

Walking the Way of the Kingdom: Putting into Practice the Way of Jesus

Winter 2026
Dr. Matthew Johnson

Matthew 7:24-25 (ESV)

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.”

I. OVERVIEW & SCOPE

This class will be a practical continuation of the class I taught in the fall of 2025 titled, “The Way of the Kingdom” on the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7. The purpose is to move from the theological and theoretical to the practical. As such, this class will be more discussion and action oriented with practical suggestions to work on each week as we seek to live our our lives in Christ.

II. RESOURCES ON FOLLOWING JESUS

- Comer, John Mark. *Practicing the Way: Be with Jesus, Become like him. Do as he did.* WaterBrook, 2024.
- Foster, Richard. *The Celebration of Discipline.* HarperOne, 2018.
- Willard, Dallas. *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives.* HarperOne, 1990.

III. SESSION SCHEDULE

1. **Session 1:** 1/6/2026 Introduction
2. **Session 2:** 1/13/2026 The Bible
3. **Session 3:** 1/20/2026 Prayer
4. **Session 4:** 1/27/2026 Fasting
5. **Session 5:** 2/4/2025 Community
6. **Session 6:** 2/11/2026 Serving

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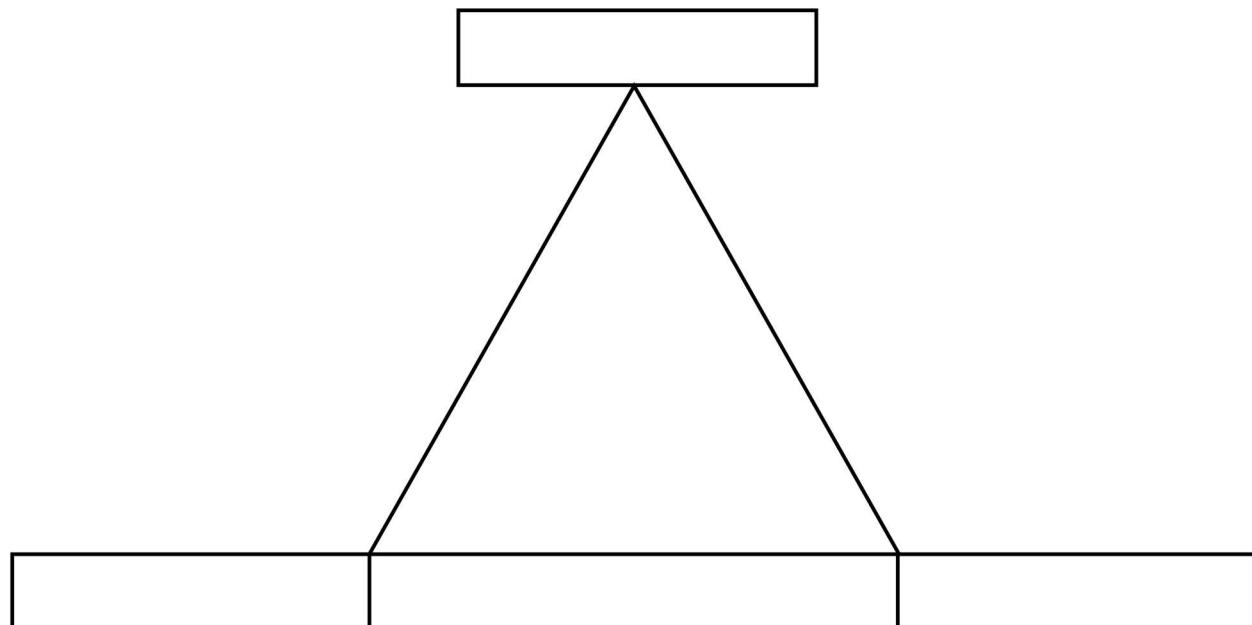
Session 1 – An Introduction

But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person.
– Matthew 5:18 (ESV)

Dallas Willard's Four Big Questions:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

James Bryan Smith's Triangle of Transformation:



Are we human beings or human doings?

Matthew 5:1-20

- Where does our sense of identity primarily come from? In other words, to what degree does what we do affect our sense of self?
- If we're going to become transformed people (in other words, if our actions are going to change to become more Christlike) what is it that needs to be affected first?
- Can our practices and habits inform our hearts?

Next week:

- 1) Read the packet I've provided.
- 2) Write down what your Bible reading practices look like. Don't be embarrassed: this is for you to start as a baseline.
- 3) Write down what you would love for your Bible reading practice to look like. Ask "what are the reasons for that gap? Are there things I could do or not do in order to reduce the gap?
- 4) Spend some time journaling around these question: how much does the Bible affect my understanding of reality and identity? What is the biggest obstacle to spending time in the Word? How will I go about overcoming that obstacle?