

Ministry of the Spirit: Witnessing

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Now those are really the three main steps in the move towards God again. God has to deal with our guilty conscience which is what happens when we're born of God, when we see that Jesus has died for our sins and that the blood of Jesus pleases our Father. Then, that deals with our guilty conscience and we can look at God and say, "We know Father you're going to accept us because of the blood of Jesus presented on our behalf, not because we have never sinned." And that's what we experience at the new birth. But even after that, many of us are still conscience of an independent will that wants its own way. And that's what is dealt with when we come into an experience of death to self, or crucifixion with Christ, or the filling with the Holy Spirit, or the baptism with the Holy Spirit. And that is an instantaneous experience.

Some dear ones have been troubled with the word "crisis experience." And they've come to a place where they've been ready to die to that independent will, but they felt, "Ah, but it must be a big crisis." Now, it's crisis in the sense of an instantaneous experience. But obviously the Holy Spirit could be working on you for weeks and months and could bring you gradually to a place where you say, "Well, I'm willing never to have my own will again, never to have my own way again." And then it's just a case of receiving the Holy Spirit in to fill you, just completely, quietly, and in faith.

But even after that many of us have discovered that we still have mental habits, or soulish abilities that have been going the wrong way for years. Some of us have great mighty intellects that we have used for years to defend ourselves and then when we got into Jesus' service, we've used them to serve Jesus with. And those intellectual powers need to be broken and brought under the control of the Holy Spirit. Some of us have strong emotions that we use to get our own way with other people. And then when we gave ourselves to Jesus, we used these strong emotions to do his work. Now those need to come into a state of brokenness before the Holy Spirit can really pour through us.

Now dear ones, that's what we talk about in these Sunday evenings, that third step that comes after the baptism of the Holy Spirit. And it's the step that concerns the soulish powers that we have, and the need to walk, not in these soulish powers, but to walk instead in the spirit. So if I could use maybe one or two examples. There's a dear brother here and he won't mind me sharing. And I'm sure you won't be able to recognize him, he's so transformed. And I suppose he's laughing to himself at this moment.

But he used to be in Christian work a lot. And he used to be--you remember LBJ [Lyndon Baines Johnson, former US President] said, "There are rockers and there are doers." And he was a doer. Well, this man was a doer, a real go, go organizer. And he was used to going into churches and leading everything and teaching Sunday School class, and all that. Now he's begun to see that if Jesus is going to pour life through him, he and all that active, almost frenetic energy that he gives out, and that soulish zeal, have to come under the control of the Holy Spirit, and be brought into restraint.

Now that's something of what we mean, you see, by soulish powers. Some of us have wild emotions. We're very emotional people. We just weep very easily. We laugh very easily. And we begin to discover that this tendency to laugh too quickly or to weep too quickly is hindering Jesus' life

flowing through us. And we see that that needs to be brought under the control of the Holy Spirit. Now that's what we mean by soulish powers, and the need to have those broken at the cross.

Now last Sunday we talked, you remember, a little of living the life of emotion and feeling. And that was under the title "The Christian's Feelings," brothers and sisters. And if you are concerned about that then that cassette, I know, is in the library. And it dealt with the Christian's feelings. Now, we need to talk this evening about the life of faith--the life of faith as opposed to the life of feeling.

Now would you like to look at some of the references that show that it is God's will for us to live a life of faith? Romans 1:17 is one of those verses. "For in it," that is the gospel, "The righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live.'" Or do you see the footnote B there in the RSV agreeing with the King James translation, "The righteous shall live by faith." Now God says, "The righteous, the people who are real children of his, will live by faith."

Now would you like to look at Galatians 2:20? And the same truth is repeated plainly. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." And you remember that the Greek really is, "I live by the faith of the Son of God," not in the Son of God. "But this life I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." In other words, it's Jesus' faith exercising itself through us.

