

Study Guide  
For

RENOVATION  
OF THE HEART  
IN DAILY PRACTICE

 *Liebenzell*  
*Retreat Ministries*  
*Bringing Hearts To God*

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*“ I drift into a peacetime mind-set as certainly as rain falls down and flames go up. I am wired by nature to love the same toys that the world loves. I start to fit in. I start to love what others love. I start to call earth “home”. Before you know it, I am calling luxuries “needs” and using my money just the way unbelievers do. I begin to forget the war. I don’t think much about people perishing. Missions and unreached peoples drop out of my mind. I stop dreaming about the triumphs of grace. I sink into a secular mindset that looks first at what man can do, not what God can do. It’s a terrible sickness, and I thank God for those who have forced me again and again towards a wartime mind-set.”*

John Piper “Don’t waste you life”

# **INTRODUCTORY SESSION**

Please read the following as a group:

The objective of this study is not for you to gain more information, but to provide a vehicle by which the Holy Spirit can cause genuine deep transformation within your heart. All too often we settle for a pseudo-transformation that comes by us trying to do what is right. This does not work and often results in us being inoculated against the kind of transformation the Bible really calls for. While we keep on trying we fail again and again. We fail to realize that it is not trying we need, but training. We must also remember that this transformation is something the Holy Spirit produces in us; it is not something that we can manufacture ourselves. But without doing our part and intentionally partnering with the Holy Spirit, the results will be the mediocrity that permeates even our evangelical churches throughout America. That is what this study is all about – being deliberate in partnering with the Holy Spirit to produce transformed believers who are genuinely winsome in character and who cannot help but share God’s love and grace to the people they meet everyday.

The book we will be using, *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*, is not a book that you just read to conquer and cross off your to-do list. You must interact with it, underline, make notes in the margin, and meditate on its content. It is a book that you need to revisit again and again in order to reinforce the principles it purports. If you keep on opening your heart to God and inviting Him into this process, you will be amazed by the results.

## **How to do this study**

1. First of all, we ask you to do the daily readings as part of your quiet time with God. The book is a devotional and lends itself well to this purpose. We suggest you use a format similar to this:

Sample quiet time:

- Open with prayer. Ask God to speak to you, to give you an understanding of the material and to help you be willing to allow him to do His transforming work within you.
- Read one chapter of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
- Read the assigned Bible verses and take a few minutes to meditate on them.
- Do the assignments at the end of the chapter.
- Pray - just share with God what is on your mind and how the things you have covered spoke to you. Pray for others that come to mind or you have on your prayer list.

This should take about 15-20 minutes. Don’t rush through it. You are not doing this to conquer it or to be able to check off your to-do list. You do it to interact with God.

2. Secondly be prepared to share in your small group how God has used this material in your life this week.

Each session consists of group discussion time and questions to help you and your group wrestle with the material you've covered during the week. You do not need to answer or read any of this material prior to your meeting. This is for your time together only.

Paul Petit, director of the spiritual formation program at Dallas Theological Seminary says:

*Spiritual growth is best nurtured and promoted in small groups. In fact, I believe this is the missing ingredient in the evangelical church...*

*Also, we are inherently relational because we are made in the image of a relational God. Thus the rugged individualism and "lone-ranger Christianity" so prevalent in America is opposed to God's intention. A man, alone with God, would seem to be the pinnacle of spirituality in our culture, but God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Gen. 2:18). Authentic community is God's intention for humanity...*

*James White points out that "A...myth [about our spiritual life] is that a personal relationship with God through Christ is a private relationship with God through Christ. The truth, however, is that becoming a truly spiritual person is a team sport."*

So come prepared to your small group meeting by doing number one above during the week (do not try to cram it all together the night before. This will defeat the purpose!!!), and ready to interact with your fellow believers during your time together. If you do so, I believe, this study will profoundly impact your life.

## **Group Discussion Time**

*"Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ"*  
Dietrich Bonhoeffer

1. What do you think Bonhoeffer means by this quote?

Notes/Comments

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Scripture often compares our spiritual life to that of an athlete or a soldier (Read 1 Cor. 9: 24-26). You probably realize that if you were asked to compete in a marathon right now, you would not be successful. Most of us are not in the kind of shape it takes to run a marathon – even if we tried really hard. Trying can only take us so far. To successfully run a marathon “*you would have to enter into a life of training. You must arrange your life around certain practices that will enable you to do what you cannot do now by willpower alone. When it comes to running a marathon you must train, not merely try. This need for training is not confined only to athletics. Training is required for people who want to play a musical instrument or learn a new language or run a business. Indeed, it is required for any significant challenge in life – including spiritual growth ...* **Spiritual transformation is not a matter of trying harder, but of training wisely.** This is what the apostle Paul means when he encourages his young protégé Timothy to “train your self for godliness.””

2. What do you think about the above?

Notes/Comments

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This study is intended to help you train wisely and effectively for godliness. If we do so, genuine transformation of the inner man will occur. Rivers of living water will flow forth from our mouth. We must remember, however, that this transformation is something only the Holy Spirit can do. Our responsibility is to partner with him by opening ourselves to Him, being teachable and moldable and being much more intentional in doing the practices that will train us for godliness.

3. What are some of these practices?

Notes/Comments

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4. How do we know if we are being successful, and what are the inherent dangers of this process?

Notes/Comments

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5. Give an example of the above

Notes/Comments

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*People nowadays take time far more seriously than eternity.*

Thomas Kelly

In *The Life You've Always Wanted* John Ortberg tells the following convicting story from his life:

*Not long after moving to Chicago, I called a wise friend to ask for some spiritual direction. I described the pace at which things tend to move in my current setting. I told him about the rhythms of our family life and about the present condition of my heart, as best I could discern it. What did I need to do, I asked him, to be spiritually healthy? Long pause. "You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life," he said at last. Another long pause. "Okay, I've written that one down," I told him, a little impatiently. "That's a good one. Now what else is there?" I had many things to do, and this was a long-distance conversation, so I was anxious to cram as many units of spiritual wisdom into the least amount of time possible. Another long pause. "There is nothing else," he said. He is the wisest spiritual mentor I have known. And while he doesn't know every detail about every grain of sin in my life, he knows quite a bit. And from an immense quiver of spiritual sagacity, he drew only one arrow. "There is nothing else," he said. You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life."*

6. What is your reaction to the above story? Can you identify with this story?

Notes/Comments

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Ortberg goes on to say, *Hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day. Hurry can destroy our souls. Hurry can keep us from living well. As Carl Jung wrote, "Hurry is not of the devil; hurry is the devil."...Hurry will keep us consumed by "the cares and riches and pleasures of life," as Jesus put it, and prevent his way from taking root in our hearts.*

7. What are some ways we can eliminate hurry from our lives, but still keep time for the important eternal issues i.e. our training for godliness?

Notes/Comments

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According to Ortberg, *the truth is, as much as we complain about it, we are drawn to hurry. It makes us feel important. It keeps the adrenaline pumping. It means we don't have to look too closely at the heart or life. It keeps us from feeling our loneliness.*

8. What can you do to ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life? Meditate on this question during the week, evaluating each day in terms of how you use your time. Then put together a detailed plan on how to eliminate hurry from your life and share it with your group next week. Ask the group to keep you accountable to implement your plan.

Notes/Comments

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**Remember, to experience true transformation and then stay spiritually healthy, we must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from our lives!**



# Quiet Times

# SESSION 1

## INTRODUCING SPIRITUAL FORMATION Chapters 1 - 5

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 1 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the scripture verses mentioned in today's readings

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 2 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read 2 Pet 1:5-11

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 3 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read John 13:34-35

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 4 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the scripture verses mentioned in today's readings

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 5 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the scripture verses mentioned in today's readings

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6:**
- In your quiet time review the things you highlighted in the first 5 chapters of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Reread any notes you made in the study guide above.
  - Reflect on and write down the main issues/points that God revealed to you during your quiet time this week.
  - Meditate on the main Scripture verses

Notes/Comments

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- Day 7:**
- In your quiet time pick out one thing that you covered this week that you want to remember or continue practicing as you go forward.

Notes/Comments

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## SESSION 2

### **THE HEART IN THE SYSTEM OF HUMAN LIFE** **Chapters 6 - 9**

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 6 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 7 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 8 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 9 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5:**
- In your quiet time review the things you highlighted in chapters 6-9 of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Reread any notes you made in the study guide above.
  - Reflect on and write down the main issues/points that God revealed to you during your quiet time this week.
  - Meditate on the main Scripture verses

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6:**
- In your quiet time pick out one thing that you covered this week that you want to remember or continue practicing as you go forward.

