

How to Enter into Deliverance

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Brothers just to remind you we're in a series at the moment, dealing with the four great stages, if you like to call them, in the Christian life, or the four great freedoms that you can experience in the Christian life. And, you remember, we've talked about the freedom from the guilt, from the guilty conscience. And we've talked about the freedom from the selfish will. And we've talked about the freedom from the domination of a personality that is independent of God's Spirit. And we've talked about freedom from a passive spirit. And it seems to me that those are the great stages, really, that all of us come to, sooner or later--maybe in different order and maybe some faster than the other. But we eventually have to come through those stages.

We have to deal with our guilty conscious. We have to allow God to deal with our selfish wills. We have to allow him to deal with our independent souls or independent personalities. And we have to allow him to deal with our passive spirits that are so poor at warring against Satan in an aggressive way. And what we have seen, during the past few talks together, is that all these freedoms and deliverances are found already in what Jesus has done for us on Calvary. So there's nothing that we need in our own lives that Jesus has not already done for us. All we're talking about here is the making these things real in our own lives. So it's never a case of, "Oh, the cross is alright for forgiveness of sins, but when it comes to deliverance from the selfish will, you need the baptism of the Holy Spirit." It's never that.

It's always, what we have in Jesus on the cross, we can have made real in our own lives--if we will really believe God's word, and submit to his Holy Spirit. Now, last time we talked, you may remember we discussed the deliverance from a selfish will. We discussed the problem that we all have found, that is outlined in Romans 7, starting at verse 15. I'll just read it to you. You almost know it off by heart--the problem which Paul explains this way. "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good." And he says, "I can't do what I want to do, for I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do."

And we talked last day of the need to be delivered from that selfish will. And you remember, we outlined the facts that that deliverance was based on--the fact that our old self was crucified with Christ, that that old selfish will was crucified with Jesus. And in order for that to be made real in us we simply had to believe that and to be willing to submit to the Holy Spirit, to die to self, ourselves. Now those are the only conditions that are necessary.

What I'd like to share today in a little more detail is how to enter into that deliverance. And I'd really appreciate it in between the presentations, if you have questions, if you would share them.

Question from audience:

I was going to ask, you said there were two conditions for the person making it. Can we know which one of those two a person is not fulfilling?

Reply from Pastor O'Neil:

Sam says that there are two needs: Revelation that you have been crucified with Christ and a

willingness to be crucified--belief and submission or trust and obey. And can you, in counseling, tell which one a person is having trouble with?

Normally, the Holy Spirit can reveal to you which one the person is having trouble with, though you can see that they are very closely linked, because "belief" in Greek is "pisteuo". And it has a willingness, a willing content to it. And if you're not really willing, in fact, you're only believing with your head. And so, total belief is a real willingness. But I think that's what I'll spend the time going into, in some detail.

Brothers the first point I think we should make clear is what the deliverance is. And it's made clear in Romans 7:17, "So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me." "It is sin which dwells within me." Romans 6 goes back to that fact, you know, where Paul says in Verse 7 of Romans 6, "He who has died is freed from sin." Now, the deliverance is from sin. Sin is an inward desire to be independent of God.

I think it's very important for us to see that the deliverance is from the selfish will. It is from the desire to disobey God. It is deliverance from the desire to get angry. It's deliverance from the desire to be irritable. It's the deliverance from that rising up from within when the fiery darts of the wicked one come into you. It's the deliverance from that quick reaction that is wrong and that is apart from God's will.

Now why I push that strongly is, I sensed at times, Larry, that you were sometimes asking me, "Well your attitude, I mean, your attitude. You still really have to resist in your attitude." Well, I think it's very important to see that it is an actual change that is wrought in your response to Satan's temptation that takes place when you are willing to die to self. It is not in other words simply a case that the fiery dart of the wicked one comes in. And you find the rising up to get irritable, but now you decide you have to resist it. And so you resist. It isn't that kind of inner fight that it once was. It is an actual deliverance from the desire to be irritable, or the desire to be jealous, or the desire to be envious. That's what we mean when we say, "You're freed from sin," you see.