And then 2 Corinthians 5:7, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." And all of us, you see, this evening, will say, "Amen brother, that's right we walk by faith. And then we'll experience that great hilltop experience, you see, when either our sins are forgiven or we realize that we have been crucified with Christ. And we'll have that great sense of Jesus' presence, And we'll say yes, our job is to walk by faith." And we'll get up some morning, and we'll feel nothing. And we'll lack that feeling of that burning love of God. We'll lack the feeling that he's really present in our hearts. And we'll suddenly look around and say, "God has left me I must have sinned." And we say, "We walk by faith, I know. But we need to feel it."

Now dear ones, do you see we need to come to terms with this business of whether you walk by faith or whether you walk by feeling? And that's what we shared last Sunday--the need to see that feeling is part of the soul. Now, God dwells in your spirit. And your spirit is inside your soul, as it were. And your mind, emotions and will that form your soul, is like an overcoat around the spirit. Now, it may manifest itself in your mind and emotions or it may not. But God is present in your spirit because you believe he is there not because you feel he is present in your soul, because he doesn't dwell in your soul. He dwells in your spirit.

You remember last Sunday we shared the need to see that God at times will withdraw feeling from us. And we need to be prepared for that. And we need to learn to walk by faith in his presence. At times, you see, God gives us a great burning sense of his love of us. And at times we sit before Jesus, and we just know his love, and we just feel it in our hearts. And we have no doubt that he loves us. And then there comes a time when God withdraws that feeling from us.

Now often he does that, you remember, either to reveal to us that there is sin in our life. In which case we just have to ask the Holy Spirit, "Will you show us sin if it exists there?" Or if it's not to reveal sin, in the case of someone who has not been crucified with Christ, it may be simply to

draw us nearer to the Father. Because at times you see, we'll exist in our feelings. And we'll enjoy the feelings rather than God himself. And God, therefore, withdraws the feelings to draw us closer to himself. At times God will withdraw the feelings from us to get us to stop living in the feeling, because he knows that the feelings are a dangerous place to dwell in. Because, if you dwell in the feelings when you're exhilarated, then Satan can easily take the feelings away from you. And you'll be utterly depressed. And you'll dwell in the midst of depression also. And so, at times, God withdraws feelings from us to drive us out of the realm of feeling and into the realm of the spirit.

You know, too, that while you're a victim of your feelings, you're a victim of your environment. It's through your feelings that you feel the other people. It's through your feelings that you sense atmosphere. While you're dominated by your feelings you're dominated by your atmosphere and your environment. And really, you're living in the world. And you're living of the world, which is contrary to God's will for us.

So you remember last Sunday we shared those reasons why God will withdraw feelings, at times, from us. Another reason he'll withdraw feelings from us, is because sometimes he will give us a foretaste of an experience of, for instance, the filling with the Holy Spirit. He will give us a foretaste of an experiencing our feelings. And then he will expect us to possess, what he has given us in our feelings, to possess it in our spirits by the exercise of our wills.

So at times, you see, a dear one will be born of God. And there will come a great sense of release and a great sense of joy. And then God withdraws the feelings after two weeks, because he wants that dear one to begin to exercise their will so that they'll begin to maintain that experience in their spirit and not in their feeling. It's the same with the experience of the filling with the Spirit. Some dear ones come into the filling with the Spirit with a great experience of tongues, or a great experience of the praise or glory of God. And they have no question that they've been filled with the Spirit. And then God knows that he has to withdraw that feeling from them because they're dwelling primarily in the midst of the feeling. And they need to begin to apply that in the spirit and begin to retain in the spirit, by the exercise of their will, what God gave them a foretaste of, in their emotions.

And so it's very important, dear ones, to see that God will not let us stay in our feelings. And you know, he will be merciless with us. And he will continue to follow us and beat us over the head, and take those feelings away until we begin to live and walk in the spirit. And he will never be satisfied until he brings us to that place, because we are of no use to him, you see, while we are dwelling in the feeling, because Satan can get at the feelings. The world can get at the feelings. Our friends can get at our feelings. An atmosphere of a meeting can get at our feelings. And we're in nothing but an unstable place while we're dwelling in our feelings.