Notes/Comments

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- Day 7:**
- In your quiet time go back to day 7 in lesson 1 and review that main thought/idea/practice in light of what you have covered this week and in particular day 6 above.

Notes/Comments

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# SESSION 3

## **RADICAL EVIL IN THE RUINED SOUL Chapters 10 - 13**

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 10 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 11 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 12 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 13 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5:**
- In your quiet time review the things you highlighted in chapters 10-13 of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Reread any notes you made in the study guide above.
  - Reflect on and write down the main issues/points that God revealed to you during your quiet time this week.
  - Meditate on the main Scripture verses

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6 & 7:**
- In your quiet time go back and review the main thoughts/ideas/practices from previous sessions in light of what you covered this week and in particular day 5 above. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and how He is trying to speak to you.

Notes/Comments

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# SESSION 4

## **RADICAL GOODNESS RESTORED TO THE SOUL** **Chapters 14-16**

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 14 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 15 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 16 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- Read Luke 18:18-23 & Matthew 10: 37-39
  - Meditate on these verses as you ask God to open your heart and your mind as to their true meaning
  - In what way are these verses relevant to you?

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5**
- In your quiet time review the things you highlighted in chapters 14-16 of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Reread any notes you made in the study guide above.
  - Reflect on and write down the main issues/points that God revealed to you during your quiet time this week.
  - Meditate on the main Scripture verses

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6 & 7:**
- In your quiet time go back and review the main thoughts/ideas/practices from previous sessions in light of what you covered this week and in particular day 5 above. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and how He is trying to speak to you.

Notes/Comments

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# SESSION 5

## SPIRITUAL CHANGE Chapters 17 - 20

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 17 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 18 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 19 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on Matthew 6:25-34

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 20 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on 2 Timothy 2:3-5 and Mark 10:42-45

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5**
- In your quiet time review the things you highlighted in chapters 17-20 of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Reread any notes you made in the study guide above.
  - Reflect on and write down the main issue/point/practice that God revealed to you during your quiet time this week.
  - Meditate on the main Scripture verses

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6 & 7:**
- In your quiet time go back and review the main thoughts/ideas/practices from previous sessions in light of what you covered this week and in particular day 5 above. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and how He is trying to speak to you.

Notes/Comments

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# SESSION 6

## TRANSFORMING THE MIND: SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND THE THOUGHT LIFE

### Chapters 21 - 26

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 21 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 22 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 23 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 24 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 25 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 26 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 7:**
- In your quiet time pick out one thing that you covered this week that you want to remember or continue practicing as you go forward.

Notes/Comments

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**THIS CHAPTER GIVES SOME GREAT ADVICE ON HOW TO READ SCRIPTURE  
– PLEASE TRY TO INCORPORATE THIS INTO YOUR DAILY QUIET TIMES!**

# SESSION 7

## **TRANSFORMING THE MIND 2: SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND OUR FEELINGS** **Chapters 27-32**

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 27 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 28 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 29 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 30 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 31 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 32 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 7:**
- In your quiet time pick out one thing that you covered this week that you want to remember or continue practicing as you go forward.

Notes/Comments

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## **SESSION 8**

# TRANSFORMING THE WILL (HEART OR SPIRIT) AND CHARACTER

## Chapters 33 - 36

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 33 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 34 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 35 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 36 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the following Scriptures: 1 Tim 4:7b; 1 Cor. 9:24-27;

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5**
- In your quiet time review the things you highlighted in chapters 33-36 of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Reread any notes you made in the study guide above.



- Reflect on and write down the main issue/point/practice that God revealed to you during your quiet time this week.
- Meditate on the main Scripture verses

Notes/Comments

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**Day 6 & 7:** - In your quiet time go back and review the main thoughts/ideas/practices from previous sessions in light of what you covered this week and in particular day 5 above. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and how He is trying to speak to you.

Notes/Comments

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**REMINDER:** A good book on the Spiritual Disciplines is Richard Foster's classic *Celebration of Disciplines*

## **SESSION 9**

# TRANSFORMING THE BODY

## Chapters 37-41

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 37 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 38 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 39 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 40 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 41 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6**
- In your quiet time review the things you highlighted in chapters 37-41 of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Reread any notes you made in the study guide above.
  - Reflect on and write down the main issue/point/practice that God revealed to you during your quiet time this week.
  - Meditate on the main Scripture verses

Notes/Comments

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- Day 7:**
- In your quiet time go back and review the main thoughts/ideas/practices from previous sessions in light of what you covered this week and in particular day 6 above. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and how He is trying to speak to you.

Notes/Comments

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## **SESSION 10**

**TRANSFORMING OUR SOCIAL DIMENSION**  
**Chapters 42 - 46**

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 42 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 43 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 44 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the following Scriptures: Mat. 5:44; Col. 3:12-14

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 45 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 46 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6**
- In your quiet time review the things you highlighted in chapters 42-46 of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Reread any notes you made in the study guide above.
  - Reflect on and write down the main issue/point/practice that God revealed to you during your quiet time this week.
  - Meditate on the main Scripture verses

Notes/Comments

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- Day 7:**
- In your quiet time go back and review the main thoughts/ideas/practices from previous sessions in light of what you covered this week and in particular day 6 above. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and how He is trying to speak to you.

Notes/Comments

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## **SESSION 11**

# TRANSFORMING THE SOUL

## Chapters 47 - 51

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 47 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 48 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 49 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 50 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 51 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.

- Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6**
- In your quiet time review the things you highlighted in chapters 47-51 of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Reread any notes you made in the study guide above.
  - Reflect on and write down the main issue/point/practice that God revealed to you during your quiet time this week.
  - Meditate on the main Scripture verses

Notes/Comments

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- Day 7:**
- In your quiet time go back and review the main thoughts/ideas/practices from previous sessions in light of what you covered this week and in particular day 6 above. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and how He is trying to speak to you.

Notes/Comments

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# SESSION 12

## THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT AND THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD Chapters 52 - 56

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 52 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 53 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 54 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 55 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the following Scriptures: Matthew 5:38-48

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 56 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6**
- In your quiet time review the things you highlighted in chapters 52-56 of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Reread any notes you made in the study guide above.
  - Reflect on and write down the main issue/point/practice that God revealed to you during your quiet time this week.
  - Meditate on the main Scripture verses

Notes/Comments

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- Day 7:**
- In your quiet time go back and review the main thoughts/ideas/practices from previous sessions in light of what you covered this week and in particular day 6 above. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and how He is trying to speak to you.

Notes/Comments

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# SESSION 13

## SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN THE LOCAL CONGREGATION Chapters 57 - 61

Do as part of your quiet time during the week prior to your next group meeting:

- Day 1:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 57 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading. Also, meditate on Matthew 28:18-20

Notes/Comments

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- Day 2:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 58 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 3:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 59 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 4:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 60 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 5:**
- In your quiet time do chapter 61 in *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Read and meditate on the Scripture verses mentioned in today's reading

Notes/Comments

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- Day 6**
- In your quiet time review the things you highlighted in chapters 57-61 of *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*.
  - Reread any notes you made in the study guide above.
  - Reflect on and write down the main issue/point/practice that God revealed to you during your quiet time this week.
  - Meditate on the main Scripture verses

Notes/Comments

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- Day 7:**
- In your quiet time go back and review the main thoughts/ideas/practices from previous sessions in light of what you covered this week and in particular day 6 above. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and how He is trying to speak to you.

Notes/Comments

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# Group Discussion Times

# SESSION 1

## **CHAPTER 1:**

1. Read the second paragraph on page 9 and have your group discuss & elaborate on if this transformation really is possible. I.e. do we really believe Scripture?
2. Read slowly the phrases describing the kingdom life and personality on page 10 and 11 (Today's Experiment). In light of this, discuss what Jesus means in the Lord's prayer when he says, Your kingdom come. Your will be done. (Matthew 6)?
3. What does the above reveal to us about our own spiritual maturity and transformation?
4. How is the transformed person described in chapter 1?
5. Why do we see so few people like this in our churches?

