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But what is God’s perspective? Through this engaging study of the life of the patriarch Joseph, Dr. Erwin Lutzer shows you what to do with an unfulfilled dream, how to find God’s vision for your life, how to nurture it and live it out, and how to handle the tests along the way.

Best of all, you’ll learn how to live expectantly as you pursue God’s dream for your life. *Keep Your Dream Alive* is one of many impactful books by Dr. Lutzer, a Dallas Theological Seminary graduate and pastor of the historic Moody Church in Chicago. Be sure to send for your copy today!
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Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost is Distinguished Professor of Bible Exposition, Emeritus, at Dallas Theological Seminary, where he has taught since 1955.

“Dr. P.,” as he is affectionately known on campus, graduated magna cum laude from Hampden-Sydney College and from Dallas Theological Seminary, where he holds both the Th.M. and Th.D. degrees. He is also the author of numerous books, including his groundbreaking work on the subject of eschatology (future things) titled Things to Come.

Dr. Pentecost also served as a pastor for many years, including pastorates at Saint John’s Presbyterian Church in Devon, Pennsylvania, from 1946–51, and Grace Bible Church of Dallas from 1958–76. He has two daughters, one of whom went to be with the Lord this past December, and two grandchildren.

This message is taken from a chapel address that Dr. Pentecost delivered to the DTS faculty and student body.

Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost has spent decades studying and teaching the life of Christ. In a recent chapel service, Dr. Pentecost shared with the Dallas Theological Seminary family his insights on what it means to be a Spirit-led follower of Christ. Dr. Pentecost opened his message with these words: “Early in His ministry our Lord called twelve men to Himself. In Mark 3:14 we read: ‘He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.’ Jesus chose these men to be with Him, and He assumed the position of rabbi to teach them. He would invest Himself in them to prepare them for the ministry.” We pray that you will be strengthened and encouraged in your daily Christian life by this powerful message from a beloved DTS professor and longtime pastor.
When Jesus called the twelve disciples to be with Him, one of His ministries to them was to teach them all that God the Father had for them. That Jesus was successful as a teacher is evidenced by the fact that from among those men, Peter, John, and Matthew were set apart later in their ministry to record both the words and the works of Christ.

The apostles had been well taught. They retained what they had been taught. By the Holy Spirit’s enablement, they recorded for our edification what they had been taught. But the key to their ministry is found in three simple words that Jesus spoke to them on the night before His crucifixion: “Abide in me” (John 15:4, kjv).

KNOWLEDGE JOINED WITH DEVOTION

One of the responsibilities we have as faculty members here at Dallas Theological Seminary is to help our students understand that obtaining a degree is not all they need to be equipped for a fruitful, profitable ministry. Even the apostles, who studied at Jesus’ side for more than three years, were not fully equipped for ministry until they learned what it meant to abide in Christ, until the knowledge they had in their minds was joined with devotion to Christ in their hearts.

Over the years, I have been called upon multiple times to provide recommendations for our graduates from churches, schools, and other organizations. I have yet to be asked about the academic record of any applicant. These ministries were not interested in the applicant’s grades in Greek, Hebrew, or theology. A person’s mind may be filled to overflowing with the knowledge of God and His Word. But that alone is not the basis for a successful ministry—or for a successful Christian life, for Jesus’ words “Abide in me” are for all believers.

Later in John 15, as Jesus sat in the Upper Room with the Twelve, He said to them, “I no longer call you servants. . . . I have called you friends” (v. 15). The relationship of a servant to his master is a relationship based on the mind—what one knows. But the relationship of friend to friend moves out of the area of the mind or the intellect and moves into the heart. The apostles, who had been so thoroughly taught that they could record as Scripture what they had been taught, still had to move from the mind to the heart in their relationship with Jesus.

THE LORD’S FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

That is why in the Upper Room, as Jesus was about to send those men out to the ministry that had been entrusted to them, He gave the specific instructions that constitute the basis for a profitable, fruitful ministry. It is those three words we read earlier: “Abide in me.”

I think back to early in my ministry here at DTS. A young man came to us from quite a distinguished collegiate background. He was a member of the UCLA basketball team that in his senior year had won the national championship. There was an aura about him. He handled it well, but he was respected because of what he had accomplished as an athlete. He was also a good student who did well academically.

This young man would often stop by my office to visit. He came in one day all excited. I said, “What’s happened?”

He told of a prominent church in Southern California that was searching for a pastor. They had invited him to come and
preach. He could hardly contain himself, and I rejoiced with him. His appointment was several weeks in the future, and he had come by to share his excitement with me.

When he had preached and returned, I asked him how the message went. He said, “I wowed them!” But then, as the weeks went by I noticed he wasn’t coming around, so I looked him up and asked if he had heard anything from that church. He said with great disappointment, “No, I haven’t heard a word.”

I asked him to tell me about the message he had preached. He explained that he had preached on the various interpretations of Genesis 1:2, depending on how you interpret the Hebrew connective at the beginning of verse 2.

