

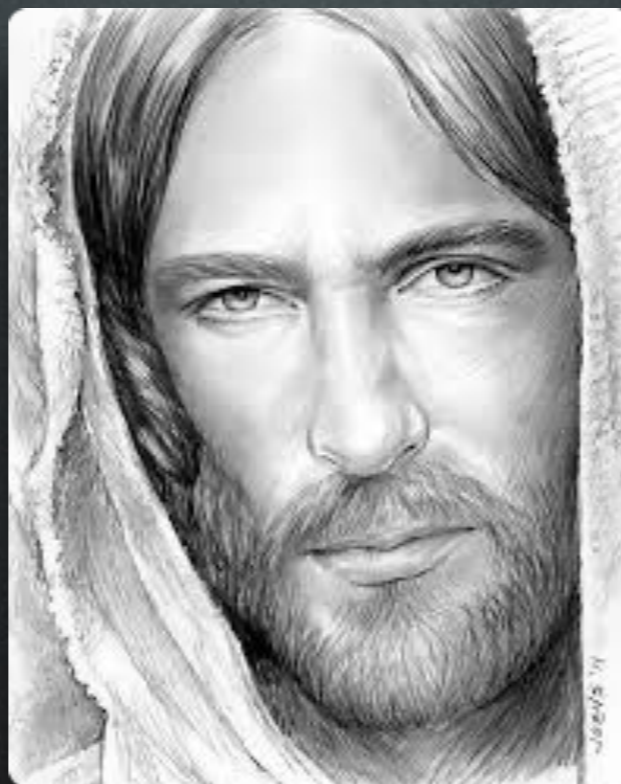
## The Genius of Jesus

WELCOME to a our four week Course sponsored by  
Dallas Willard Ministries & Jesus College



**“The Genius of Jesus”**  
*The Historical Power of Jesus*  
Session 1, Part 2

Dallas Willard at Ohio State University  
November 14, 2002



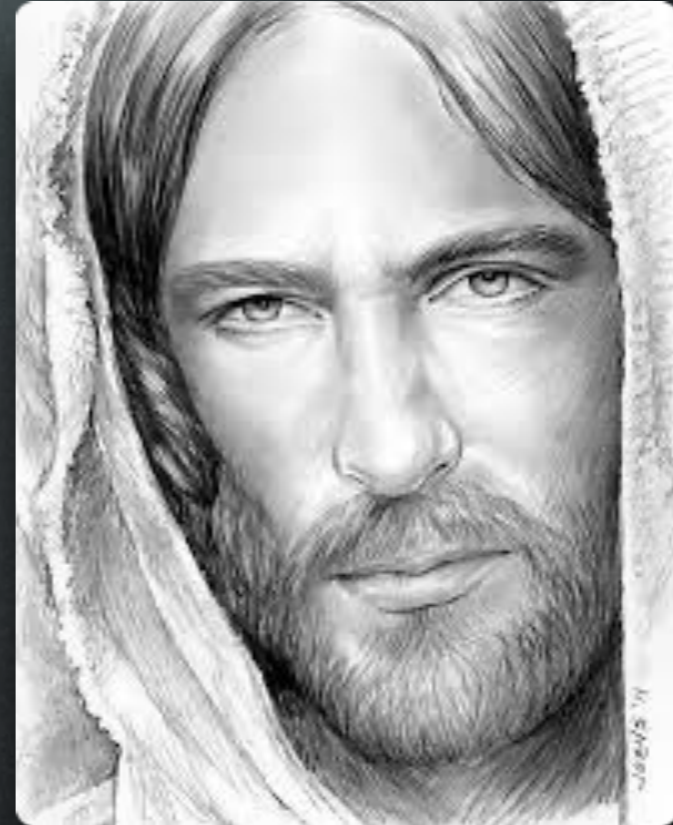
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## Session 1 REVIEW

We humans have the burden to find a knowledge for life's most important questions.

We will each choose a story from which we draw the answers.

The story Jesus tells has provided truth for beliefs upon which good lives run.



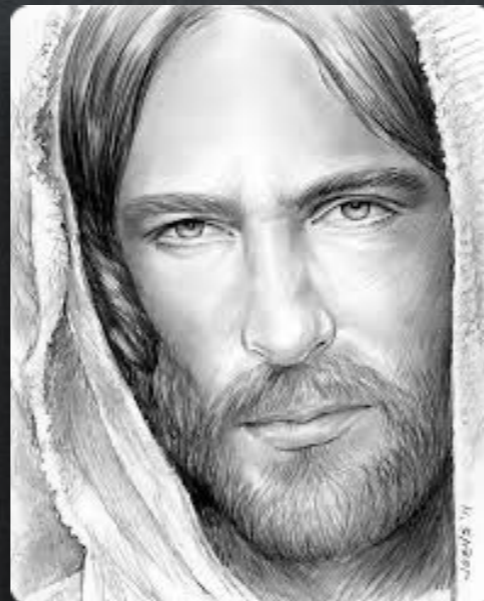
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# **“The Genius of Jesus”**

## *Session 2 — The Historical Power of Jesus*

Arguably, without much question, Jesus is the single most influential person in human history. That is open for discussion. I don't who else you might suggest.