## **CHAPTER 2:**

1. Dallas Willard says that it isn't true that where there is a will there is a way. What does he mean by this?

## **CHAPTER 3:**

1. How does the book in chapter 3 describe spiritual formation?
2. What is an essential outcome of Christian spiritual formation?
3. Read and discuss the second paragraph on page 16.
4. Who causes the transformation of my heart?

## **CHAPTER 4:**

1. Chapter 4 opens with the statement, "The external manifestation of Christlikeness is not the focus of Christian spiritual formation." Discuss what is meant by this.
2. On the middle of page 19 the authors make a thought provoking comment: "Consider the disastrous results of trying to be good." What do they mean by this?
3. How do I "become good" on the inside?
4. The third sentence of the last paragraph on page 19 begins with "If you wish..." In John 5:6 Jesus asks the invalid by the pool of Bethesda, "Do you want to get well?" Discuss in your group the possibility that deep down we are really not that interested in genuine deep ongoing transformation; and that we perhaps are content with a rather lukewarm form of Christianity

## **CHAPTER 5:**

1. Read the first paragraph in this chapter out loud, and discuss what it means. The author states that "It is very hard to keep this straight. Failure to do so is a primary cause of failure to grow spiritually." Make sure you as a group clearly understands this concept.
2. Paragraph 2 on 22: "Love is patient and kind (1 Cor. 13:4) [but] we mistakenly try to *be* loving by *acting* patiently and kindly – and quickly fail." We sincerely believe we are doing right, but if this is so, what is missing in our inner self? What must one do to correct this deficiency?
3. Ask the group to share experiences from doing Today's Experiment (see pp 22-23)

## SUMMARY

### Chapters 1-5

*Watch over your heart with all diligence,  
for from it flows the springs of life.*

*Proverbs 4:23*

We live from our heart. The part of us that drives and organizes our life is not the physical. This remains true even if we deny it. You have a spirit within you and it has been formed. It has taken on a specific character. This is true of everyone.

The human spirit is an inescapable, fundamental aspect of every human being; and it takes on whichever character it has from the experiences and the choices that we have lived through or made in the past. That is what it means to be “formed”.

Problems very largely follow upon human choices, our own or those of others. And whether or not they do in a particular case, the situations in which we find ourselves are never as important as our responses to them, which come from our “spiritual” side. A carefully cultivated heart will, assisted by the grace of God, foresee, forestall, or transform most of the painful situations before which others stand like helpless children saying “why?”

Accordingly, the greatest need you and I have – the greatest need of collective humanity – *is renovation of our heart*. That spiritual place within us from which outlook, choices, and actions come has been formed by a world away from God. Now it must be transformed

This revolution of Jesus is... a revolution of the human heart or spirit. His is a revolution of *character*, which proceeds by changing people from the inside through ongoing personal relationship to God in Christ and to one another. It is one that changes ideas, beliefs, feelings, and habits of choice, as well as bodily tendencies and social relations.

Spiritual formation for the Christian basically refers to the Spirit-driven process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it becomes like the inner being of Christ himself.

The Spirit of God calls his people to live from an adequate basis for character transformation, resulting in obedience to and abundance in Christ. If we as Christ’s people genuinely enter Christ’s way of the heart, individuals will find a sure path toward becoming the persons they were meant to be: thoroughly good and godly persons yet purged of arrogance, insensitivity and self-sufficiency.<sup>1</sup>

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

[Scripture followed by page(#) In “Daily Practice”]  
[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Quiet Time Sheets]

John 4:14 (9)	1 Corinthians 13:4-5 (16,21)	Philippians 1:6 (19)
John 7:38 (9)	Matthew 5-7; 5:20 (18)	Colossians 1:27,NIV (19)
Ephesians 3:19-20 (9)	Galatians 4:19 (18)	1 Corinthians 13:7-8 (21)
1 Peter 1:8, 22 (9)	2 Corinthians 3:6 (18)	John 4:14 (22)
1 Peter 2:1,15; 5:7 (9)	1 John 5:3 (19)	Matthew 28:18,20,PAR (22)
Amos 5:24 (15, 17)	Matthew 11:28-30 (19)	2 Peter 1:5-11(*)
John 13:34-35;14:21 (15,*)	Matthew 23:26 (19)	
Luke 6:45 (16)	Luke 6:43 (19)	

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<sup>1</sup>Dallas Willard; “Renovation of the Heart” , Chapter 1

## **SESSION 2**

### **CHAPTER 6:**

1. Elaborate on the relationship between the heart, spirit, and will.
2. According to Dallas, what are the six basic aspects of individual human beings? Which of these is the “executive center” of a human life?
3. Which of the 6 basic aspects is evident, absent, or distorted in your life?

### **CHAPTER 7:**

1. What is the function of the will according to chapter 7? What may this look like?
2. Discuss how feelings and thoughts (2 of the 6 basic aspects of individual human beings) are related. How do these relate to the will? Give examples. We will revisit this concept in much more detail later.
3. When does a thought become a sin?

### **CHAPTER 8:**

1. In your life describe Jesus’ statement in Matthew 26:41 “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”
2. How do I train/discipline my heart and mind to “live in the Spirit of God”?

### **CHAPTER 9:**

1. The body as well as the other aspects of the individual can be reformed to become our ally in Christlikeness. How?
2. Read Philippians 3:10-11. What does Paul mean and how does this apply to you?
3. What actions must I take to be in “hot pursuit of Jesus Christ”?
4. In the second paragraph on page 33 the author says, “It’s quite startling to begin to believe that transformation into Christlikeness is really possible.” What does he mean by this statement?
5. Do you believe transformation can happen? Elaborate/Discuss.
6. Ask for volunteers to share how God has used this study in their lives since last time you met.

## SUMMARY

### Chapters 6-9

*A certain expert stood up to check [Jesus] out, saying: "Teacher, what shall I do to receive eternal life?" Jesus responded, "What does the law say? How do you read it?"*

*And he answered: "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."*

*And Jesus said, 'Well, there you have your answer. Do that and you will live.'*

Luke 10:25 (PAR)

Understanding is the basis of care. What you would take care of you must first understand, whether it be a petunia or a nation. If you would care for your spiritual core – your heart or will – you must understand it. That is, you must understand your spirit.

If you would form your heart in godliness or assist others in that process, you must understand what the heart is and what it does, and especially its place in the overall system of human life.

This is not an easy task under any circumstances. But it is made triply difficult by the fact that the nature of the person is today, a battlefield of conflicting academic, scientific, artistic religious, legal, and political viewpoints.

We must understand that in today's "Western culture" the "academic" is never "merely." It is the academic that today governs the idea systems of our world and opposes traditional views of human nature – specifically, the Judeo-Christian or biblical understanding of human life.

This current state of affairs may prevent otherwise thoughtful people from seeing the value of what has traditionally been regarded as the best of "common sense" about life and what has been preserved in the wisdom traditions of most cultures – especially in two of the greatest world sources of wisdom about human self, the Judeo-Christian and the Greek, the biblical and the classical.

When we set aside contemporary prejudices and carefully examine these two great sources, I believe it will become clear that "heart", "spirit" and "will" (or their equivalents) are words that refer to one and the same thing, the same fundamental component of the person. But they do so under different aspects. "Will" refers to that component's power to initiate, to create, to bring about what did not exist before. "Spirit" refers to its fundamental nature as distinct and independent from physical reality. And "heart" refers to its position in the human being, as the center or core to which every other component of the self owes its proper functioning.<sup>2</sup>

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

[Scripture followed by page (#) "In Daily Practice"]

[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Quiet Time Sheets]

Psalms 16:7-9 (24,26)

Psalms 86:11 (25)

Psalms 42:5 (26)

Psalms 42:5 (26)

Romans 11:33-36 (29)

Romans 7:23 (30)

Matthew 26:41 (30)

Romans 8:5-7 (30-31)

Psalms 63:8 (32)

Philippians 3:10,11 (32)

2 Corinthians 9:8 (32)

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<sup>22</sup>Dallas Willard; "Renovation of the Heart" pp.27-29



## **SESSION 3**

### **CHAPTER 10:**

1. Was this chapter convicting to you in any way? Explain
2. What do you think about the author's description of the group dynamics of any group that the rare person who exemplifies the second list on page 34 is part of?
3. One often used quote when talking about the human condition is: "We are not sinners because we sin; we sin because we are sinners." What does this mean?
4. The author says that it is critical that we understand that Jeremiah 17:9 is a description of us, you and me. What do you feel about this?
5. Describe how and why you fear God?
6. Ask for volunteers to share the result of the "*Today's Experiment*" for this chapter.