I am sure this young man was excellent at explaining the interpretation of Genesis 1:2. But he had committed a classic rookie mistake, and I understood why the church’s pulpit committee erased his name from consideration. That message was mind to mind. But until what we know has been transferred from our minds to our hearts, it will be empty, cold, and pointless. That’s why when the disciples and Jesus were in the Upper Room, He said to them, “Apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

**MAKING THE FATHER KNOWN**

John had made it very clear in the introduction to his Gospel that Jesus Christ had become incarnate so that He would be the channel through which God the Father would make Himself known. Through Jesus, God would make Himself known to those who should have known Him through the evidence of creation (John 1:10–11). But the people had rejected natural revelation as disclosing the existence and the power and the beauty of God.

Christ came to make the Father known. Christ affirmed, “The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work” (John 14:10). The works that Jesus did were not to attract attention to Himself, although they did validate His claim to be the Son of God and the Messiah.

Every work Christ performed was to reveal the Father to His followers so that they might know the Father. Therefore, in John 17 Jesus said, “As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified” (John 17:18–19).

John 14 informs us that the believer is indwelled by God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is at work through the indwelling Christ to do through you as a believer what He did when He walked the earth to reveal the Father. Christ was not revealing Himself through the miracles He performed as much as He was revealing the Father.

The Father saw His covenant people as blind, and Christ performed miracles of restoring sight to the blind in order that they might know that God the Father in revealing Himself was removing spiritual blindness. God’s covenant people should be ignited in worship, praise, and thanksgiving to the God whom the Son is revealing. Jesus removed muteness from lips that they might know that the Father was loosening their tongues so they can worship Him.

Until what we know has been transferred from our minds to our hearts, it will be empty, cold, and pointless.
is not abiding. A thing is abiding only when that which is abiding is drawing strength from its native element—that which nourishes and supports and maintains its life.

So a farmer who wanted to start a vineyard would prepare the soil, the native element for that plant. Then he would plant that grapeplant into the ground, and through its roots system it would reach out into its native element and take into itself from that in which it abides, that which nourishes, supports, and sustains the grapevine. Eventually, that in which the grape is abiding will reproduce itself through the branch and produce a luscious bunch of grapes.

That's not the fruit of the vine; it's the result of abiding in its native element. That element into which we have been introduced is the element of the Son. He who has come to reveal the Father becomes that which nourishes, supports, and sustains the imparted life that belonged to the grape and produces fruit to the benefit of the owner of the vineyard.

Abiding is not the relationship of mind to mind, but of heart to heart.

CHRIST IS OUR LIFE

Galatians 2:20 tells us, “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” From His residence within us, Christ is seeking to do through us that which He came to do in the time that He walked among men to reveal the Father. The only way we can do that is to be in personal, intimate relationship to the Son—the Son unhindered and unhampered in His work of revealing the Father through us.

That's what Christ was trying to impart when He used a figure from nature to reveal His concept of abiding. The word translated “abide” in John 15:4 and following can have several significances in the Greek language. It can refer simply to a geographical connection. It could be said that Jesus changed His residence and abode in Capernaum. That is a physical, external relationship, but that's not abiding.

WHAT IT MEANS TO ABIDE

So to get His point across, Jesus used the figure of a grape plant. Let me put it this way. You may take a 2 x 4 piece of wood, sharpen it, and then with a heavy hammer pound it into the ground. That stake is in the ground, but it

Every work Christ performed was to reveal the Father to His followers so that they might know the Father.
As believers in Jesus Christ, we all need to continue growing in our knowledge of God and His grace. Words “are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me” (John 14:24).

When even as late as in the Upper Room, one of Jesus’ own came to Him and said, “Show us the Father” (John 14:8), I from years of experience in the classroom would not be at all surprised if hearing that question, Jesus didn’t sigh a deep sigh. What did His disciples think He had been doing for the past three years? Christ had spent those years revealing the Father by His words and works, but up to that point, it had not migrated from the disciples’ heads to their hearts.

But once Christ gives you a passion for Himself and His Word and transfers what you are learning from your head to your heart, your life will produce fruit. Become rooted in Christ, for the root can transfer all that God is through you to those around you. Our Father gives us a passion to abide so that throughout this age the Father can be revealing Himself through Jesus Christ.

There is no end to my amazement when it comes to the life and ministry of Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost, or “Dr. P.” as he is affectionately called on campus. Here is a 96-year-old scholar, beloved teacher, and dear saint of God who is still growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ.

All of us at Dallas Theological Seminary deeply appreciate Dr. Pentecost’s heart for God, his love for students, and his love of the ministry. His lifetime’s worth of work on the life of Christ has been the subject of one of the most popular courses ever offered at Dallas Theological Seminary. So when Dr. P. spoke on this at a Seminary chapel service, it was an easy decision to decide to share it with you in this issue of Veritas. It is a classic subject by a man of God whose heart beats with the things that matter most to his Lord.

When I think of Dr. P., three things come to mind: a Book, a Person, and an experience. The Book is God’s Word, which Dr. P. has spent a lifetime studying and living out. The Person is Jesus Christ, whom Dr. P. has also spent a lifetime teaching about. The experience is the Christian life, the life of the Spirit, which has been the dominant focus of his life.

One of the great joys for me in providing DTS students with Bible-centered training is the privilege it affords them to sit under the teaching and influence of godly instructors and mentors like Dr. Pentecost.

I am also delighted for the opportunity to share his biblical wisdom with you by means of this booklet. It comes to you with my very heartfelt appreciation for your support of Dallas Theological Seminary. It is our desire to help you grow in Christ as you share with us from your heart. We continue to thank God for you daily!