

WHAT IS AN UNCLEAN HEART?

Transcript of a clip from the talk **LIVING WITHOUT A CLEAN HEART** by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

So, many of us who are born of God, who have received the Spirit of Jesus into us and who try to read the Bible and who try to pray day-by-day, many of us have found that there is still within us, an unclean heart. There's something within us that has started to make our life with God a kind of uphill struggle, that contrasts so clearly with our experience at the beginning because when we first sensed Jesus' Spirit, it seemed to be easy and natural to obey Him and we seem to just zoom along, it was so easy. What was inside seemed to be all sweet and fragrant but gradually as the years have passed, we have begun to find there's something inside, like a kind of weight inside. A kind of drag on us and we've begun to find, it's more like climbing up a steep hill to obey God. You know what you should do but you don't seem able to do it because your heart is not going the same way as your will wants to go.

For many of us it's like a kind of computer inside that has kind of a bug in the memory system and we're going along and we meet suddenly a person who is very blunt and very argumentative and we know we should be able to punch up the gentle, peaceful Spirit of Jesus from our hearts and we punch the right button but there's something wrong inside and the old memory storage seems to send up an attitude of 'Give him as good as you get' and you can't hold it back and it's as if your storage of feelings inside store different ones from the ones you used to experience. Or you're passing by a magazine stand and you see the magazine with the picture on it and you try to punch up the Spirit of Jesus' love for that dear person on the magazine cover but something goes wrong inside and that storage sends up on the screen of your imagination all kinds of lustful thoughts and actions that can't possibly co-exist with the Spirit of Jesus.

Loved ones, that's the key to the up and down life, that last sentence. That's why many of us who are Christians have an up and down, spirit and flesh, in and out Christian life because Jesus' Spirit cannot co-exist with evil. His Spirit cannot co-exist with evil. In other words, His Spirit cannot dwell in an unclean heart.

This book loved ones is just a good one called 'The Spirit of Christ' by Andrew Murray and I'll just read you two sentences, "In the Old Testament, we have the Spirit of God coming upon men and working on them in special times and ways, working from above without and within. In the New, we have the Holy Spirit entering them and dwelling with them" -- you see, not working upon them from without as He did on prophets and kings and priests at special times but the Holy Spirit in the New, coming and dwelling within them, working from within, without and upwards. "In the former, we have the Spirit of God as the almighty and holy one, in the latter we have the Spirit of the Father of Jesus Christ."

Now the fact is those of us with unclean hearts are somewhere between the Old Testament and the New, that's it. We've experienced the forgiveness of sins of the Old Testament and something of the regeneration of the New but not the full indwelling that God planned for us.

You remember it's what we said in that Ezekiel Chapter 36. You remember God gave the promise of the New Covenant and He said, "I will put a new spirit within you", that's, "I'll regenerate your spirit. I'll make it alive and new", and then He says, "And I will put a new heart within you because I will put My Spirit within you", that is the Holy Spirit.

Now loved ones if your heart is not clean, your spirit is renewed and you have periodic experiences of the Holy Spirit's action upon your spirit but you do not have a constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit within. He is not in fact at home in your heart. He is a guest and He cannot be at home until your spirit has finally given up the right ever to resist Him and until you have been prepared to make your heart absolutely what He wants it to be.