### **CHAPTER 11:**

1. How is the biblical view of knowledge different from the modern western concept of knowledge?
2. What are your thoughts on the statement "God being God offends human pride"?
3. My drive for self-gratification opens up to a life where I can do whatever I want and get away with it. How does this make me god instead of allowing God to be God?
4. How does Dallas define "the radical evil of the human heart"?
5. Share with the group how this chapter spoke to you this week.

### **CHAPTER 12:**

1. As a group discuss what the following statement means: "Wanting God to be God is very different from wanting God to help us." Do you have any personal examples that would shed light on this truth?
2. In order for this study to have the intended effect on our lives it is important that we do the daily experiments listed at the end of each chapter. Share with the group your experience with doing "Today's Experiment."

### **CHAPTER 13:**

1. What does the author mean by "this transformation is not a project of life enhancement"?
2. Read the second to last paragraph on page 43. Discuss what this means "Becoming a 'better Christian' doesn't mean becoming a nicer version of ourselves or getting involved in the local church." What does the author mean by this statement?
3. Define your development of a "different kind of life?"

## SUMMARY

### Chapters 10-13

*The Lord looks down from heaven on humankind to see if there are any who are wise, who seek after God. They have all gone astray, they are all alike perverse; there is no one who does good, no, not one.*

Psalm 14:2-3 (PAR)

We must see the soul and the person in its ruined condition, with its malformed and dysfunctional mind, feelings, body, and social relations, before we can understand that it must be delivered and reformed and how that can be done. One of the greatest obstacles to effective spiritual formation in Christ today is simple failure to understand and acknowledge the reality of the human situation as it affects Christians and non-Christians alike. We must start from where we really are.

You have had a spiritual formation and I have had one, and it is still ongoing. It is like education: everyone gets one – a good or a bad one. We reemphasize that those are fortunate or blessed who are able to find or are given a path of life that forms their spirit and inner world in a way that is good.

Strangely, it is precisely the intrinsic greatness of the person that makes it in its ruined condition “a horror and a corruption such as you now meet . . . only in a nightmare.” If we were insignificant, our ruin would not be horrifying. G. K. Chesterton somewhere says that the hardest thing to accept in the Christian religion is the great value it places upon the individual soul. Still older Christian writers used to say that God has hidden the majesty of the human soul from us to prevent our being ruined by vanity.

This explains why even in its ruined condition a human being is regarded by God as something immensely worth saving. Sin does not make it worthless, but only lost. And in its lostness it is still capable of great strength, dignity, and heartbreaking beauty and goodness – enough so to hide from the unenlightened, or those who do not wish to understand, the horror it has become and is becoming.<sup>3</sup>

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

[Scripture followed by page(#) In “Daily Practice”]

[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Quiet Time Sheets]

Romans 3:10-18; 17:9 (35)

Proverbs 9:10 (37)

John 17:3 (37)

Exodus 20:2-3, KJV (37, 38)

Romans 1:26-28 (37, 38)

Matthew 8: 11-12 (41)

Matthew 8:8 (41)

2 Corinthians 5:17 (43)

Isaiah 6:1-8 (44)

John 1:4, NIV (44)

Psalm 103:14 (44)

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<sup>3</sup> Dallas Willard; “Renovation of the Heart”, pp. 45, 46

## **SESSION 4**

### **CHAPTER 14:**

1. Read the first paragraph on page 46. Discuss what is meant by the last sentence in this chapter.
2. What is the author trying to tell us about looking out for ourselves and self-promotion?
  1. Explain Matthew 10:39.
  2. How does the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm relate to Matthew 10:37-41

### **CHAPTER 15:**

1. How do we explain cancer in young children, heart attacks in healthy young people, and handicapped children from birth in light of Romans 8:28?
2. Define how you move/grow/change toward death to self?
3. Elaborate on what Saint Francis of Assisi meant with the words: “wear the world like a loose garment, which touches us in a few places and there lightly.

### **NOTE:**

In this chapter Dallas Willard is alluding to the Spiritual Disciplines. Using the Spiritual Disciplines is how we train for righteousness. A good book on this is Richard Foster’s *Celebration of Disciplines*.

### **CHAPTER 16:**

1. The book tells us to lay down the burden of having our own way. What is meant by this? What is it dependent upon?
2. The author says death to self occurs in small steps. What are some ways we can begin taking these small steps?
3. What is the result of dying to self and trusting God?
4. How are you living out this belief?
5. What might you do this week to “train yourself for righteousness?”

## SUMMARY

### Chapters 14-16

*And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified,  
but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
and in the Spirit of our God.*

1 Corinthians 6:11

One of the amazing things about the human being is that it is capable of restoration, and indeed of a restoration that makes it somehow more magnificent because it has been ruined. This is a hopeful but strange thought. We want to see what goes on within the person who is “un-ruined”... in particular we must see what is the basic shift that can lead to the reordering of the six universal dimensions (see Session 3) of the human self in subordination to God.

The key to understanding the overall reordering is provided by what we learned about the human ruin in the previous session. John Calvin once remarked, “For as the surest source of destruction to men is to obey themselves, so the only haven of safety is to have no other will, no other wisdom, than to follow the Lord wherever he leads. Let this, then, be the first step, to abandon ourselves, and devote the whole energy of our minds to the service of God.”<sup>4</sup>

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

[Scripture followed by page(#) In “*Daily Practice*”]  
[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Quiet Time Sheets]

Theme Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6:11

Matthew 10:39, PAR (46,\*)  
Romans 8:6 (46)  
Psalm 23:1-3 (47)

Matthew 5:39 (52)  
John 12:24-25(52,53)  
Galatians 2:20 (53)

Luke 6:38 (53)  
Matthew 10: 37-39 (\*)  
Luke 18:18-23(\*)

Romans 8:28 (49)  
Psalm 23:4-6 (50,51)

Psalm 84:7 (53)

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<sup>44</sup>Dallas Willard; “Renovation of the Heart”, 63

## **SESSION 5**

### **CHAPTER 17:**

1. Dallas suggests that “the effort to change our behavior without inner transformation is precisely what we see in the current shallowness of Western Christianity.” Discuss what he means by this statement. Can you give some personal examples?
2. Read and discuss Luke 6:43
3. What is VIM and why is it important?

### **CHAPTER 18:**

1. How does Dallas define the kingdom of God?
2. On the bottom of page 57 it says: “What we are aiming for in this vision is to live fully in the kingdom of God, as fully as possible now and *here*, not just hereafter.” What does the author mean by this? What does it mean to live in the kingdom of God?
3. What fascinates or excites you most about life in the kingdom of God? What scares you? What confuses you?

### **CHAPTER 19:**

1. People today “do not see the value of transformation and decide not to carry through with it.” Why is this?
2. How does the book define “believe?”
3. What does the author mean when he says: “Perhaps the hardest thing for sincere Christians to come to grips with is...?” (p. 60)
4. How does this apply to your life?
5. Have people in the group share what they got out of “Today’s Experiment”

### **CHAPTER 20:**

1. What are some of the “means” mentioned in this chapter that can be used to train for inner transformation?
2. What steps have you taken to be more deliberate in working with the Holy Spirit in transforming your life (Gal 2:20)?
3. Are you sincerely praying for your own spiritual formation in Christ? If you are not why not?

### **REMINDER:**

A good book on the Spiritual Disciplines is Richard Foster’s classic *Celebration of Disciplines*.

## SUMMARY

### Chapters 17-20

*But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

2 Corinthians 3:18

Spiritual formation in Christ is the process by which one moves and is moved from self-worship to Christ-centered self-denial as a general condition of life in God's present and eternal kingdom.

What we need is simply to realize the means of spiritual formation are available. In the spiritual life it is actually true that "where there is a will there is a way." This is true because God is involved and makes his help available to those who seek it.

Real spiritual need and change . . . is on the inside, in the hidden area of the life that God sees and that we cannot even see in ourselves without his help. Indeed, in the early stages of spiritual development we could not endure seeing our inner life as it really is. The possibility of denial and self-deception is something God has made accessible to us, in part to protect us until we begin to seek him. Like the face of the mythical Medusa, our true condition away from God would turn us to stone if we ever fully confronted it. It would drive us mad; He has to help us come to terms with it in ways that will not destroy us outright.