If you like to put it this way, you're freed from the power of sin." Or, if it's clearer to put it this way, "You're free from having to sin." You're free to sin. But you're freed from having to sin. So it's important to make that distinction. You're free to sin, but you're now free, so that you need not sin, if you don't want to. Before, you see, the problem was, "I don't want to get angry. I don't want to think these unclean thoughts. I don't want to be irritable. But, I find something in me that wants to do them." Now death to self with Christ, and being cleansed by the Holy Spirit, means that your heart is actually cleansed by faith. That's what Acts 15:9 says, "God gave the Holy Spirit to them as he did to us and cleansed their hearts by faith."

It is actually, brothers, a cleansing of the tendency to disobey God. It is a cleansing from the tendency to fall over independent of God. I make that point, Bill, because deliverance was so real in my own life, you know. And if you press me and say, "Brother, are you saying you never sin again?" I'm saying, "If you ever do sin again it's your fault." And many of us are deceived into sinning. And many of us sin after entering into our death with Christ. But if we do, it's simply our own fault. Before, it was really what Paul said, "If I do it, it is sin that dwells within me." But now this is a deliverance from that inward sin, and you're really free to obey.

Now I believe I should stop there and give an opportunity for anybody to press me.

Question from audience:

You mean we're not responsible for the sin before that?

Reply from Pastor O'Neil:

Alright, that's good. Sam says, "You mean we're not responsible for the sin before that?"

And obviously, old Paul would be very strong and say, you know, or James says, "Let no one say is tempted by God."

And undoubtedly God says, "A man is responsible for expressing the inward desire that Satan has put inside him." He's responsible for that. And so, even though he says, "This is something that seems to be controlling me," yet he still is responsible for letting it express itself in his life.

Most of us Sam, it seems to me, have come to the place where we do not express this outwardly. But we have it inside, and we're holding it down. And most of us, therefore, are walking in some degree of victory. But it's through an intense self will and willpower. And it's due to great repression and suppression of that desire. But certainly, if we give vent to it, still God holds us responsible for that giving vent. Indeed, we feel it ourselves. We sense guilt, immediately we express that anger. We don't say to ourselves, "Oh, well that anger is part of Satan so I'm not responsible for it." There's something in our conscience that says, "If you express it you're responsible for it."

Now I think the responsibility is the same in both cases. But before, it seems impossible to do anything about it. And that possibly is due to the fact that we do not read God's word in an open minded way. Mark?

Question from audience:

You said there were two steps. Will there be a time period before they experience deliverance?

Reply from Pastor O'Neil:

Mark is going back--and it's just for the sake for any who are listening to the cassette that I do this. Mark is going back to the two facts, you remember, or the two conditions that are necessary if we're to enter in. And they're outlined in many verses but Galatians 5:24-25 are two such verses, "And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." That's belief in that fact. And the second one, "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit," is submission to the Holy Spirit or willingness. And he's saying, "If you enter into a real belief in the fact is there often a gap," I think, "Before you enter into the willingness?"

Yes, I think there often is. I think many of us have to believe that fact for a long time only in our heads until the Holy Spirit really brings us into a willingness for that fact to be made real in our own spirits and lives. Mark I think now I'm going to deal with just some of those issues.

What I'd like now to deal with, brothers, is three of the misunderstandings or misconceptions about

how to enter into this deliverance from self or this being filled with the Holy Spirit. The first one is this, that many of us do not set our eyes on the fact. We set our eyes on our own experience. Many of us, in other words, when we find anger and impatience within us, say to ourselves, "Obviously, I'm not crucified with Christ. Obviously, you can see it my life is full of irritability, and anger, and jealousy. I'm not crucified."

Now all we're doing there, is walking by sight and not by faith. We're walking by the symptoms that Satan is producing in our own lives, rather than by the reality that is stated clearly in God's word. In other words, God's word says in Romans 6:6, "Our old self was crucified with Christ." Now brothers, if the Holy Spirit is going to make real anything in our lives, he can only make it real if we believe God's word, against our own experiences.

Now many of us get into real problems you see, we say, "Oh no, my experience tells me that I am not crucified with Christ. So now I have to crucify myself." And if we don't fall into exactly the asceticism of the Catholic saints--of some of the Catholic saints--we do fall into that same kind of attitude, "I must crucify myself. I must destroy this evil within me. I must destroy this selfishness." And we end up falling into legalism, in order to control this lion within us.

Now brothers it is not a matter of looking at our own personal experiences. I think each time you find irritability, or impatience, or anger inside yourself you have to say, "Holy Spirit, I know that is there. Satan, you don't need to tell me I am evil. I know it. But I know that my old self was crucified with Christ. And I set my mind on that fact. And Holy Spirit, I know you can only make this real, if I set my mind upon it and accept it."