Now you remember too, that one of the reasons God withdraws feelings from us is to get us to go onto a new plane of fellowship with himself. And so we should really always be glad when the feelings disappear. All we should do is ask the Holy Spirit, "Holy Spirit, is there any sin in my life? If there is, will you reveal it to me?" If he reveals nothing, then we need to take a position in faith and say, "I thank you Father that you've withdrawn this feeling from me. I thank you that you're still here. That you are unchanging and that you're going to bring me into a stronger place in my own spirit." But I think there's great need, brothers and sisters, maybe, to get that very clear just before we begin.

Now do you see that the life of faith is utterly different from the life of feeling? The life of faith is completely different from the life of feeling. In the life of feeling you only work for God when you feel an unutterable sense of bliss and enthusiasm. See, when you're living a life of feeling you only go out and witness for God if you feel like it. If you feel Christ's presence in your emotions so tremendously that you just want to burst out, then you can go out and witness for him. Or, if you feel a great sense of your obligation to Jesus, then you can come and do some hard, sweated labor for his body.

But do you see that if you're living in the feelings, if that great love of Jesus is not present in your feeling, if you don't feel as if you could burst out with a love of others, than you do nothing? When the feeling of bliss disappears, the activity disappears. When the emotion of love to Jesus goes, then the work and obedience to Jesus goes. And dear ones, do you see that a lot of us spend a lot of our time in that position? A lot of us, you see, rebel against the Campus Crusade emphasis that you ought to go out and witness. And of course, we use that rebellion just as an excuse to get into a life of feeling. And we say, "Oh, well I ought not go out and witness unless I feel like it."

No, you ought not go out and witness if the Holy Spirit is not guiding your spirit to do that. You should only go out and witness if the Holy Spirit is guiding your spirit to go out and witness. But, do you see, that's a different thing from feeling it in your emotions? And a lot of us, I think, have not really come to a place where we've been broken of our emotions. And we use feeling. And we make that an excuse. We say, "Ah, the intuition of my spirit isn't telling me to do this." Actually, all that happened is, we've become depressed or cold in our feelings. And we're not doing it.

Now the life of faith is a life that goes out despite feeling and against feeling at times. The life of feeling depends completely on it. The life of faith depends on something that is unchanging. The life of feeling depends on something that is just swaying--whether the sun shines, whether it rains, whether it's a cloudy day, whether it's been a good service, whether they sang the hymns that you like, or whether you've met somebody that you enjoy being with. In other words, it's an unstable constantly changing thing.

You can see, too, that the old life of feeling, you know, is preoccupied with self, really. It's really preoccupied with self, where we say, "Ah, I don't feel that God loves me today the way I felt it yesterday." Or, "I don't feel God's presence, somehow, in these days." And you see that that shows that we're preoccupied with ourselves. We're not preoccupied with God. We're preoccupied with whether we feel God is present.

Is God here? See? All of us would agree, of course he's here. Jesus said again and again, "Look, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." We know he's here. But when you sink into feeling, you begin to doubt that. And you begin to live in that realm of feeling. And that feeling is preoccupied, not with whether he's here or not, because you know he's here, but whether you feel that he's here or not. In other words the life of feeling is a self centered feeling. It's preoccupied with the one who believes, rather than preoccupied with the one in whom he believes. One is preoccupied with self. The other is preoccupied with God.

And so this is another distinction, you know, it's preoccupied with our own enjoyment. I think it's plain that God does not want his children to be preoccupied with their own enjoyment. This is one thing we need to watch in spiritual meetings. You know the way we tend to run around, we go to

Saint Frances Cabrini [Church in Minneapolis] because really, "Oh, I felt Jesus' presence there." Or we go to Ashland [Campus Church house] because, "I really felt God was there." Or, we come here tonight because, "I really feel that they love me." Now, brothers and sisters, do you see that that's alright, initially, to be drawn to God? But there must come a time when we start going to places because God tells us to go. There must come a time when we stop being selfish people who want feelings, feelings, feelings.