On the other hand, where there is no will (firm intentions based on clear vision) there is no way. People who do not intend to be inwardly transformed, so that obedience to Christ "comes naturally", will not be – no matter what means they think of themselves as employing. God is not going to pick us up by the seat of our pants, as it were, and throw us into transformed kingdom living, into "holiness."<sup>5</sup>

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

[Scripture followed by page(#) In "Daily Practice"]  
[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Quiet Time Sheets]  
Theme Scripture: 2 Corinthians 3:18

Luke 6:43,PAR (55)  
Romans 8:28,35-39 (57)  
1 John 3:1-2 (57)  
2 Peter 1:4 (57)  
Luke 16:16 (57)

Colossians 3:17,PAR (57)  
Matthew 6:10, KJV (57)  
Luke 4:43 (57)  
Luke 17:21 (57)  
Matthew 6:33; 11:12 (57)

Luke 22:51 (58)  
2 Timothy 2: 3-5 (\*)  
Matthew 6:25-34 (\*)  
Mark 10:42-45 (\*)

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<sup>5</sup> Dallas Willard; "Renovation of the Heart", pp.77, 79, 91

## SESSION 6

### **CHAPTER 21:**

1. Dallas suggests that “the ultimate freedom we have as human beings is...” what?
2. How are “we nourished by the Holy Spirit in ways far beyond our own efforts or understanding?” What is the result of this?
3. In *Today’s Experiment* we are asked to apply the principle “The first freedom is where I put my mind” What does this mean? And how did it go this week putting this into practice?

### **CHAPTER 22:**

1. What does the book say about the relationship between our core ideas and what we profess to believe? How can this be?
2. What are your “core ideas”? Being transparent and sharing some of these with the group will help the group better understand these concepts.
3. How do we identify “the idea system of evil” within us?
4. How do we replace these “idea systems of evil” with idea systems taught by Jesus Christ?

### **CHAPTER 23:**

1. What are images and why are they important? Give examples
2. What are some of your images of God?
3. What are some destructive images in your life?
4. How does the author define spiritual formation in Christ in this chapter?
5. How are images and ideas related?
6. How can you replace destructive images with Godly images?

### **CHAPTER 24:**

1. Spiritual transformation of our lives is the work of the Holy Spirit. However, the book points out that we must partner with the Holy Spirit in this endeavor. What is our responsibility
2. Dallas Willard says that “spiritual formation requires thinking.” What does he mean by this?
3. The book stresses the importance of applying our thinking to the Word of God and tells us how to do this. How different is this approach to how you normally seek the Lord?

### **CHAPTER 25:**

1. Read the last sentence of the first paragraph on page 77. Discuss what the author means by this.
2. Does this mean that you have to be a great thinker to serve God well?

### **CHAPTER 26:**

1. The book claims that “we cannot transform our ideas, images, information, or thought processes into Christlikeness by direct effort.” What must we therefore do?
2. Have someone read the last paragraph on page 80 and the first paragraph on page 81. The authors are using some strong words to communicate their point here (“[God] really wants you to do this”). Why do you think they are emphasizing this so much?
3. Are we teachable? Are we willing to die to self and partner with the Holy Spirit in this important area?

## SUMMARY

### Chapters 21-26

*I have set the Lord continually before me;  
because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.*

Psalm 16:8

As we first turned away from God in our thoughts, so it is in our thoughts that the first movements toward the renovation of the heart occur. Thoughts are the place where we can and must begin to change. There the light of God first begins to move upon us through the word of Christ, and there the divine Spirit begins to direct our will to more and more thoughts that can provide the basis for choosing to realign ourselves with God and his way.

The ultimate freedom we have as human beings is the power to select what we will allow or require our minds to dwell upon. We are not totally free in this respect. But we do have great freedom here, and even though “dead in trespasses and sins,” we still have the ability and responsibility *to try to retain God in our knowledge* – if only in an inadequate and halting manner. And those who do so will surely make progress toward him; for if we truly do seek God as best we can, he, who always knows what is really in our hearts, will certainly make himself known to us. It is because of this fact that we always remain responsible before God, even though we are spiritually dead.

The biblical way of personal transformation must be set in clear contrast to other ways, even if they utilize what looks like biblical language. Honesty and thoroughness is required. Many “alternative” paths of human help and healing offer themselves today *only because Jesus’ formation is not widely and powerfully available* to human beings – or even known about. The transformation of our thought life by taking on the mind of Christ – his ideas, images, information, and patterns of thinking – opens the way to deliverance of every dimension of the human self from the oppressive powers of darkness.<sup>6</sup>

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

[Scripture followed by page(s) “In Daily Practice”]  
[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Quiet Time Sheets]

Theme Scripture: Psalm 16:8

Psalm 23 (67)	Psalm 91:4 (72)	Joshua 1:8 (80)
Ephesians 6:12 (68)	Exodus 3:6-10 (72)	Psalm 1 (80)
Romans 12:2 (70)	Exodus 13:21-22 (73)	Romans 5:1-8; 8:1-15 (80)
2 Corinthians 4:4, NRSV (72)	Hosea 4:6-14, NSRV (74)	Colossians 3:1-17 (80,81)
Zephaniah 3:17 (72)	Hosea 4:6,14, NSRV (75)	1 Corinthians 13 (80,81)
Proverbs 18:10 (72)	Colossians 3:1-4, NIV (75)	
Jeremiah 3: 6-10(72)	Psalm 19:7-8 (77)	

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<sup>66</sup> Dallas Willard; “Renovation of the Heart”, pp. 95, 116



## **SESSION 7**

### **CHAPTER 27:**

1. Dallas suggests that “feelings live in the front row of our lives like unruly children clamoring for attention.” What does he mean by this?
2. Do you feel that you are mastered by your feelings? Why? or Why not?
3. Have you ever come to a point in your life, a milestone, where you realize in your heart of hearts that your feelings do not have to be satisfied? Explain.
4. Dallas says that the person who truly realizes that his feelings do not need to be satisfied is the person who happily lets God be God. What does he mean by this?

### **CHAPTER 28:**

1. Have you ever been in a situation where your feelings were so in charge of your being that you had a hard time listening to reason? Please share with the group.
2. What does this chapter say is a prerequisite for successfully overcoming the control feelings have on your life?
3. As a group, discuss what the book means by *underlying conditions of our feelings*. Will someone be vulnerable enough to share a personal example of an underlying condition?

As a group, will each of you commit to pray daily for the persons who were transparent enough to share some of their underlying conditions? Pray daily until your next small group meeting.

### **CHAPTER 29:**

1. The author claims that “in modern times, feelings exercise almost total mastery over the individual.” What does he say is the connection between feelings and self-control?
2. How do we start changing our destructive feelings?

### **CHAPTER 30:**

1. Read the part about faith in the second paragraph on page 90. Discuss the statement. Based on this definition how great is your faith?
2. How does the author differentiate between desire and love?
3. What is the opposite of love? How does love eliminate pride?

### **CHAPTER 31:**

1. How is joy defined in this chapter?
2. On page 93 the author is admonishing us to not be passive and allow joy to dissipate. Instead what does he tell us to do?
3. What does it mean to be abandoned to God?
4. What is the relationship between joy, peace, and being abandoned to God?

### **CHAPTER 32:**

1. How are destructive feelings replaced by love, joy, and peace?
2. What does it mean to be crucified with Christ? And how does that relate to the transformation of our feelings?

## SUMMARY

### Chapters 27-32

*For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

Romans 14:17

*Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

Galatians 5:24, (PAR)

Feelings are a primary blessing and a primary problem for human life. We cannot live without them and we can hardly live with them. Hence, they are also central for spiritual formation in the Christian tradition. In the restoration of the individual to God, feelings too must be renovated; old ones removed in many cases, or at least thoroughly modified and new ones installed or at least heightened into a new prominence.

Our first inquiry as we greet people for the day is likely to be, “How are you feeling today?” Rarely will it be, “How are you thinking?” Feelings live on the front row of our lives like unruly children clamoring for attention. They presume on their justification in being whatever they are – unlike a thought, which by nature is open to challenge and invites the question “Why?”