Now brothers if you don't set your mind on the fact that that was crucified on the cross, you will begin to experience an increasing conviction of sin, which is the Holy Spirit's way of leading you on into this experience. But, as you increasingly experience how evil and how egotistical you are, that great ego will loom so large, in your own mind, that you'll become utterly discouraged--unless you keep hold of the fact, "This has been crucified with Christ." It will overwhelm you completely, you see, unless you hold to the fact in your own mind, "But this has been destroyed. I thank God it has been destroyed. Boy, I'm still under it but I thank God this old self has been destroyed."

But if you don't accept that brothers, there'll be no deliverance for you, you see. And I think a lot of us say, "Oh I see the old self. I see the envy. I see the jealousy. I see the irritability, and boy, God, I don't know how you're ever going to overcome it." Unless you hold to the fact that God has said, "Listen my brother, my sister, your old self was crucified with my son. I destroyed all that. What you're seeing is simply a ghost." Now if you say to me, "Oh, but brother, if the old self was destroyed, why is it that I still feel the effects of it inside me?" Because, you're living a lie--you're believing the lie that that old self is still alive, and that it has a right to its own possessions--it has a right to its own way, when actually God has destroyed it. And the reality is that all of us are dead.

I know that's mad. But the reality is that all of us are dead. And we've been raised with Jesus. And at the moment, are at God's right hand. But, we keep believing Satan's lie. We believe we have a right to live our own life, to have our own way. And so, his lie produces those evil fruit. Sam?

Question from audience:

So it's by ignoring the empirical reality of our evil nature?

Reply from Pastor O'Neil:

It is in a sense, though it is in another sense facing it, facing it head on and saying, "Holy Spirit, I see that. I see evidence that I'm still believing the lie, but in actual fact, I know that I've been crucified. I know that potentially it is there, and the only possibility of it being actualized in me is if I believe it." It's the same with our sins. I mean, we all believed that Jesus had died for us, but it was only made real in us when we were willing to let go of our sins. Now, it's the same with this. The only basis is to believe that you have been crucified with Christ, and then to go on and find out in what way you're not willing to be, because it's the unwillingness that prevents the Holy Spirit from making it real.

Do you want to press me anywhere brothers?

Question from audience: (inaudible)

Reply from Pastor O'Neil:

Scott, if you don't mind I'll repeat that just in case some listen. Scott was saying, as you heard, that it seemed a lot more natural to him, and God seemed to begin to deal with him on the issue, when he at last accepted that, "Okay, I have been crucified with Christ and now I'll just let the Holy Spirit show me, and make this real to me, but I won't fight to die." And it seems to me that's the heart of it, that we have to accept that when God destroyed Jesus, he destroyed the whole evil world. And we are part of that world. And we have been destroyed in Jesus. And as far as God is concerned we're no longer any great threat. And we should simply accept, "Well Lord, I thank you that you've destroyed this. And now, Holy Spirit, I know you want to express the victory of that death right in my life. And now I just trust you to let it come."

I agree with Scott, I think you can get yourself into a neurotic state if you say, "I've got to die. I've got to die." Yeah. It's actually--the place of faith is, "I believe your word, Lord. Now Holy Spirit, I trust you to make it real in me." Sam?

Question from audience:

When I was dealing with some word last Sunday night, it came to me, "What does it mean to hunger?"

Reply from Pastor O'Neil:

Yes, that's good. Sam has brought up the question of, when he stops striving, then God seemed to deal with him. Then someone asked, "Well, what does it mean to hunger and thirst after righteousness?" And it seems to me we need to keep doing our best to obey God's word all the time. We never need to stand back and say, "Okay, I can't do it I'll just be a sinner." We need to, all the time, set our mind on God's word, and move towards it. But we need to see that what we're trying to do, is begin to see how helpless and hopeless we are. We'll never succeed in obeying it on our own. But it's always a coming to an end of our own helplessness and hopelessness. So it's a hungering after Jesus rather than a striving to obey the word without him.

It seems to me that's the heart of it. It seems to me as we try to obey the word without God, by our own strength, that's the striving that is wrong. That's the striving that God is trying to

bring us to the end of. But the point to which he's trying to bring us, is to see that, with all our striving, we'll never do anything. What we need is simply Jesus within us. But until that time comes, I think Nee is right. All you can do is keep doing your best to obey. And yet all the time allow the Holy Spirit to show you how hopeless your obedience or your attempts are.

