

'Divine Conspiracy' Author Dallas Willard Dies

Dallas Willard, philosopher, professor and best-selling author of *The Divine Conspiracy*, died of cancer on Wednesday. He was 77.

Willard was "one of the great reformers of Christian thought of the past century," and "his most powerful lessons were in how he lived an unhurried life with God," said Gary Moon, director of the Dallas Willard Center for Spiritual Formation at Westmont College in Santa Barbara, Calif.

The Divine Conspiracy was *Christianity Today's* Book of the Year for 1999. Additionally, Willard's *Renovation of the Heart* won *Christianity Today's* 2003 Book Award for Spirituality and the Association of Logos Bookstores' 2003 Book Award for Christian Living. His other books included *Hearing God*, *A Place for Truth* and *The Spirit of the Disciplines*.

Willard had also taught philosophy at the University of Southern California since 1965, and headed the school's philosophy department from 1982 to 1985.

He believed passivity was a widespread problem in the church, and his greatest goal was to make genuine disciples of Jesus. His writing focused on spiritual formation, which, he emphasized, was not merely behavioral modification.

"Dallas thought about his faith, and he talked about his faith, but, most importantly, he talked about Jesus, whom he called the 'smartest man who ever lived,'" said InterVarsity Press (IVP) Publisher Bob Fryling. "I am deeply indebted to Dallas for his winsome example and rich teaching on how to be a spiritual person as a disciple of Jesus Christ."

Cindy Bunch, IVP's associate editorial director, added:

“[Author] James Bryan Smith has shared with me of how Dallas would encourage him not to reference him so much, saying, ‘If it was any good, it did not come from me, but from the Holy Spirit, so consider it public domain.’ “

Earlier this week, Willard revealed that he was battling stage four cancer. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Jane; two children, John and Becky; and a granddaughter.