“The term “feeling” indicates a kind of “contact”, a “touch”, that is once blind and powerful – in allure as well as in revulsion. A “touching” scene is one which evokes feelings that “touches” us. In feelings we really know that something is “there”, and solidly so. But what it is remains obscure – though hauntingly present. This aspect of “blind power” has famously led to the description of emotions as “human bondage” But the quality of blind power equally extends to mere sensations or desires, which, as well as emotions, can be simply overwhelming.<sup>7</sup>

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

[Scripture followed by page(#) In “Daily Practice”]  
[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Quiet Time Sheets]

Theme Scripture: Romans 14:17; Galatians 5:24, PAR

1 John 2:16 (83)  
Colossians 3:5-10, NIV (84)  
Matthew 11:30(87)  
Ephesians 1:6, (89)  
2 Corinthians 4:17-18 (90)

Romans 12:12, PAR (90)  
Numbers 12:3 (91)  
Hebrews 11:27(91)  
Isaiah 63:11-13 (91)  
Hebrews 12:14 (93)

John 5:11 (93)  
Romans 8:34,(93)  
Philippians 4:6-7(94)  
Isaiah 26:3, PAR (94,95)  
Romans 12:9 (96)

## SESSION 8

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<sup>77</sup> Dallas Willard, “Renovation of the Heart”, pp. 117, 118

### **CHAPTER 33:**

1. Dallas Willard says that “character can be changed, which is what spiritual formation in Christlikeness is all about.” Give some examples of how you would like your character to be transformed.
2. What is critical to keep in mind in order for real transformation to take place? (p 99)
3. What does a will or heart look like that has been transformed into Christlikeness?
4. Read the first paragraph under the flag on page 100. What is character? Discuss this paragraph.

### **CHAPTER 34:**

1. What is the primary responsibility of our will?
2. What is the result of a character of the will not focused on God?
3. Would somebody feel free to share the result of Today’s Experiment with the group?

### **CHAPTER 35:**

1. What does Dallas mean by being willing to will to surrender completely to God? Where are you in this process of being willing to surrender?
2. Elaborate on what the book means by abandonment and what it results in?
3. How does Dallas explain contentment? Is this different from how you have viewed contentment in the past?
4. Finally, surrender, abandonment, and contentment lead to participation. What does this mean to you?
5. Would somebody please volunteer to share the result of Today’s Experiment with the group?

### **CHAPTER 36:**

1. What are the spiritual disciplines?
2. What is the purpose of the spiritual disciplines?
3. Dallas has several times throughout the book talked about how we deceive ourselves. Discuss what you think he means by this. Give examples of how you have been (or still are) deceived.
4. Would somebody please volunteer to share the result of Today’s Experiment with the group?

## **SUMMARY Chapters 33-36**

*If any man is willing to do His will, he shall know  
of the teaching, whether it is of God,  
or whether I speak from Myself.*

*John 7:17*

By this point we are beginning to get a glimpse of what those renovated in Christ-likeness look like. We know that they will have a thought life centered on God in his goodness and greatness, and therefore on truth. Also, their feelings will be dominated by the rich array of positive feelings that naturally accompany love, joy, and peace, along with their foundational conditions of faith and hope.

But such conditions of thought and feelings are not to be produced and sustained without massive changes in other dimensions of the human being, nor do those massive changes in the other dimensions come about without corresponding transformations of thought and feeling. Each constituent of the human being distinguished in [the previous session] is but one element in an interlocking whole. Those constituents can to some degree be distinguished and described in isolation from the others, but they cannot actually exist or develop except in tandem with the others.

We have learned that a person with a well-kept heart is a “person who is prepared and capable of responding to the situations of life in ways that are ‘good and right’.” When through spiritual transformation we have in some measure come to know the well-kept heart in real life, we experience it as a gift of grace, no matter how hard we may have had to struggle in the process of growing into it. And it is a gift in which we find, precisely, ourselves, as Jesus taught: “He who has lost his life for My sake shall find it” (Matthew 10:39).

For the first time we not only have a fully functioning will, but we also have a clear identity in the eternal kingdom of God and can day by day translate our time into eternity embedded in our own life and in the lives of those near us. The will of God is not foreign to our will. It is sweetness, life, and strength to us.<sup>8</sup>

## **SCRIPTURE REFERENCES**

[Scripture followed by page(#) In “Daily Practice”]  
[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Time Sheets]

Theme Scripture: John 7:17

Acts 20:21 (99)

Galations 3:27 KJV (100)

Matthew 19:13-15 (100)

Matthew 14:15-21 (100)

John 12:20-33 (100)

Matthew 20:20-28 (100)

Matthew 9:18-22 (100)

John 14:23 (101)

Phillippians 3:10-11, NIV (103)

Romans 5:17, PAR (104)

Revelation 22:5 (105)

Galations 2:20, KJV (105)

1 Corinthians 9:24-27(\*)

1 Timothy 4:7b(\*)

## **SESSION 9**

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<sup>88</sup> Dallas Willard; “Renovation of the Heart”, pp. 141, 156

### **CHAPTER 37:**

1. On the bottom of page 110 it says: “For usual human beings in usual circumstances their body runs their life.” What do you think about this statement? What does it mean? Give examples

### **CHAPTER 38:**

1. In what ways did this chapter speak to you?

### **CHAPTER 39:**

1. Discuss the importance of physically doing the exercises suggested in this chapter.

### **CHAPTER 40:**

1. Dallas Willard claims that, “Even professing Christians often devote spiritual growth only a tiny fraction of the time they devote to their body.” How much time do you spend on your body as opposed to the time you set aside for spiritual growth?
2. In what ways do we misuse our bodies?
3. Would somebody please volunteer to share the result of Today’s Experiment with the group?

### **CHAPTER 41:**

1. How important is it to take care of our bodies? (define what you mean – using examples – by taking care of your body. Different people in the group may have different understandings of this concept)
2. Are you misusing your body? Are you taking care of it? Do you have any plans to make any changes in your life to improve on the way you treat your body? Why or Why not?
3. What are some specific ways in which we can wean our body away from its tendencies to take control, to run the world, to achieve and produce, to attain gratification?
4. How can sleep be a good indicator of how thoroughly we trust in God?
5. Explain what the authors mean by being practiced in Sabbath keeping.

## **SUMMARY Chapters 37-41**

*Are you unaware that your body is a shrine to the Holy Spirit from God? who is within you? And that you are not your own property? A price has been paid for you. So make your body a showplace of God's greatness.*

*1 Corinthians 6:19-20, PAR*

Spiritual transformation into Christlikeness . . . is the process of forming the inner world of the human self in such a way that it takes on the character of the inner being of Jesus himself. The result is that the “outer” life of the individual increasingly becomes a natural expression of the inner reality of Jesus and of his teachings. Doing what he said and did increasingly becomes a part of who we are.

But for this to happen, our body must increasingly be poised to do what is good and refrain from what is evil. The inclinations to wrongdoing that literally inhabit its parts must be eliminated. The body must come to serve us as a primary ally in Christlikeness.

For good or for evil, the body lies right at the center of the spiritual life – a strange combination of words to most people. One can immediately see all around us that the human body is a (perhaps in some cases even the) primary barrier to conformity to Christ. But this certainly was not God's intent for the body. It is not in the nature of the body as such. (The body is not inherently evil.) Nor is it even caused by the body. But still it is a fact that the body usually hinders people in doing what they know to be good and right. Being formed in evil it, in turn, fosters evil and constantly runs ahead of our good intentions – but in the opposite direction.

Still our body is a good thing. God made it for good. That is why the way of Jesus Christ is so relentlessly incarnational. The body should be cherished and properly cared for, not as our master, however, but as a servant of God. For most people, on the other hand, their body governs their life. And that is the problem. Even professing Christians, by and large, devote to their spiritual growth and well-being a tiny fraction of the time they devote to their body, and it is an even tinier fraction if we include what they worry about.

What is going on here? Can our body truly become our ally in Christlikeness? It can and it must, but its essential role in spirituality is the one thing most likely to be overlooked in understanding and practicing growth in grace.<sup>9</sup>

## **SCRIPTURE REFERENCES**

[Scripture followed by page(#) In “Daily Practice”]

[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Quiet Time Sheets]

Theme Scripture: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, PAR; Romans 6:13, PAR

Matthew 6:25 (110)

Galatians 6:8 (111)

Matthew 5:28 (111)

Psalms 139:3 (112)

James 3:5-6 (113)

Romans 7:18,PAR (113)

Psalms 23 (114)

Romans 7:23,PAR (114)

Colossians 3:5-10 (116)

Romans 12:1,PAR (116)

Romans 5:8-14 (116)

Corinthians 6:19-20 (116)

Psalms 145-150 (117)

Proverbs 16:31; 20:29 (119)

Leviticus 23:3, KJV (120)

Psalms 127:2,KJV (120)

## **SESSION 10**

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<sup>9</sup> Dallas Willard; “Renovation of the Heart”, pp, 159, 160

## **CHAPTER 42:**

1. What does chapter 42 say about God's Trinitarian nature as it relates to social activities?
2. What is a key result of spiritual formation in Christ? Give some examples of what this may look like
3. What does laying down your life/dying to self look like?

## **CHAPTER 43:**

1. What does Dallas mean when he says that "Those spiritually formed in Christlikeness find the natural condition of life to be one of reciprocal rootedness in others?"
2. What is the result when this assurance of others being for us is lacking?
3. Read and discuss the last sentence on page 124.
4. Who is the primary other in our life?
5. Read and discuss the last paragraph before Today's Experiment.

## **CHAPTER 44:**

1. What are the two forms of social lovelessness that are common in our social dimensions?
2. Chapter 44 gives several examples of the above. Which form of social attack or withdrawal is most hurtful to you and which one do you most often use on others?
3. What are some ways to train to not assault others?

## **CHAPTER 45:**

1. Why is the best training ground for righteousness often within your own family?
2. In what ways did this chapter speak to you?

## **CHAPTER 46:**

1. What is the first element in the spiritual formation of our social dimension?
2. Elaborate on what the author means by abandonment of all defensiveness.
3. What are elements 3 & 4 in the spiritual formation of our social dimension? Explain each of them.
4. Which of the items listed on page 134 are personally most important to you and why?
5. Read and discuss Today's Experiment.

## **SUMMARY Chapters 42-46**

*The communities of God, to which Christ has become teacher  
and guide, are, in comparison with communities of the  
pagan people among whom they live as strangers,  
like heavenly lights in the world.*

ORIGEN

*We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we  
love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.*

1 John 3:14

When we come to deal with spiritual formation of our social dimension, we have to start from woundedness. It is hard to imagine anyone in this world who has not been deeply injured in his or her relationships to others. The exact nature of the poison of sin in our social dimension is fairly easy to describe, though extremely hard to deal with. It has two forms. They are so closely related that they really are two forms of the same thing: of lovelessness, lack of proper regard and care for others. These two forms are assault or attack and withdrawal or “distancing.” They are so much a part of ordinary human existence that most people think they are just “reality,” and never imagine that we could live without them.

If spiritual formation in Christ is to succeed, the power of these two forms of evil in our own life – within our self – absolutely must be broken. So far as it is possible, they must be eliminated as indwelling realities, as postures we take toward others. They also must be successfully disarmed as they come toward us. And they must be eliminated in our social environment – especially in the fellowships of Christ’s followers – so far as that is possible. Perhaps we must be reconciled to the fact that they cannot be entirely eliminated from our world, or even from our fellowships of Christian believers, until a new epoch dawns, but we can eliminate them from our own being. We can live without them.<sup>10</sup>

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

[Scripture followed by page(#) In “Daily Practice”]  
[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Quiet Time Sheets]

Theme Scripture: 1 John 3:14

John 13:35,NRSV (122)	Romans 14:7,PAR (124)	2 Peter 1:3,NIV (131)
1 John 3:14,16 (122,123)	Psalms 23:5 (128)	Luke 13:10-16 (132)
Matthew 5:46-47 (122)	Ephesians 5:22-33(130)	Romans 12: 9,NRSV (133)
Colossians 3:3-4,PAR (123)	Luke 13:12, NIV (131)	Romans 12:9-21 (134)
Philippians 3:11 (123)	John 3:8 (131)	Romans 12:3:8 (133,134)
Genesis 2:18,PAR (124)	Matthew 5:44 (*)	Colossians 3:12-14 (*)

## SESSION 11

### CHAPTER 47:

1. What is the soul as defined by Dallas Willard?

<sup>10</sup>Dallas Willard; “Renovation of the Heart”, p. 181



2. Dallas says in chapter 47 that “For many, this ideal arrangement of life under God remains an impossible dream.” Do you think it is an impossible dream? Explain your answer.

### **CHAPTER 48:**

1. Read Matthew 16:26 out loud. What does it mean to lose one’s soul?
2. How is it with your soul?
3. Please try to be open and transparent and share Today’s Experiment with the group.

### **CHAPTER 49:**

1. Why have Christian churches become fertile sources of recruits for cults & other religious & political groups?
2. What does Dallas admonish us to do in chapter 49?
3. Share Today’s Experiment with the group

### **CHAPTER 50:**

1. What is a key secret of obtaining soul rest? Why?
2. What does Dallas say is the result of allowing strong desires to govern our lives?
3. To what extent do you allow strong desires to rule your life?
4. Read the two paragraphs below the flag on page 146. Discuss our willingness to trust God independent of the physical results.

### **CHAPTER 51:**

1. What does it mean to view the law of God as a wonderful gift of grace? How is this different from how we often view God’s laws?
2. How is viewing the law of God as something we must achieve, destructive?

## **SUMMARY Chapters 47-51**

*Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle*

*and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls.*

*Matthew 11:29 (See also Jeremiah 6:16)*

What is running your life at any given moment is your soul. Not external circumstances, or your thoughts, or your intentions, or even your feelings, but your soul. The soul is that aspect of your whole being that correlates, integrates, and enlivens everything going on in the various dimensions of the self. It is the life-center of the human being. It regulates whatever is occurring in each of those dimensions and how they interact with each other and respond to surrounding events in the overall governance of your life. The soul is “deep” in the sense of being basic or foundational and also in the sense that it lies almost totally beyond conscious awareness.

In the person with the “well-kept heart,” the soul will be itself properly ordered under God and in harmony with reality. The outcome will be, as we have said, “a person who is prepared for and capable of responding to the situations of life in ways that are good and right.” For such a person, the human spirit will be in correct relationship to God. With his assisting grace, it will bring the soul into subjection to God and the mind (thoughts, feelings) into subjection to the soul. The social context and the body will then come into subjection to thoughts and feelings that are in agreement with truth and with God’s intent and purposes for us. Any given event in our life would then proceed as it should, because our soul is functioning properly under God.<sup>11</sup>

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

[Scripture followed by page(#) In “Daily Practice”]  
[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Quiet Time Sheets]

Theme Scripture: Deuteronomy 4:9; Matthew 11:29; Jeremiah 6:16

Jeremiah 17:5-8,NIV (137,138)	Colossians 3:5 (145)	Matthew 5:19 (148)
Luke 12:21 (139)	1 Peter 4:19 (145)	1 Corinthians 13:4-5,7 (149)
Luke 1:46,KJV (139)	1 Peter 5:6-7 (145)	Matthew 5:39-47 (149)
Matthew 11:29,NIV (142)	1 Peter 2:11 (145)	Matthew 5:27-28 (149)
Matthew 9:36 (142)	Ephesians 5:5 (145)	Matthew 5:33-37 (149)
Philippians 2:3-11 (142)	James 2:8 (148)	

## PSALMS

1:1, 2 (36,149)	62:1,5 (140)	108:1 (143)
6:3 (140)	63:1, 5, 8 (139,140,143)	116:7,8-11 (143,149)
35:3 (141)	77:2 (143)	119:20,28 (140)
42:1-2, 5 (140,143)	84:2 (140)	130:6 (143)
57:8 (140)	94:18-19 (143)	131:2 (143)
57:1 (143)	103:1, 5 (140)	143:6 (143)

## SESSION 12

### CHAPTER 52:

1. Dallas Willard is describing some characteristics of children of light. What are these characteristics?

<sup>111</sup> Dallas Willard; “Renovation of the Heart”, p. 199

2. During the time you have been involved in this study how have you changed to reflect more of these characteristics?
3. How are you now more deliberate in your spiritual life in “training for righteousness”?
4. What does the author mean by “God-intoxication”?

### **CHAPTER 53:**

1. Dallas is describing the transformed life. What aspects of this life are most appealing to you?
2. This transformation can only happen if we arrange our lives around Christ. How can we do this?
3. On page 154 the author says that “children of light are easy to deal with.” Are you easy to deal with? Why or why not?
4. Read the last paragraph before Today’s Experiment. What does it mean to abandon everything to God and how important is this to our growth in Christ?
5. Share the results of Today’s Experiment with each other.