The second misconception, brothers, that I'd like to deal with is, that many of us think it's a question of auto suggestion. Many of us say, "All I have to do is auto suggest myself into this death with Christ." And we keep saying it – in fact, I know a brother who used to walk around saying, "I'm dead, I'm dead, I'm dead, I'm dead, I'm dead, I'm dead." Now, do you see that's only the mind trying to persuade the mind that it's dead? In other words, it's revelation, not auto suggestion that will bring us into this.

And it ties up a bit with what you said Scott, we need to set our mind on the fact that we've been crucified with Christ. And then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us in what way we're not crucified. But it seems to be an attitude that says, "Alright Holy Spirit I've tried my method. Now I'm giving up on my method. I'm willing to try your method. Holy Spirit, will you give me revelation about what, in what way, I'm not crucified with Christ?"

Now brothers, if you don't do that, you end up in introspection, because you start looking around and saying, "Well, I'm not dead. It's not real in my life. Now in what way am I not dead?" And you start asking yourselves all kinds of questions that you make up, you know. "Would I be willing not to be married? Yeah, yeah. Would I be willing not to have a dog? Would I be willing not to have two dogs? Would I be willing not to have a lot of money?" And you start making up questions that God isn't asking you at all.

Now it seems to me that's the difference between striving around and thrashing around in your own experience and introspection and auto suggestion and what is really needed, going to the Holy Spirit and saying, "Holy Spirit, my Lord said, 'You would lead me into all truth.' My Lord said, 'You would counsel me.' Now, Holy Spirit, tell me how do I look in Jesus' eyes at this moment? In what way am I not willing to go through his death with him? In what way am I not willing to die to self? Holy Spirit, I'm asking you. Will you show me?"

And brothers, it seems to me that's the hungering and thirsting after righteousness. It's not so much, if you like, a hungering and thirsting after victory, Scott. It seems to me you can come preoccupied with victory until it becomes almost a neurotic obsession. But, it's a hungering and thirsting after the Father's will. "Lord, what is your mind for me? What do you think of me? Holy Spirit, you know God's mind. You know how he sees me. Give me judgment day honesty. Help me to see myself through Jesus' eyes."

And it seems to me that's what we mean by revelation, you see. And that's so important, brothers, because all of us have different things holding us back from death to self. All of us hold back from the cross for lots of different reasons. And the person, who knows you best, still doesn't know you well enough to show you in what way you're not willing to be crucified in Christ. Only the Holy Spirit knows you that well.

And so that's the second misconception. A lot of us think it's auto suggestion instead of revelation. A lot of us think it's introspection instead of revelation. But it's not. It's always revelation. And that's, Scott, where that rest comes in. You come to a place where you see at last, "Lord, I don't know what's holding me back. I've done my best to obey. I don't know what's

holding me back. Holy Spirit, will you show me?” And there was a great deliverance in my own life when I gave up the introspection, and gave up trying to see the thing for myself. In fact, it involved a death to my own mind, because my mind thought it could discover all my shortcomings itself. And so that was part of the old self that had to die.

Now brothers, revelation not auto suggestion. Is that okay?

The third misconception brothers, is this. I think a lot of us are tempted by Satan to believe that this experience of death to self, or deliverance from the selfish will, is simply a question of believing that we've been crucified with Christ, and then repressing the feelings that we have inside, on the basis of that. So a lot of us, I think, get into the position where we think it's a kind of double think, or a kind of bluff. “Okay knowing that you're crucified with Christ, knowing that fact, that fact has a certain intellectual power of constraint upon my mind. And if I keep holding to that I'll come into more strength than I used to have over envy and jealousy. And I'll somehow be able to repress them or suppress them, in a way that I wasn't able to before.”

Now brothers, it is not suppression. It is submission. It is not suppression of the evil things within us. It is submission to the Holy Spirit. It is a loving gentle attitude to the Holy Spirit. “Holy Spirit, show me in what way I'm not ready to die to self. And whatever way you show me, I'm willing to submit to you.” And you submit to the Holy Spirit. You come into an absolute death to your own ability to live the Christ life, and an absolute obedience, instant obedience, to the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit naturally and unconsciously takes away those desires from within you.

