

Christian Formation Workshop 2025

THEORIES OF DIVINE TRANSFORMATION

Understanding How God Changes Lives

OPENING COMMENTS

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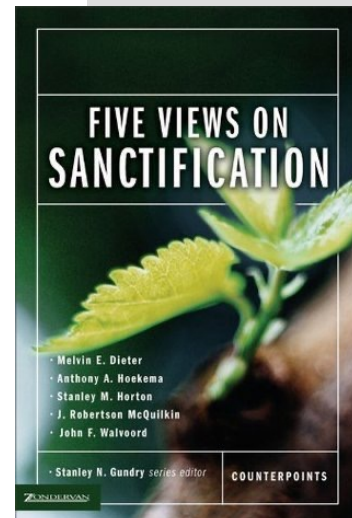
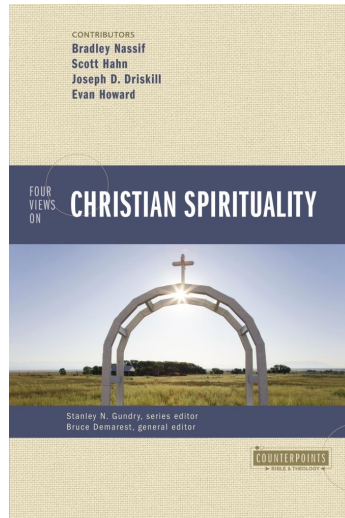
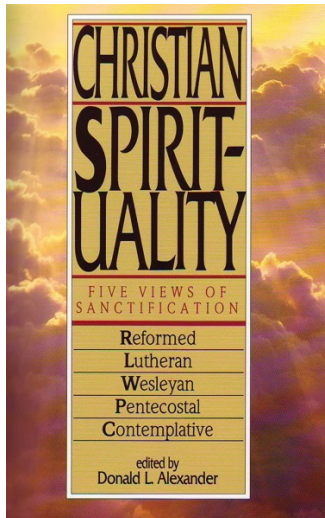
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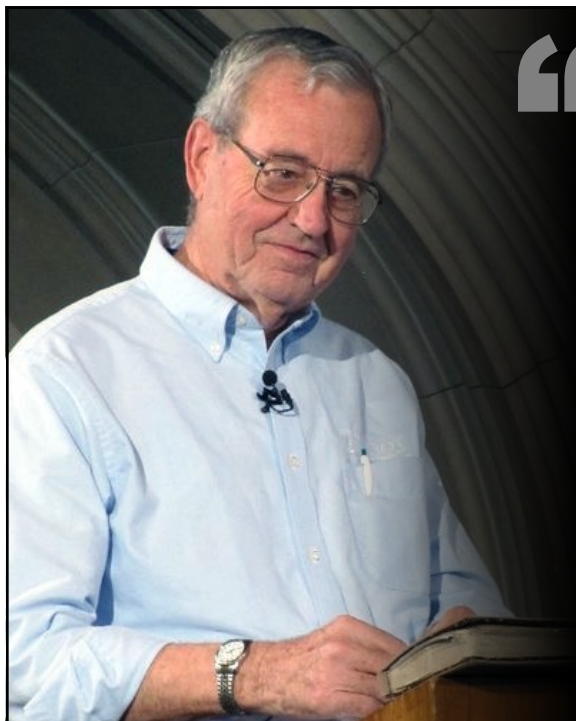
- “[Apollos] had been instructed in the way of the Lord. . . . he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus . . . but when Pricilla and Aquila heard [Apollos], they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately” (Acts 18:25, 26).
- “We ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification” (1 Thess 4:1–3).
- “We proclaim Christ, warning and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me” (Col 1:28–29).

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DISPARATE MODELS



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“Most Christians had been told by me as by many others to attend the services of the church, give of time and money, pray, read the Bible, do good to others, and witness to their faith. . . . It was painfully clear to me that, with rare and beautiful exceptions, Christians were not able to do even these few necessary things in a way that was really good for them, as things that would be an avenue to life filled and possessed by God. . . . I finally decided their problem was a theological deficiency, a lack in teaching, understanding, and practical direction. And the problem, I also decided, was one that the usual forms of ministry and teaching obviously do not remedy.”

DALLAS WILLARD, *THE SPIRIT OF THE DISCIPLINES*

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“In both my personal and pastoral experience, the problem is not that people don’t want to change (most do) or aren’t trying to change (most are); it’s that they don’t know *how* to change. We don’t have a good grasp on how the human soul goes from spiritual birth to spiritual maturity.”

- John Mark Comer

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Three Stages of Refining Our Knowledge of Sanctification

- **Stage One:** Prayerfully Identify Your Model (purgation)
- **Stage Two:** Prayerfully Attend to the Evidence (illumination)

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“If I were to say that what I want to show people is that what really matters is utter trust in God; that this trust cannot be there until we have lost all self-trust and are rooted in poverty; that we must be willing to go to God with empty hands, and that the whole meaning of our existence and the one consuming desire of the heart of God is that we should let ourselves be loved, many spiritual persons would smile at my naïveté. They are likely to murmur: ‘But we know all that; we can read that in any spiritual book. Does she think she is telling us something new?’ All I can say is that, although I too have known this in theory, it is only now that it is integrated into my life. At least so it seems. Probably in five years time or even next year, I will realize that now I know next to nothing about it” (Burrows, “Before the Living God,” 2).

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Three Stages of Refining Our Knowledge of Sanctification

- **Stage One:** Prayerfully Identify Your Model (purgation)
- **Stage Two:** Prayerfully Attend to the Evidence (illumination)
- **Stage Three:** Prayerfully Draw Near to God (communion)

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