### **CHAPTER 54:**

1. In the middle of page 157 Dallas Willard points out a mistake that we very commonly make. What is this mistake? Discuss how this applies to you personally.
2. How is the author contrasting trying versus training in this chapter?
3. How are all our dimensions changed by the Spirit? What is the implication and application of this for your life? This is an important question to pray about this week.
4. Read the last paragraph before Today’s Experiment As a group discuss what this means.

### **CHAPTER 55:**

1. In what ways have you/are you not living what you talk? And what do you think is the result of this both in your life and in the life of people you come in contact with?
2. According to the author, what is the call of Christ for us today?
3. How well are you doing in this area? In what ways are you “living what you talk, even in places where you cannot talk what you live”?
4. In Today’s Experiment it encourages us to practice “turning the other cheek”. In what ways have you been able to do that the last couple of weeks?

### **CHAPTER 56:**

1. What does the author mean by “vessels” and “treasure”?
2. In what ways have we let a life of church activities be a substitute for having a life with God?
3. What does it mean to immerse ourselves in the presence of our Trinitarian God?

## **SUMMARY** **Chapters 52-56**

*You were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of light consists*

*in all goodness and righteousness and truth),  
verifying what is pleasing to the Lord.*

*Ephesians 5:8-11, PAR*

*The simple program of Christ to winning the whole world  
Is to make each person he touches magnetic enough  
with love to draw others.*

*Frank Laubach*

According to the biblical picture, the function of human history is to bring forth an immense community of people, from “every nation and tribe and tongue and people” (Revelation 14:6), who will be a kingdom of priests under God (Revelation 1:6; 5:10; Exodus 19:16), and who for some period of time in the future will actually govern the earth under him (Revelation 5:10). They will also, beyond that, reign with him in the eternal future of the cosmos, forever and ever (Revelation 22:5).

These people will, together as a living community, form a special dwelling place for God. It will be one that allows his magnificence to be known and gratefully accepted by all of creation through all of the ages (Ephesians 2:7; 3:10; Philippians 2:9-11). What the human heart now vaguely senses should be, eventually will be, in the cosmic triumph of Christ and his people. And those who have fully taken on the character of Christ – those “children of light” in Paul’s language – will in eternity be empowered by God to do what they want, as free creative agents. And it will always harmonize perfectly with God’s own purposes.

Spiritual formation in Christlikeness during our life here on earth is a constant movement toward this eternal appointment God placed upon each of us in our creation – the “kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34, see also Luke 19:17). This movement forward is now carried on through our apprenticeship to Jesus Christ. It is a process of character transformation toward complete trustworthiness before God.<sup>12</sup>

## **SCRIPTURE REFERENCES**

[Scripture followed by page(#) “In Daily Practice”]

[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Quiet Time Sheets]

Theme Scripture: Ephesians 5:8-11, PAR

Revelation 1:6 (151)	John 14:23;15:4-5 (152)	1 Corinthians 13 (157)
Revelation 4:9 (151)	Ephesians 5:8-10 (153)	John 13:34 (157)
Revelation 5:10 (151)	Philippians 2:3-4 (153)	2 Corinthians 4:7 (162)
Revelation 14:6 (151)	1 Peter 4:19,MSG (154)	Matthew 5:38-48 (*)
Revelation 22:5 (151)	Proverbs 9:8 (154)	
Acts 2:13 (151)	2 Peter 1:3-7 (156)	
Ephesians 5:18 (151)	2 Peter 1:10-11 (157)	
Philippians 4:8,2:9-11 (151)		

## **SESSION 13**

### **CHAPTER 57:**

1. This chapter claims that as Christians we have been taught that it is more important to be right than Christlike. What do they mean by this? Do you agree?

<sup>12</sup> Dallas Willard; “Renovation of the Heart”, pp. 217, 218

2. Read the third paragraph in this chapter out loud. What does it mean that we are more interested in getting people in to heaven than we are in getting heaven into people?
3. What are the implications of this?
4. What does the author claim is the most important thing about any meeting in church? Do you agree? Why is this important?

### **CHAPTER 58:**

1. As a group read and discuss the first paragraph in this chapter.
2. Discuss the book's claim that the New Testament does not recognize a category of Christians who are not apprentices of Jesus Christ?
3. What is Jesus' plan for spiritual formation in the local congregation?
4. Elaborate on the meaning, the implication, and the application of these three stages.
5. Share the results of Today's Experiment with each other.

### **CHAPTER 59:**

1. What does it mean to be an apprentice of Jesus?
2. How do we practice the presence of God? Discuss and give practical examples.

### **CHAPTER 60:**

1. What does Dallas Willard mean when he states in the third paragraph of this chapter that the doing of what [Jesus] commanded is not the focus of our activities at this point?
2. What should be the focus of our activities at this point?

### **CHAPTER 61:**

1. What does the author say about willpower in this chapter? What does he mean by that?
2. Dallas says that now is the time for specific planning. Spiritual formation in Christlikeness is the sure outcome of well directed activities under the personal supervision of Christ... What is your plan for partnering with the Holy Spirit for real transformation into Christlikeness? What do you intend to do different in the future in order to arrange your life around Christ? Have the whole group share.
3. Take some time to pray for each other's plans for transformation. Write these down and commit to pray these things for each other over the next several weeks and months.

## **SUMMARY** **Chapters 57-61**

*Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,*

*that He might present to Himself the church radiant, having no stain or wrinkle or any other blemish; but that she should be holy and blameless.*

*Paul (Ephesians 5:25-27)*

If what we have [seen] about the spiritual formation of the children of light is true, what would we expect to find in those gatherings of disciples of Jesus into local congregations, which we call “churches”? Of the actual churches around us, what would they do better, and what do they need more of?

A reasonable response might be that these local congregations would be entirely devoted to the spiritual formation of those in attendance – to “renovation of the heart,” as we have explained it here. This seems to have been Paul’s idea, and him, more than any other, was given the role of defining the church, this new thing on earth, the non-ethnic people of God. In it there was to be “no . . . Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all and all” (Colossians 3:11). Identification with Christ and the emerging community of Christ obliterated all other identities, not by negation, but by its new and positive reality.

Thus we have Paul’s magnificent statement to the Ephesians that Christ, in his triumphant capacity as risen Lord of all (4:11), has given certain people to the “called out ones” or ecclesia (that is, the church) “as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers” (verse 10). And these special, supernatural functions are solely for the purpose of “equipping the holy ones (‘saints’) for the work of service, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us arrive at a coherent faith and the full knowledge of the Son of God – at a completed human being, as measured in terms of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (verses 12-13. PAR).

As a result of this “building up” we will no longer be like children, swept up in every current of teaching that comes by, or taken in by human trickery and deceitful schemes . . . Instead, “speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every respect into him who is the head, Christ, from whom the whole body, being adapted and held together by what is supplied through every part functioning properly, grows and builds itself up in love” (verses 14-16, PAR).<sup>13</sup>

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

[Scripture followed by page(#) In “Daily Practice”]  
[Scripture followed by (\*) are from Daily Quiet Time Sheets]

Theme Scripture: 1 Timothy 3:15, PAR; Ephesians 5:25-27

2 Corinthians 4:6,7 (163)	Matthew 5 (174)
1 Timothy 6:19,PAR (165)	Luke 23:27-31 (175)
Matthew 28:18-20,PAR (167,168,171)	Luke 23:34 (175)
James 5:12 (170)	Luke 23:28,NIV (175)
Matthew 5:44 (170)	1 Timothy 4:15 (176)
Matthew 10:42 (170)	Colossians 1:27,NIV (177)

## NOTES:

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<sup>13</sup> Dallas Willard; “Renovation of the Heart”, pp. 233, 234

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*“I drift into a peacetime mind-set as certainly as rain falls down and flames go up. I am wired by nature to love the same toys that the world loves. I start to fit in. I start to love what others love. I start to call earth “home”. Before you know it, I am calling luxuries “needs” and using my money just the way unbelievers do. I begin to forget the war. I don’t think much about people perishing. Missions and unreached peoples drop out of my mind. I stop dreaming about the triumphs of grace. I sink into a secular mindset that looks first at what man can do, not what God can do. It’s a terrible sickness, and I thank God for those who have forced me again and again towards a wartime mind-set.”*

–John Piper “Don’t waste you life”