

“You are a never-ceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God’s great universe.”

It’s a great quote, but we have to understand the fundamental things before we can live like that.

1. WHAT IS REALITY?

What can I count on? So what is the ultimate reality? God and His kingdom. I can count on this. This is where idolatry makes a mistake about reality. When you get obsessed with the visible, you miss the invisible and it puts you at odds with reality.

Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. Php. 3:19

Christ calls us, *For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. Mat. 16:25*

Temperance is the ability to not do what you want and to do what you don't want.

Shame has gotten a bad name and not all shame is good, but it enables people not to do things that would be harmful to them.

You have to get reality right or you can't get your life right. Most of what makes us up is non-physical. Spirit in God and man is primarily will. The spirit, the heart and the will are the same thing, although the words describe differing aspects.

- Spirit refers to the unconditioned factor in you.
- Heart refers to the centrality of the will.

#1 WHAT IS REALITY?

#2 WHO IS WELL-OFF?

#3 WHO IS A REALLY GOOD PERSON?

#4 HOW DO I BECOME A REALLY GOOD PERSON?

2. WHO IS WELL-OFF?

Who is happy? Who is blessed? It’s okay to ask questions. Good authority is authority that can be questioned and tested. God invites us to test Him and to ask questions.

Anyone who is alive in the kingdom of God is well off. Therefore, you can go ahead and do what is right without worrying what is going to happen. You may not get what you want, but your want is your problem.

Our function now is to train to reign. As an example, Dallas cites Luke 16:1-14 and “The Parable of the Unrighteous Steward.” He points out that the servant is not unrighteous, but making a choice with his will. He is deliberating. He made something good for himself and his master. If he had done nothing, the master would have received nothing.

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v. 9 And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness... v10 He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much, but whoever is unrighteous in a very little is also dishonest in much. v11 Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you?

This is a story about reigning, being responsible and making choices. You can be faithful in little things by understanding that God is here. God is even in the little things. The point of the story is that you are free to make decisions, to use your mind, and to act.

One of the ways that people have messed up Jesus' teaching is to turn him into a legalist. You become so literal with his words that you just take what he said and do that. In Mat. 18 Peter asks if he should forgive his brother 7 times. Jesus says 70x7. Does this mean we are limited to 490 times? No, he's trying to get Peter to think differently about life in the kingdom of God. Training for reigning means coming to exercise judgement.

The vision of what is good, life in the kingdom of God, is the care of God. That's the good life. *Romans 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.* Not everything is good, but in kingdom living God will work all things, even the bad things, for good.

3. WHO IS A REALLY GOOD PERSON?

A really good person is someone who is permeated with agape love. In Mat. 22, a lawyer asks which is the greatest commandment. Jesus is not just giving the right answer to a Bible question, but is telling this man that this is the very best way to live.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 22:38-39 Love is acting for the good of what is love. To love God with all your heart is to have your will devoted to what is good for God.

That kind of person is going to exercise their kingdom for the sake of God.

4. HOW DO YOU BECOME A REALLY GOOD PERSON?

By becoming a disciple of Jesus. This is a process!

As a disciple, we must think of Him as our Teacher, not just the one who died for our sins or the one who is in heaven. If we don't think of him as teacher, we seek out and find other teachers. What does it mean to have him as our teacher? It means we are with him and learning to be like him.

A student comes to know what the teacher knows. A trainee learns to do what the trainer does. How we think about Jesus' role in our lives is critical. In Mat. 22:42 Jesus asked, "What think ye of Christ?" In Mat. 16:15, "Who do you say I am?" How do I think about him? Is he your Teacher?

In Mat. 16 Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ. It was a wonderful revelation, but his idea of Christ was not very well formed because he rebuked Jesus when Jesus said he was going to die. Jesus



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was trying to teach Peter that God's way is through death, not around it. The kingdom of God is beyond death.

You can be inspired of God and still be wrong! Anyone can have a great insight or prophesy. In Nu. 22:21-39 God uses Balaam's donkey to speak to the prophet. Dallas comments that after the donkey was done speaking, he was still a jackass." A brilliant inspiration doesn't necessarily change our character or put us on the right path. Sometimes we wrongly assume that people who have great insights have great character. We cannot settle for have great insights we must continue the pursuit of being a really good person!

QUESTIONS

1. Which of the four questions do you feel is most important and why?
2. It's common to hear that we are three parts: spirit, soul and body. The soul is often defined as the mind, will, and emotions. Our emotions are often linked to our heart. Dallas says that the core or heart of God and man is the will. He says that spirit, will and heart are the same. Dallas always says, "I may be wrong about these things. You don't have to agree with me?" Do you disagree? Can you explain why? Even if you disagree, can you understand the importance of what he is saying?
3. In American culture we often hear people say, "He or she is a good person," even after they have done something terribly wrong. What do we mean when we say someone is a good person? When does a person's sin or failure indicate they are not good?
4. Dallas makes a distinction between people who have receive revelation and people who have developed character. Have you ever been fooled into believing someone had good character because they had great spiritual insights?
5. List three people who have taught you how to live a better life. Is Jesus your teacher? How much time do you spend studying his teachings?

Notes, outline and summary are by Bill Dwyer.