The power in the answers He gives to the four basic questions made Him such a force in history. His vision of reality, well being and life simply has nothing close to it.



## **Life's Four Great Questions**

- 1.) What is the nature of reality?
- 2.) Who is well off?
- 3.) Who is a really good person?
- 4.) How do you become a really good person?

# I. Jesus Answers Life's Four Great Questions

## 1.) What Does Jesus say About Reality?

Reality is God and His Kingdom.

The Kingdom of God (defined) – The range of God's effective will.

Where what God wants done what is done.

– In nature in so far as God has created nature.

Your Kingdom/Queendom/Persondom - What you have say over, the range of your effective will.

God invites us to live in His kingdom and know it as an experiential reality.



## **1.) What Does Jesus say About Reality?** (continued)

Our finite kingdom/queendom can not run on its own.

The issues about conflict between truth and desire and will. We are at war within ourselves and with others.

There is no greater reality in which people can meet.

Only life in the Kingdom of God harmonizes our lives.

That's why Jesus taught:

*“Love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength...*

*and then you have the ability to*

*...love your neighbor as yourself.”*

## **2.) What does Jesus say about a Blessed Life of a Good Person?**

What does God have to do with it?

God invites us to live in a spiritual reality in which all of the aspirations of the human heart for welfare and being a good person can be realized.

Jesus understood that the basic problem for human beings is to find a spiritual home in which they can know that they are eternally cared for and then from which they can care for others and not spend their whole life just fighting over what to do.





*“Can’t we all just get along?”*  
Rodney King, LA Riots, 1992

We can not get along because we want our way, our kingdom to prevail and we can not find a larger kingdom in which to live together with others.

Jesus made clear what morality is  
and how it can be lived.

# The #1 Problem in the University & Culture Today

You don't teach a morality by preaching at people. You do it by body language, subtle suggestions, example, who you criticize, who you laugh at.

Morality is passing on a certain kind of life.

Morality (def.) — “A shared public understanding with associated emotional postures concerning what types of persons are to be or not to be admired, approved, imitated, encouraged and supported without regard to whether they prosper or not. It is a matter of character & will.”

The governing morality in our university and culture is not the theistic story, but a different reality taking humanity as an ultimate point of reference. As long as we do that, we will never find the basis for living out the kind of morality we know we should.

## **The Historical Power of Jesus**

Jesus knew what to do and could enable people to do it,  
to provide a morality that would actually make people good.



### **3.) Who is a Good Person According to Jesus?**

“A morally good person is a person who is intent upon on advancing the various goods of human life with which they are effectively in contact in a manner that respects their relative degrees of importance and the extent to which the actions of the person in question can actually promote the existence and maintenance of these goods.”

This is what Jesus is talking about:

*“Love your neighbor as yourself.”*

*“Treat others the way you want to be treated.”*

## 4.) How does Jesus Help You Become a Good Person?

Be alive in the Kingdom of God in personal interactive contact with the ultimate reality learning from that ultimate reality through Jesus and His people.

*“Love your neighbor as yourself.”*

What if you don't love yourself?

There are a lot of people who don't.

Jesus says,

*“Love one another as I have loved you.”*

That's different.

*“Greater love has no one than they lay down their lives for their friends.”*

“Why are you a disciple of Jesus Christ?”

*“Who else did you have in mind?”*



## II. How do You Live it?

### 1.) Serious Inquiry & Personal Testing

Honest comparison of Jesus and His teachings with others. You find the truth by honest testing.



### 2.) Surrender, “What I want” and trust the better way of Jesus.

If you’re not prepared to surrender that, you will not be a able to hear the teaching that Jesus brings and you will not be able to be delivered into life in the Kingdom of God.

If there really is a better way, Jesus would  
be the first one to tell you to take it.

You can't imagine Him saying,  
*"Well, that's better, but it's not Christian."*



*"The truth shall set you free."*

The most misquoted statement in human history.



## **The Genius of Jesus = Truth & Freedom**

*“If you continue in my word (put it into practice) then you really are my apprentices (in living in the Kingdom), then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.”* (parentheses by Dallas Willard) John 8:31-32

—> The Genius of Jesus: You know the truth in a way that sets you free in an interactive relationship with Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God.

Q — What does it set you free from?

A — It sets you free from your inability to do and live the good you know.

We have to shift the understanding of Jesus away from someone who is perhaps nice, but doesn't really provide knowledge, to one who provides us with the most essential knowledge about the most important things in human life.

He doesn't come to just offer us a fire insurance policy. He offers us eternal life now. And that is open to testing, to questioning, to experimentation.

To know the  
put it to the



TRUTH  
TEST

He is talking about,  
of experience.



# Q&C

Your Questions & Comments are welcome!



*Use the Q&A on the bottom of your Zoom screen*

Q1 — Am I, or who I care about, open to examine Jesus' answers to life's questions?

