

“The most important thing in your life is not what you do; it’s who you become. That’s what you will take into eternity. You are an unceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God’s great universe.”

Dallas Willard, quoted in *Soul Keeping* by John Ortberg, p.23

Trinity Sunday—Included in the Trinity!

God’s “plan is for us to develop, as apprentices to Jesus, to the point where we can take our place in the ongoing creativity of the universe.”

Scripture: Matthew 25: 14-21

“For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’”

Voice of wisdom:

“The gospel of the kingdom sees the world of nature, from the tiniest particle to the farthest system of galaxies, as a great and good thing. There is, at a minimum, no reason to think that the world of nature will cease to exist or be destroyed. In a Trinitarian universe - a universe grounded in a society of divine persons - that is entirely...the purpose that world serves. As long as it serves a purpose in such a universe - as it most certainly does - it will continue to exist, through whatever transformations may come. The material universe is both an essential display of the greatness and goodness of God and the arena of the eternal life of finite spirits, including the human.

“This present universe is only one element in the kingdom of God. But it is a very wonderful and important one. And within it the Logos, the now risen Son of man, is currently preparing for us to join him (John 14:2-4). We will see him in the stunning surroundings that he had with the Father before the beginning of the created cosmos (17:24). And we will actively participate in the future governance of the universe.

“We will not sit around looking at one another or at God for eternity but will join the eternal Logos, ‘reign with him,’ in the endlessly ongoing creative work of God. It is for this that we were each individually intended, as both kings and priests (Exodus 19:6; Rev. 5:10).

“Thus, our faithfulness over a ‘few things’ in the present phase of our life develops the kind of character that can be entrusted with ‘many things.’ We are, accordingly, permitted to ‘enter into the joy of our Lord’ (Matt. 25:21). That ‘joy’ is, of course, the creation and care of what is good, in all its dimensions. A place in God’s creative order has been reserved for each one of us from before the beginnings of cosmic existence. His plan is for us to develop, as apprentices to Jesus, to the point where we can take our place in the ongoing creativity of the universe.”

Dallas Willard in *The Divine Conspiracy*, pgs. 377-378

Study 26

Contemplation:

What key words and ideas stand out to you? How do they help you take a deeper look at yourself as an unceasing spiritual being?

The parable of the talents can be somewhat threatening if we dwell on the person who buried his talent. How does the story change in your mind given Dallas Willard's words here?

How does it make you feel to be in training for "the endlessly ongoing creative work of God"?

Practices:

Write down one or two of the key phrases that are important to you. Hold them (literally) before God and wait silently on him. Record any further thoughts he may give you.

Exercise your creativity this week! Find a project that will improve the beauty or goodness of your little corner of the universe.

©sharonracke These contemplative studies are the result of the thoughtful and transformative teaching I have received both at The Dwelling Place (dwellingplaceindy.org), and as a student of The Renovare Institute (renovare.org). I pray that as you use them, you will experience the presence and love of God, and learn more about living with Christ daily. Sharon Racke (recess.racke@gmail.com)