. This is a major step in coming to grips with our fallen condition is to understand that you don't miss out on something good by refusing to do what you know to be wrong.

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Dallas now examines a prayer from Coventry Cathedral that brings discipleship into all of life. Coventry was firebombed in 1940 and although the city and Cathedral were ruined, these prayer panels engraved in stone remained.

Hallowed is the first part of The Lord's Prayer, but it's not a familiar term to us.

Hallowed means to hold precious, separate, dear, to treasure.

If this were done, most everything else would take care of itself because it expresses an attitude toward God.

The prayer covers industry or work, the arts, the home, commerce, suffering, government, education and recreation.

When I do what I do, whatever it may be, I do it with the expectation that God is acting with me. This is how we begin to move into the richness of a life where God governs by the governing of his kingdom.

The big issue in life is how you think about God. It may be an overstatement, but all human troubles come from thinking wrongly about God. We have to keep God before our minds habitually in a way that he actually does rule in our lives.

*Hallowed be Thy name in industry.
God be in my hands and in my making.*

*Hallowed be Thy name in arts,
God be in my senses and in my creating.*

*Hallowed be Thy name at home,
God be in my heart and in my loving.*

*Hallowed be Thy name in commerce,
God be in my desk and in my trading.*

*Hallowed be Thy name in suffering,
God be in my pain and in my enduring.*

*Hallowed be Thy name in Government,
God be in my plans and in my deciding.*

*Hallowed be Thy name in education,
God be in my mind and in my growing.*

*Hallowed be Thy name in recreation,
God be in my limbs and in my leisure.*

*Holy, Holy, Holy: Lord God of Hosts;
Heaven and earth are fully of Thy Glory*

Dallas concludes with a short letter from Paternus to his son. We only know that Paternus was a first century Christian, but his advice captures Dallas' message to us.

"First of all, my child, think magnificently of God. Magnify His providence; adore His power, pray to Him frequently and incessantly. Bear Him always in your mind. Teach your thoughts to reverence Him in every place for there is no place where He is not. Therefore, my child, fear and worship and love God; first and last, think magnificently of Him! —PATERNUS, ADVICE TO A SON"

He then moves to a Question and Answer session.



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1st Question: Is our spirit, will and heart the same as the Holy Spirit within us?

Dallas: Our spirit is not the Holy Spirit. Our spirit is our capacity to choose. Our spirit is the most sacred part of human being. God Himself will not override the human will. God will in many ways influence our choice, but He will not make the choice for us.

Isn't it interesting that we are permitted to grieve the Holy Spirit and we are permitted to resist the Holy Spirit. In His kindness, God will allow us to rebel against Him.

Exercising our will is crucial. Jesus did say, "Without me you can do nothing" John 15:5. But if you do nothing, it will be without him. Many people have adopted a view of grace and the Spirit that makes us passive. We are always to be active. Grace is not opposed to effort. It's opposed to earning. We must learn to work with God.

2nd Question: What do you think of the book, "The Shack" and its representation of the Trinity?

Dallas: Dallas had a positive reaction to the book because "the normal Christian has no way of thinking about the Trinity." The book has also been helpful to people in terms of getting a better grip on what God might be like. As long as you realize it's a work of fiction, it could be helpful. At the same time, he realized there are legitimate concerns about people being misled and how wrong ideas might be harmful.

He made an interesting comment that "a wrong idea might be better than a just a vacuum" for people who are committed to God.

Ultimately, I would recommend other books that draw people more accurately and deeply into an understanding of the Trinity.

3rd Question: Can we bring about transformation through the ministry of the Holy Spirit? We teach, preach and then we ask the Spirit to change people. Can you comment on this?

Dallas: It depends on what you are praying for. Some things come by prayer, but Jesus never prayed for anyone to be healed of lying. If you want to be changed in character, you have to commit yourself to a course of action.

For example, Lying is a fundamental human resource. If someone developed a pill that would stop people from lying, few would want it. If you are to stop lying, you have to be prepared to live without it. You can't just pray over someone to stop lying. That change doesn't happen passively. Any kind of character issue involves a commitment of your will to a course of change.

This is what happened with the disciples. They didn't fully understand what they were getting into, but they chose to follow Jesus and to stay with him when others were offended. They knew he was giving them something no one else had.

To be active we have to clear up confusion over things like, "we are unworthy." That's true, but we also have worth. God sees our worth even though we are unworthy.



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QUESTIONS

1. Dallas refers to elements of the Great Commission to explain what discipleship entails. What are the key elements? How is your local church doing with these essentials?
2. How does the prayer from the Coventry Cathedral impact you? Is it possible for you to hallow God's name in every aspect of your life? What area of life is God calling you to focus on at this time?
3. We have all been impacted by the failures of friends and leaders. Dallas commented that the failure is not the problem, but where the person had been living all along. What thoughts does this provoke?
4. In the Q&A he keeps coming back to the point that discipleship for transformation requires the commitment of the will.
 - It will not happen if we are passive.
 - We cannot change by having someone simply pray for us.
 - We must be prepared to give up old behaviors and learn new ones.
 - God will not violate our will, although He will encourage us and use circumstances in our lives.

Is this your understanding of how you grow in Christ? Do you have a theology of passivity? Are you hoping someone will pray a magical prayer over you that give you character?

Notes, outline and summary are by Bill Dwyer.