Dear ones, if we do that, do you know that Satan will lead us from meeting, to meeting, to meeting for the rest of our lives? And that's really what happens to a lot of people who enter into some life of the spirit. They begin to dwell not in the spirit but in the emotions. And so they'll go where there's lovely singing in the spirit, or they'll go where there's a certain kind of atmosphere that has a certain kind of emotion in it that touches you. Now, do you see that sooner or later God wants to draw us away from just enjoying our own feelings? He wants us to come onto a higher plane than just going where we enjoy being.

You can see if that's the case, none of us will ever get to China, because you certainly wouldn't go to China to enjoy yourself. And none of us will ever get to any of the other countries. We'll just stay here, you see, because it's more enjoyable to be here. So you can see how important it is to come out of a life of feeling and into a life of faith.

You can see that faith is what goes on despite melancholy, despite sorrow, despite despondency, despite any depression. Faith goes on whether it is interested or not. The life of feeling you know, draws us to be satisfied with the joy that we feel. The life of faith draws us to be satisfied with God's will and God's will only.

When a person is still living in a life of feeling and depression hits them--and do you see Satan can drop depression on you like that? Do you see that? Brothers and sisters it's no problem. Satan can always get at your soul. He can always drop depression upon you. Your dear ones at home can bring you into depression, just like that. Many of us, as husbands and wives, know how close you are to the dear one you live with. And you know if the dear one goes down, boy! you can just go down like that. And if your spiritual life is lived in your emotions, then you'll be up and down, however often you're filled with the Holy Spirit. You'll just be up and down.

That's why, you see, it's important to see that there's something beyond the baptism of the Spirit. The baptism with the Spirit is the beginning of the walk in the Spirit. But if we don't learn to walk in the Spirit, then we can be baptized with the Spirit 30 or 40 times, but it still will make no difference, because we'll walk each time back into our emotions.

Now it's important for guidance, too, you see, because many of us, if we are not broken in our emotions, begin to receive the emotional guidance as the intuition of our spirits. And that causes just chaos, you know. And again, and again brother and sisters are coming and saying, "Oh, I feel I should go here," or, "I feel I should do this." And you know, if you'd only check it dear ones. Usually you say it after about a week's hard prayer, you know. You stay before the Father for a whole week--which is magnificent for such a mighty change in your life. And then you say, "Oh, I feel I should go there." Dear ones, we should stay before the Father for weeks, you see. We should allow the Holy Spirit to nail this down in our spirits and we should be quiet until that happens.

Some of us share too quickly, you know. A feeling passes through us and we say, "Oh, I feel God wants me to go to Pakistan." And we share it. And it isn't in the intuition of our spirits, but we

share it. And by sharing it, Satan uses the confirmation of our bodily expression, to affirm it again inside us. And so the body combines with the emotion and they both work against any quietness of spirit that we need to hear God's command to us.

And so you can see the importance of coming to a brokenness in the emotion. That's why we really need to come to, you know, just a deeper work of the cross inside us. I think a lot of us feel it's enough to forsake physical comfort, you know. Or, it's enough to forsake emotional happiness, or worldly happiness. It's enough to just stop getting our kicks from water skiing and from riding motorcycles. It's enough just to forsake the extreme riches of the world. But do you see that God wants us also to forsake joy and peace as things that we demand continually from him. He wants us to come to a place where we're able to walk without joy and peace at the times he wants us to walk that way. He doesn't want us always to be demanding joy and demanding peace.

He wants us to come into the kind of thing you remember, that Paul came into if you look at it there in 2 Corinthians 6:4 on. Of course, you can see the importance of this, if it is true that before the year 2000 we will all come into persecution such as we don't now know. "But as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger; by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God."

Now God wants us you see, to come into that place where we're willing to live without this constant peace and this constant sense of joy in our emotions. A lot of us feel this you see, "Oh well now, isn't it true that Rembrandt [Dutch painter] in the midst of tremendous physical suffering had a great sense of the joy of God in his spirit?" Yes, but that's only because he came to the place where he was willing to endure tremendous physical suffering without any inward consolation. Now do you see that?

God doesn't want us only to be able to endure physical suffering and torture. He wants us to be able to endure it even without inward consolation. See, a lot of us think, "Oh now, Rembrandt and Nee [Watchman Nee, a Chinese Christian] they all tell us that this was so, that God gave them great sense of his presence, great sense of joy and indifference to pain." Yes, but only after they had come to a death to their emotions and into a place where they were willing to endure physical suffering without any inward consolation. Now, do you see this is proof that we love our Father? This is proof that we're willing to walk by faith.

Old John Bunyan [Author of Pilgrim's Progress], you know, was being hounded from place-to-place and from jail-to-jail. And the men in charge, at last decided that they would hang him. And Bunyan, you know, got down and prayed this, "I prayed to the Father, and I got up from my knees and I said, 'If God does not intervene, I will leap into eternity by blind faith, come heaven come hell.'" Now, do you see, that's faith? "I will go in whether he blesses me or not because I know that this is true. And he has already given me signal proof of his presence and signal proof of his graciousness to me. Now, I'm going to believe him whether I feel it or not."

Now, loved ones, this is walking by faith, you see--not walking by grabbing at every little consolation emotionally that the Father can give us. And this is what we need to come into.

You can see that the life of faith is independent of circumstances. You saw that in old Job's story. It's Job 13:15. And you remember the whole trial really was based on this. Satan said, "Oh Job believes in you alright because you have given him wealth, and power, and happiness. But just

put forth your hand upon him and withdraw the graciousness that you've shown him and he will curse you." And you remember the whole story of Job is just that. "Behold, he will slay me; I have no hope; yet I will defend my ways to his face." And you remember, the King James Version says, "Even though he slay me I will still believe in him." "Even though he slay me..." And this is the kind of faith that God wants us to enter into now.

Now you may say, "Oh, but Pastor, will it now be all misery?" No, the Father will begin to give us joy in the spirit and peace in the spirit if we will really come to a death to our emotions and to our desire to feel these things in our emotions. Yeah, I mean, the Bible is full of joy in the spirit, dear ones. But it's a different thing than joy in the emotions. Romans 14:17, it is. "For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Yeah, God will give us, through the Holy Spirit, peace and joy in our spirits, but only after we've come to a death to our desire to feel these things in our emotions.

And you get it again, you know, in Galatians 5:22, the fruit of the spirit. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law." And in other words, if you live after the spirit you live in the spirit and apart from emotions. And you give up these crutches that everyone wants to have, you see, these crutches of sensation. "Unless I feel a burning sense of Jesus' love I do not believe he loves me." No, you've sensed at times God expects you to believe it now without feeling it.

Now you can see that this ties up with everything. It ties up first of all with the life of faith being a life of the will. There are two kinds of Christians really, who are filled with the spirit. There are those who live by the emotions even after they're filled with the spirit and there are those who live by the will. Now you can see the importance, dear ones, of beginning to exercise your will to obey God. A lot of us sort of float around and say, "I do not feel like witnessing." But the Father has told us to go and preach the gospel to all nations. He has told us to witness. That's a direct command, We are to put ourselves in the way of witnessing.

Now do you see that's the difference? A lot of us feel, "Oh, but Pastor do you mean we're go to out with the four spiritual laws and just present them to everybody we meet?" No, but you've to go out. You've to get into a position where you're available for the Father, you see. He may not want you to share the four spiritual laws. He may hate you sharing the four spiritual laws. But if you put yourself in the way of obedience and in a position where you can be used to witness and trust the Holy Spirit to open the door for you, then he will open it. But he won't open it if you sit at home. He won't open it if you lay in bed. But, he'll open it if you put yourself in the way of witnessing. And brothers and sisters, God dearly needs Christians who will stop moving back and forward by their emotions and will begin to go out in obedience.