Q2 — What do I describe as a good life?

Q3 — Who is a good person?

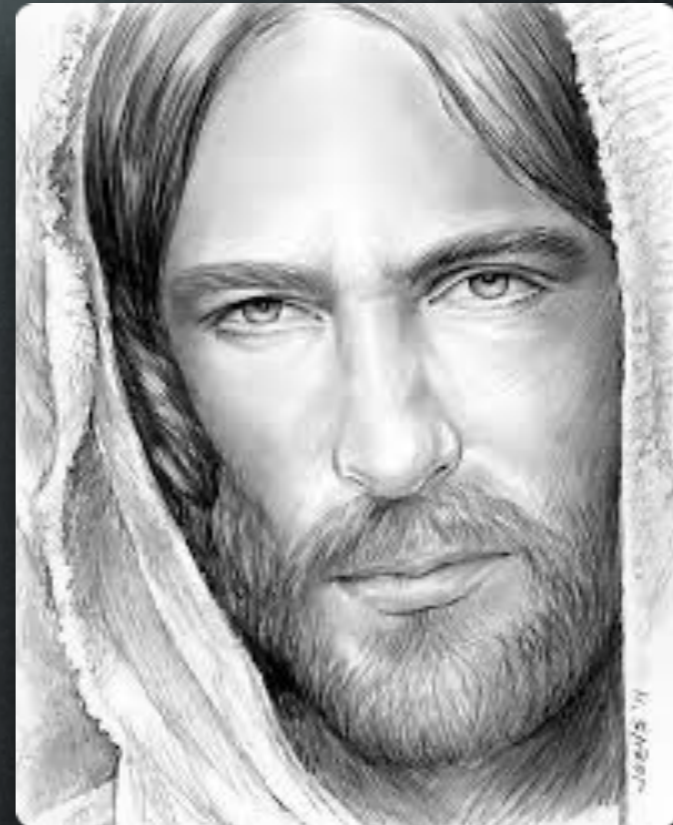
Q4 — How will I learn from Jesus this week to practice loving my neighbor?



## Session 2 Summary

Jesus knew what to do and could enable people to do it, to provide a morality that would actually make people good.

We need to shift Jesus from nice to the One with the most essential knowledge of the most important things!



The Genius

Dallas Willard's 2-part series, "The Genius of Jesus" is on the [\*\*Dallas Willard Ministries YouTube Channel\*\*](#).

Here is each Session's link:

The Genius of Jesus, part 1 - ["Knowledge of Truth for Life"](#)

The Genius of Jesus, part 2 - ["The Historical Power of Jesus"](#)

[What Does it Mean to Be Human, part 1](#)

[What Does it Mean to Be Human, part 2](#)



May the One in whom  
are hidden all  
wisdom and  
knowledge teach you  
in the next 10,000  
minutes how to be a  
good person.

*Doug*

@OneAfterJesus

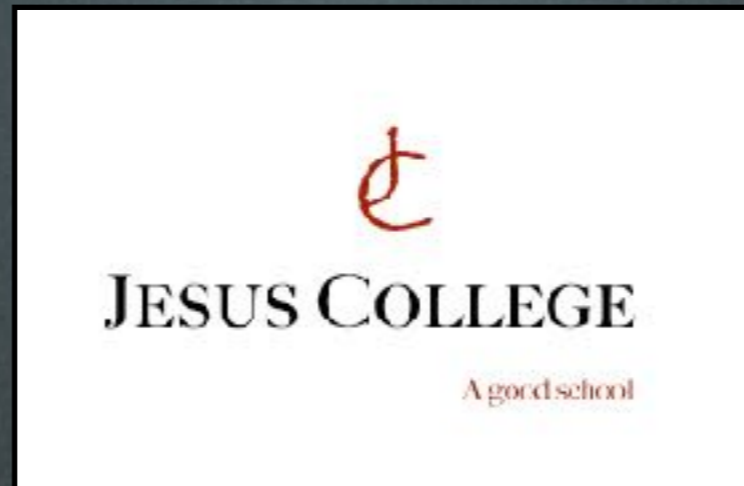






THE SCHOOL  
of  
KINGDOM LIVING

**Information...Registration** — [JohnC@dwillard.org](mailto:JohnC@dwillard.org)



Apprentice to Master Love — //Nouns  
*“A Student of the Superior Benefactor”*

Apprentice to Master Love — //Verbs  
*“Training to be proficient in willing the good”*

**The Mission of Jesus College** - To Empower Apprentices to Master Love by knowing Jesus as the One, great truth and live a good life found in such truth.

**The Vision of Jesus College** - To equip Trainers (Ministry, Business Leaders, Parents) to mentor Leaders (Senior Apprentices) to disciple Apprentices to Master love.

**The Storehouse of Jesus College** - Over [200 FREE downloadable resources & links](#) offering the good life in the person, work, teachings & life of Jesus through “Eyes to See” visual resources and “Ears to Hear” audio resources, plus gatherings live & online provided by JESUS COLLEGE, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization.