

## Closing Thoughts

*If you've got that picture, I hope I can now say very clearly what it means to have been spiritually formed in Christ, for spiritual formation in Christ transforms your embodied will. It transforms your embodied will so that what comes out of you automatically are the words and deeds of Christ.*

— Dallas Willard

### Suggestions Going Forward

Here are a few suggestions for next steps as you continue with the Spiritual Disciplines:

- It is not the quantity but the quality that matters. Going through the motions is not helpful for the sake of just going through the motions.
- As always, do what you can, not what you can't. Starting small is still starting.
- Focus on the Spiritual Discipline (or Disciplines) that resonated with you most. It is safe to assume that this is prompting from the Holy Spirit.
- Extend rather than add. This goes back to the first point: quality not quantity.
- If none of the Spiritual Disciplines we have covered resonates with you, keep searching or create your own. You have the theoretical background now to be able to do that.

### Support Going Forward

The Spiritual Disciplines can be done individually, with a partner, or in a small group. Even if done individually, you could still have a partner with whom to share experiences.

What can I do to help? Would a weekly Zoom be of value? Perhaps follow-on sessions? I am available on email during the week and happy to answer questions or to bounce ideas.

## Dallas Willard

Who was Dallas Willard? Here are two answers to what is actually a very complex question. These answers are not original with me.

- Dallas Willard (1935–2013) was a prominent American philosopher, theologian, and author, best known for his contributions to the field of Christian Spiritual Formation and Discipleship. His work focused on integrating deep philosophical thought with practical Christian living, particularly emphasizing the teachings of Jesus as a guide to human flourishing and personal transformation. Dallas Willard's work continues to inspire people worldwide, urging them to see faith not as a set of doctrines but as a way of life rooted in love, grace, and transformation.
- Dallas Willard was an American philosopher also known for his writings on Christian Spiritual Formation. Much of his work in philosophy was related to phenomenology, particularly the work of Edmund Husserl, many of whose writings he translated into English for the first time. He was also a longtime Professor of Philosophy at The University of Southern California in Los Angeles, teaching at the school from 1965 until his death in 2013.

In addition to Dallas Willard, I would also like to commend to you the work of Jan Johnson and Todd Hunter. Dallas' work tends to be more foundational, and the works of Jan and Todd add a practical piece that is difficult to discern just by reading and studying Dallas in isolation.

## Resources

- **Dallas Willard**
  - Books:
    - *Hearing God*
    - *The Spirit of the Disciplines*
    - *The Divine Conspiracy* (His Magnum Opus)
    - *Renovation of the Heart*
    - *Knowing Christ Today*
    - *The Great Omission*
  - Web Site:
    - <https://dwillard.org/>
- **Jan Johnson**
  - Books:
    - *Meeting God in Scripture*
    - *When the Soul Listens*

- *Abundant Simplicity*
  - *Invitation to the Jesus Life*
  - *Enjoying the Presence of God*
- Web Site:
  - <https://janjohnson.org/>
- **Todd D. Hunter**
  - Books:
    - *Christianity Beyond Belief*
    - *Giving Church Another Chance: Finding New Meaning in Spiritual Practices*
    - *The Accidental Anglican*
- **Others**
  - Books:
    - M. Robert Mulholland: *Invitation to a Journey*
    - Henri Nouwen: *Spiritual Formation*
    - Ruth Haley Barton: *Sacred Rhythms*
    - Tish Harrison Warren: *Liturgy of the Ordinary*
    - John Mark Comer: *Practicing the Way*
    - John Mark Comer: *The Lectio Bible*
    - Eugene H. Peterson: *Eat This Book*
    - Richard Foster: *Celebration of Discipline*
- **The Daily Office**
  - Book Of Common Prayer (BCP) 2019:
    - <https://bcp2019.anglicanchurch.net/>
  - Anglican House Publishers:
    - <https://anglicanhousepublishers.org/anglican-liturgy-press/>
  - The Daily Office Web Site:
    - <https://stpetersloveland.org/the-daily-office>
  - The Daily Office App:
    - <https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/the-daily-office/id1513851259>
  - The Daily Office Podcast:
    - <https://crossroadsabbey.podbean.com/>
  - ESV Bible App:
    - <https://www.esv.org/>

## Final Words

It is appropriate to close with words from Dallas reflecting on 1 Timothy 4:

*The general description of practices for training ourselves in godliness, that is, for shaping the inner dimensions of life, is spiritual disciplines, or better, disciplines for life in the Spirit. These are training activities that enable us to do what we cannot do without that training, such as controlling our anger, our lusts, or our tongue. Spiritual disciplines are a means of drawing grace into our souls and bodies and transforming our habits (what we are ready to do without thinking) into godly character. They are not righteousness or law, but wisdom.*