Dear ones, you remember the way old Milton [John Milton, 17th century English poet] tells of how in heaven, in his imagination, you know the Father asked, "Who will step forward for mankind?" And you remember, how Jesus stepped forward and said, "I will step forward." Do you see what a position we will be in if Jesus said, "Well, I don't feel like going down and suffering those things?" Do you see? If he had said, "No, wait for several centuries, and if I feel like it." Dear ones, do you see that it's will and it's obedience that makes Christians?

That's why you know, I presented so strongly to you, in connection with work around the house of Dunamis and the bookshop, selling books on the campus, doing things in the body [church body]. You know, what the brother shared last Sunday evening was relevant, that there's a danger in becoming

obese spiritually except that you will never become obese spiritually. You'll just become obese in the flesh, you see, and in your mind, and your emotions. A person who is healthy spiritually is a person who is going out obeying God. And oh, there's a great need to do that.

You remember, I shared with you before, the tendency for many of us who are interested in the deeper life to spin our wheels, you know. And we say, "Oh, I'm waiting for Jesus to anoint me with the Holy Spirit, and then I'll really set this world aflame." But you see he will only anoint you with the Holy Spirit if you're out obeying him, doing your best to set the world aflame. Doing the best you know, obeying all you know. And so there's a great need, you know, to turn the life of faith into a life of the will where you exercise the will.

Maybe I could share this with you and it would come home maybe more significantly. During last summer June, July and August I came into just a new experience of Jesus ministering to me from the right hand of the Father, you know. And you know that we've shared oh just the reality of this again, and again this year. And I came into a great sense you know, where I could ride along in the car and just feel the life of Jesus coming into me. Now, I had never felt that before. But you know, I would have a pain in my body and I would just receive the life of Jesus and the pain would clear. And so June, July, and August was just spent like that.

Or, you know, Satan would attack with depression and I would just look to Jesus at the right hand of the Father and the depression would just disappear. And I could almost feel it coming into me. And it went on like that through June, July, August and it came on to the time, you remember, when I needed to make some decisions about the campus church and I was in Bethany Presbyterian at that time. And I had written to the Mormons, and no reply had come back, offering a sanctuary. And then in September a letter came.

Now let me tell you this. And I can tell you it now. All feeling disappeared. Really. It was as if Satan – you know, when you're going to do anything for him he attacks and withdraws everything from you. And you know, for a few days I was bewildered. I wondered, "Maybe this isn't the Father's will. Maybe I shouldn't go forward." Now, dear ones, I can tell you now I went through all of the autumn with not an iota of feeling, really. And you know that the Father has just blessed us. Do you see that he blesses often most--he blesses your ministry, when you feel least?

And dear ones, we need to come into that. We need to come into a place where we will minister because Jesus has told us to minister, not because we feel like ministering. Where we'll witness because Jesus has told us in our spirits we are to witness, not because we feel like it. And you can see what a mighty army God can create if he had a group of us who work independently of feeling. You get a group of men, or a group of sisters who are based on that and, dear ones, the gates of hell cannot prevail against them.

You see, that's what the church is. It's a body of men and women who walk by faith and by exercising their will. You see that all our problems in our churches come because we're all living in our feelings. And if somebody says something to me--Oh, I'm just offended. And I'll never go back to that church. And you know, Satan must just laugh and the Father must weep at the poor pretenses we make at being that body against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

Now you can see that it connects up with the whole business of the work of God, you see, and with the battling of the enemy. You can't war against the enemy in prayer unless you've come independent of your feelings, you see, because there is no great joy in travailing in prayer. You remember, I

think it's mentioned there by Paul, Galatians 4:19. He got back to these old Galatians, you remember. And they were just falling back into legalism. He states this truth you know, of travailing in prayer, "My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you!"

