

Divine Conspiracy Book Study
Discussion Questions – Jun 15, 2009

Chapter One

Life in the Dark

1. Recall the story of the student of Harvard University's Professor Robert Coles. She asked, "What's the point of *knowing* good if you don't keep trying to *become* a good person?" This illustrates the disconnection between learning or discussing the *knowledge* of right and wrong and actually changing our *actions* and *character* with this knowledge. Question: Is there evidence that the church also experiences this disconnection between knowledge and character? Explain.

2. Do you believe that 'mere ideas' have had drastic consequences in our lives? Have any of them crept into our understanding of how we follow Jesus?

Word from a Different Reality

3. What strikes you or challenges you the most in this section?

4. What is the problem with over-familiarity with the teachings of Jesus? (11)

5. What are God's desires for us? How does he make his desires for us possible?

6. Dallas says, "If I had to choose, I would rather have a car that runs than good insurance on one that doesn't" (p 12). What is he referring to? Agree/disagree?

7. In the section "Entering the Ordinary" (pp 13-14) what startles you about this description of Jesus?

8. Discuss the drive to significance. Where does it come from? In what ways does it signal God's desire to interact with you? (15)

9. Jesus establishes a beachhead of *divine life* in an *ordinary existence* by stepping into the public arena to make his life available to the world. Compare Willard's paraphrase of Mark 1:15 on page 15 with your translation of the Bible. What new insights do you gain in reading it through Willard's perspective?

10. Willard quotes C.S. Lewis (p 20) who teaches about God's desire to transform us from the inside out. In what ways have you experienced God's life in your life?

Made to Rule

11. What is a kingdom? What is in your kingdom?

12. Willard cites Frank Laubach's experiment (p 24) as an example of meshing one man's kingdom with God's kingdom. What do you think about Laubach's experiment?

13. What is God's kingdom? What is in God's kingdom? Where is God's kingdom?

14. What was the 'gospel' of the Old Testament (p 26)? What passages or stories can you recall that fill out our understanding of the gospel of the Old Testament?

15. What is God's intent for our individual kingdoms?

16. What is the divine conspiracy (pp 27-28)?

In the Midst of Many Kingdoms

17. Willard notes that "other 'kingdoms' are still present on earth along with the kingdom of the heavens" (p 29). Do you agree/disagree? Where have you seen "other kingdoms" at work?

18. After finishing Chapter I, share the ways that God has been speaking to you.