

Dallas Willard Definitions

Source: <http://www.dwillard.org/>

Abide: Dwelling in or living in, as found in John 8:31-32 and John 15:1-7. But what does it mean "to abide in his word"? It means to put his words into action, to act according to them. When we do that we "inhale" the reality of the kingdom.

Anger: A response towards those who have interfered with us, it includes a will to harm them, or the beginnings thereof.

Apologetics: Answering a question that will open the doorway of faith for another person.

Belief: Readiness to act as if what you believe were true. When your whole being is set to act as if something is so.

The Bible: The unique written Word of God. It is inerrant in its original form and infallible in all of its forms for the purpose of guiding you into a life-saving relationship with God in His kingdom. The Bible contains a body of knowledge without which human beings cannot survive. It reliably fixes the boundaries of everything God will ever say to humankind.

The Body: Our independent power source for action. It is the little "power pack" that God has assigned to us as the field of our freedom and development. The place from which we live.

Celebration: The completion of worship, for it dwells on the greatness of God as shown in His goodness to us.

Character: That internal, overall structure of the self that is revealed by our long-run patterns of behaviour and from which our actions more or less automatically arise. What we will seriously think about is one of the strongest indications of how our character has grown.

Confess: To own up to a condition of your soul.

Consumers of Religious Services: Those who attend church functions regularly without ever engaging in discipleship.

Contempt: To think or speak of someone in such a degrading way that they are dehumanised. It spits on the deep need to belong and is inherently poisonous. It stabs the soul to its core and deflates its powers of life. Contempt can hurt so badly and destroy so deeply that murder would almost be a mercy.

Death to Self: The willingness to trust the Kingdom of God where we are with what we are and what we're doing in a way that will allow that Kingdom to come into play.

Disciple: Someone who has decided to be with another person, under appropriate conditions, in order to become capable of doing what that person does or to become what that person is.

- Disciple (apprentice) of Jesus: Anyone who is learning from him how to lead their life as he would lead their life if he were they.
- Place of discipleship: Where you are
- Discipleship may be loosely described as staying as close to Jesus Christ as possible.

Disciplines: Activities we engage in that are within our power and enable us to do what we cannot do by direct effort, because in this way we meet the action of God (grace) with us, and the outcome is humanly inexplicable. This is what it means to speak of discipline as "a means to grace." They are required in every area of life, including the spiritual.

> **A Spiritual Discipline** – on the Christian understanding—is a discipline focused upon enhancement of the interactive life of Grace in the (spiritual) Kingdom of the Heavens. Examples: Solitude, Fasting, Chastity and Secrecy are disciplines of abstinence; Study, Confession, Submission and Worship are disciplines of engagement.

The Divine Conspiracy: God's plan to overcome evil with good in human history.

Eternal Life: interactive relationship with God and Jesus.

Ethics: A fundamental human device for directing us in how we ought to live. Can point the way to good, but is unable to provide a life that is good.

Evil: Human wrath that is an explosive, unrestrained impulse to hurt or harm. It is the raw intention to harm others. Evil gets worse when combined with "righteousness" (a sense of one's own superiority), which is a deadly combination.

Exile: The normal human condition. Have you noticed we're not in The Garden anymore?

Faith: Confidence grounded in reality. It sees the reality of the unseen or invisible, and it includes a readiness to act as if the good anticipated in hope were already in hand because of the reality of God.

Forgiveness: It's almost like oxygen, it's the grease of life.

Godliness: Adequacy of resources rooted deeply in the reality of God.

Good: What is good for anything is what fulfills its nature.

Grace: God acting in our life to bring about, and to enable us to do, what we cannot do on our own. (2 Tim. 2:1) Grace is for whole life and not just for forgiveness. Grace is not opposed to effort (action)-though it is opposed to earning (attitude). Grace is inextricably bound up with discipline in the life of the disciple or apprentice of Jesus. –"Grace," of course, as an active agency in the psychological and biological reality of the disciple.

Joy: Joy is not pleasure, a mere sensation, but a pervasive and constant sense of wellbeing. Hope in the goodness of God is joy's indispensable support.

Holiness: Otherness or separateness from the ordinary realm of human existence.

Hope: Joyous anticipation of good.

Kingdom of God: The range of God's effective will, where what God wants done is done. It is an everlasting metaphysical reality, the natural home of the soul: God and His reign "from everlasting to everlasting."

Kingdom Living: Living in the character and power of God, living from the resources of the Kingdom. Includes accepting the fact that we don't have to have our way.

Knowledge: The act (or capacity) of representing (thinking about, talking about, dealing with) a corresponding subject matter as it is, on an appropriate basis of thought and experience, including good "authority." Knowledge, biblically, is interactive relationship with what is known.

Law: The course of rightness, but not the source of rightness.

Life: Self-directing, self-initiating, self-sustained activity, of some kind and some degree.
Spiritual Life: A kind of an activity independent of the physical.

Love: The will for the good of others. This is not delight. You don't like everything you love. Love is the foundation of the spiritual life

Marriage: To give oneself to another person in the most intimate and inclusive of human relationships, to support him or her for good in every way possible – physically, emotionally, and spiritually; but in every conceivable dimension of his or her being. Mutual submission to each other in awe of the Lord. Marriage is a particular kind of union of body, soul and spirit under God, not just whatever we say it is. The various alternatives being discussed must meet this challenge.

Mind: Where our thoughts and feelings originate.

Morality: A shared (public) understanding, with associated emotional postures, concerning which types of persons are to be (or not be) admired, approved, imitated, encouraged and supported, without regard to whether they prosper or are able to accomplish what they desire.

Peace: The rest of will that results from assurance about how things will turn out.

Profess: To put forth an understanding of something.

The Range of God's Effective Will: Where what God wants done is done.

Regeneration: Entry of God's nature and life into our real existence and identity.

Reason: the mental power to trace out connections in reality. It indicates the human destiny appointed by God.
- The reasonable person is the one who is devoted to truth, and to finding it and living in it by all available means.

Repent: to change the way you've been thinking and acting

Sanctification: Living in a relationship to the Master that brings and sustains right thoughts, feelings, choices, and habits, enabling one to do what is right religiously, morally, and prudentially, and to do this out of who one has become rather than from external obedience.

Salvation: Participating now in what Jesus is doing on earth. A life, not an event.

Self-Confidence comes from relentlessly adhering to what you know to be good and right. (Allowing others to do whatever dance it is they're going to do around you.)

Self-Control: You are able to do what you intend to do.

Significance: We were built to count, as water is made to run downhill. We are placed in a specific context to count in ways no one else does. That is our destiny.

Sin: When we inwardly say "yes" to the temptation, when we would do the deed, even if we do not actually do it.

Social: Aspect of the human self that requires rootedness in others – people and God

Soul: Encompasses and "organizes" the whole person, interrelates all other dimensions of the self so that they form one person.

Spirit: Unbodily personal power

Spiritual Formation (without regard to any specifically religious context or tradition): The process by which the human spirit or will is given a definite "form" or character.

> **Spiritual Formation in Christ:** The process by which we become like Christ in our inner being, and its result is love of God with all of the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and of the neighbour as oneself.

Ten Commandments: God's gift of specific information on how best to conduct human existence.

Truth: A thought or statement is true provided that what it is about is as it is represented in the thought or statement.

> **Absolute Truth:** All truth is absolute truth. If you believe you have gas in your gas tank, it's either absolutely true or absolutely false.

Vampire Christians: Those who just want a little of Christ's blood.

Virtue: The combination of skill, wisdom, power and steadfastness for good.

Will (or human spirit, heart): Part of the individual that originates things and events (freedom and creativity)

Work: A fundamental structure of love in the Kingdom of God.

Worship: The overall character of the renovated thought life and the only safe place for a human being to stand.

CONCEPTS

Stages of Apprenticeship in Jesus

Confidence in and reliance upon Jesus as the "Son of Man."

Desire to be his apprentice in living in and from the kingdom of God.

Obedience to what Jesus said and did.

Pervasive inner transformation of the will/spirit/heart and soul.

Power to work the works of the kingdom.

The Difference Between Belief and Knowledge

A. What Knowledge Is: The act (or capacity) of representing (thinking about, talking about, dealing with) a corresponding subject matter as it is, on an appropriate basis of thought and experience, including good "authority." It includes truth and openness of method. LOOK AT THE COMMON CASES IN LIFE.

B. You believe something, by contrast, if you are (to some degree) inclined to act as if it were so. Neither truth nor evidence required. We often "pick up" beliefs, like lint or viruses, from our surroundings.

C. Knowledge alone provides the right and responsibility to act, direct action, formulate policy and supervise its implementation, and to teach. Knowledge is:

Common—not rare or esoteric.

Not dogmatic, nor necessarily certain—You don't have to know that you know in order to know. Sometimes we do know that we or others know, and sometimes not.

Does not exclude love or grace. We often know by the assistance of grace, and love helps us know what we love.

D. The biblical picture of the life of faith is belief envired in knowledge.

"The Disappearance of Moral Knowledge" refers to the current condition in our society in which the institutions of education do not "officially" present a body of truths about good and bad, right and wrong, as knowledge, rationally developed and critiqued.

The Three Dimensions of Discipleship.

1. Obedience to his commands.
2. Doing what he wants in all areas of life not commanded.
3. Learning to act in his power.

Faith, Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace - the "magnificent five" - are inseparable from one another and reciprocally support each other. Try to imagine any one without the others!

The Function of Fasting is to teach you how to be sweet and kind when you don't get what you want.

The Four Great Questions of Life.

1. What is Reality?
2. Who is well-off? What is Blessedness? The Good Life?
3. Who is a really good person?
4. How does one become a really good person?

God's Intent for Each of Us is that we should become the kind of person whom he can empower to do whatever we want.

The Gospel of Jesus is that life in the Kingdom is available to us now. We can experience the Kingdom and live in it by placing our confidence in Jesus for everything, and by being His constant students precisely because we have confidence in Him.

Grace is not opposed to effort. It is opposed to earning.

While Spirit-driven, we are not passive. If we do not take appropriate action, it will not happen. Hence, all the commands of the New Testament on what we are to do, e.g. Colossians 3:1-17.

Manifestations of Divine Power: you will see accomplished by your words and actions what cannot possibly be explained by your efforts and talents.

Morally Good Person: One who is intent upon promoting human goods (including good humans) that are effectively within one's reach, in their relative degrees of importance.

- Morally evil person: One intent upon destroying human goods.

Spiritual Life: life that is intermingled with and dependent upon God's action "with us."

- "Flesh" is the kind of activity that does not immediately depend upon God's action.

- "The World" is the order of social and natural existence of which every human being is a part. It is socially organized flesh.

Spiritual Person: a person who is leading a life that is largely intermingled with and dependent upon the action of God and his kingdom.

- The non-spiritual person is one who is leading a life independent of God's action with them.

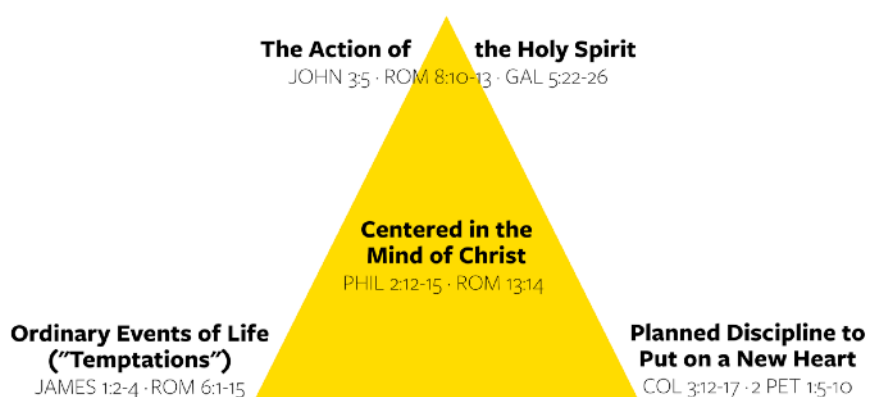
The Mark of the Spirit in an Activity is always the incommensurability of the result to the effort.

Spiritual Transformation only happens as each essential dimension of the human being is transformed into Christlikeness under the direction of a regenerate will interacting with constant overtures of grace from God in many forms. Such transformation is not the result of mere human effort and cannot be accomplished by putting pressure on the will (will power) alone.

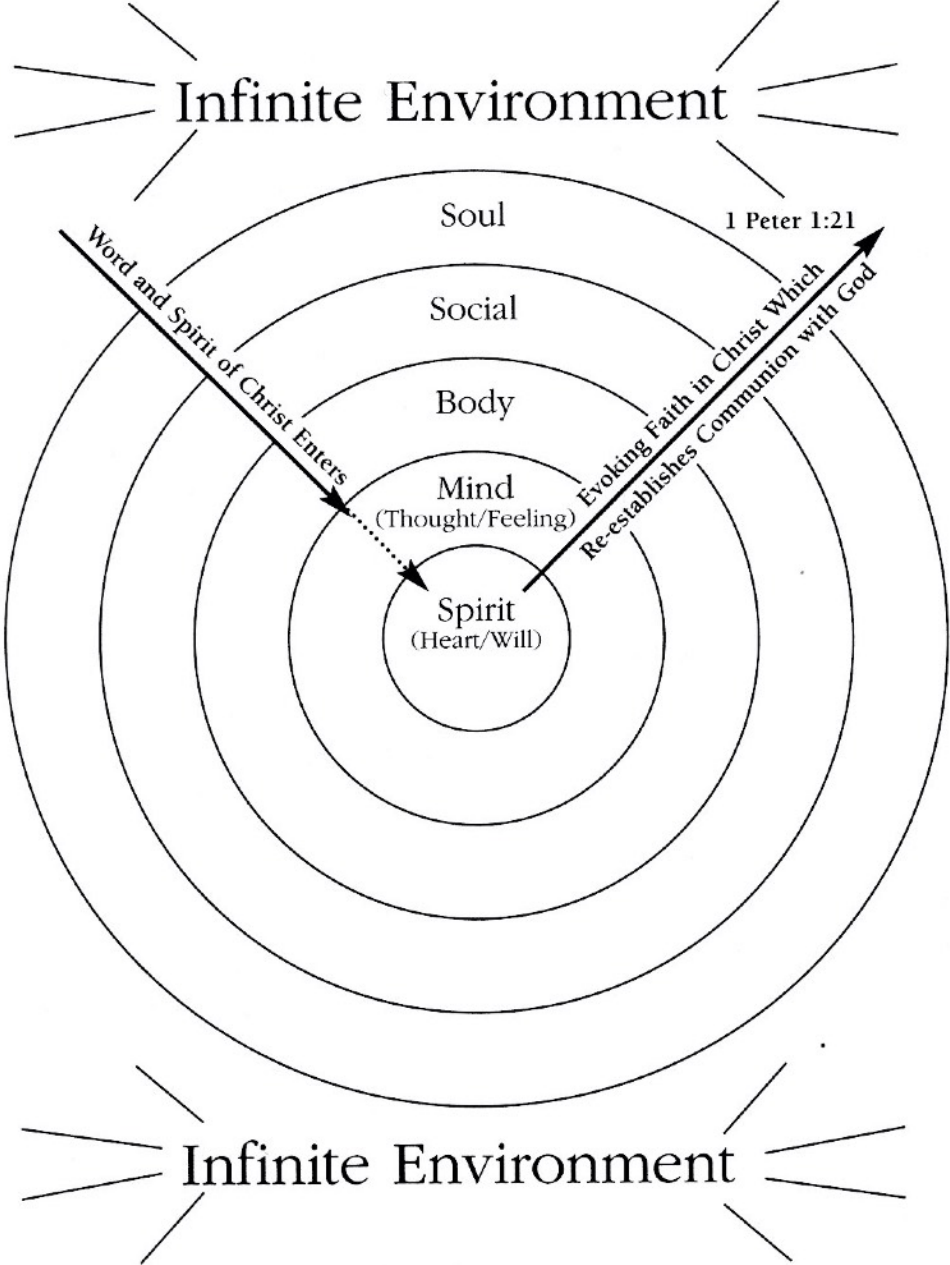
Who You Are and Why You Are Here: You are an unceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's great universe.

The **Will Transformed into Christlikeness** will exhibit single-minded and joyous devotion to God and His will and to service to others because of Him.

The Golden Triangle of Spiritual Growth



The Whole Person



Where action comes from