Now do you see that travail comes from the same word, you remember, as work. And travail is what a mother experiences when she's bringing a baby to birth. Now travail in prayer is not a tremendously enjoyable thing. It's hard perspiring work. Now if we don't come free of our feelings, every time the prayer burden gets heavy we'll withdraw from it. And that's why there's so little deep work being done in people's spirits these days, because we seem to have so few intercessors--people who will intercede with the Father for others. And that's why we have a lot of fluffy meringue kind of work, you know. It's solid on the outside but it's all soft on the inside. So much building wood, hay and stubble on the foundation of Jesus, instead of precious stones and gems, because very few of us are able yet to enter into the travailing work of prayer, because it's something that doesn't give you personally much joy or satisfaction. It's something that you do because the Father has told you to do it.

Now, loved ones, do you see that all this is preparing us for what we believe will come sooner or later--a time of tremendous persecution, a time when all the forces of evil will press in on the body of Christ. And you can see that unless we've come to a life of faith, as opposed to feeling, there will be nothing but defeat after defeat. But in that life of faith, when you come into that place where you walk by faith, there is absolute rest. You cannot be moved by circumstance. You cannot be moved by environment. Your mind and emotions can do what they like, but in the spirit you know that God is there, and that he does not change, and that there is no shadow of turning within him, and that he loves you every moment with all his being, and his life is flowing down to you every moment. And dear ones, you cannot be touched when you come into that position. It is a place of absolute rest and absolute peace and continuous and constant victory. And it's the place where God can begin to use you.

Now, would you like to share questions?

Question from Audience:

If you realize you're working in your emotions, if you try to get clear of your emotions would that not tend to drive you into your intellect?

Reply from Pastor O'Neill:

And do you see the whole center of the answer to that question is that if you try to get rid of your emotions yourself you're trying to get rid of a soulish power by using a soulish power? All we can do is look to the Holy Spirit and say, "Holy Spirit, I'm aware that you have shown me by revelation that I live too much in my emotions. Now I trust you to bring me into breaking experiences which will break me of the power of these emotions. I trust you to do that. And I trust you to lead me positively to exercise my spirit, at a time when my emotions are taking over." And so it's trusting the Holy Spirit to bring you into breaking experiences. And when that time comes to enable you to exercise your faith and exercise your spirit so that they grow strong.

Question from Audience:

What is the difference between your will and your intellect?

Reply from Pastor O'Neill:

Your intellect is what calculates, what sizes situations up. I suppose the definition of IQ, the ability to perceive relations and correlates, is your mind. Now your will is what makes decisions. It's the voluntary, volitional part of you. It's the part of you that decides to do this, whereas your mind doesn't decide. Your mind passes information on maybe and says, "Now, I think you should do this." But it's your will that actually makes your hand go out. That's why we are careful of Kierkegaard [Søren Aabye Kierkegaard 1813-1855 a Danish philosopher and theologian], because at times he is very unscriptural, but Kierkegaard was certainly very scriptural when he emphasized that life is decision and that we choose to love people, or we choose to obey God and the importance of the will.

So it seems that would be it. And we've to decide, you see, whether our mind and emotions are going to govern our will or whether our spirit is going to govern our will. And so at times we will, in our quiet time, come to a place where we know Jesus is telling us to go somewhere that day. But we'll get up from our quiet time, and suddenly we'll sense we'll we don't feel, we don't feel that God wants us to do it now. And really what the situation is, is we don't feel it any longer in our emotions, and we're still living in our emotions. Therefore it seems dry to us. And we refuse to go out on, what we did undoubtedly receive, in the intuition of our spirits.

And so a lot of people moon around for hours, you know. And they feel, "Ah no, I can't do anything because I don't feel like it." And the moment they go into some active practical work, they can't any longer feel the presence of Jesus and so they say, "Oh no, I mustn't be ready for practical work yet." But what God is trying to do, is to get them to stop living in their emotions, and demanding an emotional feeling of his presence, and to do the thing as unto God. That is why Brother Lawrence said he could sense the presence of God as much in the midst of the pots and pans as in the chapel, because he had come to a place where he had gone beyond the feelings and the emotions. Brother, push me again later.

Question from Audience: (inaudible)

Reply from Pastor O'Neill:

Dear one, it seems that we have to distinguish between the emotional peace that comes, maybe, from our environment or, that at times reflects the peace in our spirits, and, peace in our spirits. In other words, we all believe in the peace that passes all understanding, or the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, and peace. Now obviously there is peace that you can experience in your spirit. Now do you see that at times that peace in your spirit reflects itself in your emotions? But the important point to see is that whether it reflects itself in your emotions or not, it exists there in your spirit, if you believe in Christ. And so the thing is, not to say that there is no peace, but to distinguish between peace in your spirits and peace in your emotions. Only the Holy Spirit can make this real to us. We can define it to each other. But only he can make it real.

Question from Audience:

What about Christians going through persecution, is that talking about tribulation?

Reply from Pastor O'Neill:

No, I just sense, what a number of Christian brothers and sisters sense, that it will not be too long before, really, the church needs to go underground and will come into a more oppressive kind of treatment than it's ever had before. I believe that those days, you know, will come soon upon us and that God is trying to prepare us for those days.

Question from Audience: (inaudible):

Reply from Pastor O'Neill:

Now I would hesitate to say that the tribulation will come in our time. It may come in our time.

Dear ones, I know that some of you, you know, sit tonight and you wonder, "Well now Pastor, I honestly want to see the difference between peace in my spirit and peace in my emotions, but I honestly can't."

Now, do you see, dear ones, that you will not see it unless you're filled with the spirit and have come into this place with God? Now, if you don't see it, don't worry about it. Don't panic. Go at the pace that God is taking you. Don't say, you see, "Ah, but I want to see it. I want to see it." Because, if you do that, all you'll see is in what's your soul, you see.

A lot of brothers and sisters get all caught up over this difference between spirit and soul, because they're not filled with the spirit, and they haven't come to a place where God has begun to show these things. Well, that's alright. But you see that it's important for someone, somewhere in the Cities [Twin Cities: Minneapolis, St. Paul], to present this to us, so that we begin to move beyond baptism with the spirit. So I have to present it, you see. I can't hold back because a number of us are not ready yet for it. Nevertheless, you have to be wise in your spirit. And that's why, you remember, at the very beginning, about the first evening service, oh six, eight, nine months ago I said, "Now, let the Holy Spirit reveal these things to you. Don't take them soulishly in your mind and try and make them real. If they don't come real to you don't panic, don't worry, and don't fuss."

On the other hand don't go the other direction. A lot of us are so proud and arrogant, you see, that we say, "I can't see this therefore it must not be true." Well now that's arrogance and pride, you see. And the Father cannot do anything with that. Then you have to look at Hebrews 4 and see plainly it says, "The word of God will divide between the soul and the spirit." And you have to see, "Well, it's in God's word. I don't understand it yet, but it's there and I trust you Holy Spirit to make it real to me."

So let's trust the Holy Spirit, dear ones. And you know, in these coming – now this might be the last evening really where we can have a kind of quiet time together, because it's not always so easy outdoors. But we'll try to do what we can, and try to sit as close as we can. But throughout the summer, trust the Holy Spirit, you see. Forget all that we've shared on Sunday evenings, because it's no use to you unless the Holy Spirit makes it real. And don't labor over it, and don't come under bondage to it. And don't get into this place, you know, where you say, "Ah, am I walking in the soul or am I walking in the spirit? Am I walking in the soul?" No, no, walk freely, you see. Walk freely and trust the Holy Spirit. Trust him to show that to you, but don't come under bondage to it, you see. And don't become a little esoteric group of Christians who have one up on everybody

else, because we have a special corner on truth that they haven't, you see.

No, if it hasn't resulted in you walking in the spirit you have got nothing. So it's important you know, to just relax in the spirit and trust him to bring to your remembrance the things which God has told us.

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