So it is a real miracle, the Holy Spirit removes those things from your heart as you spend your time submitting to him. So actually it's far from preoccupation, you know, with the evil things within you. Actually, it's a real preoccupation with the Holy Spirit and with submitting to him. And suddenly as you begin to submit to him completely, and trust him to make the Christ life real in you, suddenly you find yourself flying over all the other things. So it is a real miraculous removal of those things by the Holy Spirit. It isn't a suppressing of them with the help of the intellectual fact that you've been crucified with Christ.

It is in other words, a real miracle, brothers. It's a miracle that the Holy Spirit works in your spirit in response to your absolute submission to him. And if you say to me you see, “Where is the problem?” I think the problem is in the submission to the Holy Spirit. I think we think we're submitting to the Holy Spirit, but there are a hundred different ways in which we're not really obedient to the Holy Spirit at all. And, in a way, this experience is an experience of total obedience, you know.

Question from audience:

How can one have the discernment to obey the Holy Spirit before they've died to self?

Reply from Pastor O'Neil:

How can one have the discernment to obey the Holy Spirit before they have died to themselves? First of all I would go in on the word discernment. I would say that it is not discernment that is needed to obey the Holy Spirit. But it is willingness to obey the Holy Spirit. Then, when you come into a willingness to obey the Holy Spirit, discernment is given to you. In other words, God is very gracious he doesn't reveal to you much more than you're willing to enter into. He just reveals a

little step ahead to convince you that there's resistance in there that has to be dealt with. But he will not – somebody has said, "The key to insight, spiritual insight is love, loving obedience."

And so you only receive the discernment when you actually come into a willingness to obey. That would tie up, Mark, with what I've said at times that when you come into full consecration or readiness to die to self, the Holy Spirit witnesses that inside. He witnesses it, so that you know, "Yeah, I am ready." And then discernment pours in on top of you. If God gave us all the discernment that he could give us, about how we're not obeying the Holy Spirit, he would blind us, and absolutely discourage us, and dishearten us. So, he only gives just enough, which is why we talk about revelation, why we talk about the importance of revelation. God only reveals what is necessary for us to see at that time in order to enter into deliverance.

Question from audience:

Doesn't this description tend to present the death to self as a process rather than as a crisis?

Reply from Pastor O'Neil:

Why I think it appears as a process is, I'm trying to take this experience apart, and trying to foresee all the ways in which we try to enter into it that are unscriptural, and ineffective. And I think, in fact, you can spend a lot of time dying, but there's a moment when the breath stops and you're dead. So you can say that there is a process leading up to the experience, but the experience itself is instantaneous. And I remember in my own life there was a moment came, when I knew I was willing to die with Christ. And it was just a moment when I knew I was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Could I just finish with one thing brothers? What is the relationship of this to the baptism with the Holy Spirit? It does seem that this is the precondition of a full, complete baptism of the Holy Spirit. You can't say that being ready to die to self is the baptism with the Holy Spirit. All you can say is that, when you are willing to die to self, and to be buried with Christ, then, as he rises up from the water, and the dove of the Holy Spirit comes upon him, so as we rise up from our crucifixion with Christ, the Holy Spirit comes upon us, and baptizes us with himself--filling us for inward purity and anointing us for outward power--filling us with the fruit of the spirit, the nine fruit of the spirit, and anointing us with the availability of the nine gifts of the spirit.

But it is true I think, doctrinally, to say that it is – the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a result, or follows upon, our readiness to be crucified with Christ. And yet it's the baptism with the Holy Spirit that actually completes it, because you can be ready to be crucified with Christ and to die with self and never be angry again, but, unless the Holy Spirit baptizes you with himself, there'll be no deliverance from anger. So, really, it's important to see that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is, as it were, the seal. Ephesians puts it, you remember, it's the seal of our childlike position to God the Father.

So the baptism of the Holy Spirit is what follows upon our readiness to die with Christ. Now does anyone want to press me on that?

I think we dealt, last day, with the fact that some people do seem to enter into a very partial experience that they call baptism with the Holy Spirit, but that is only a temporary experience of some of the gifts of the spirit--at times tongues, or maybe some of the miracle gifts. But they

don't enter into a real death to self with Christ. And so they don't minister life through the gifts. They become preoccupied with the gifts and with each other.

Brothers, is there anything because I think we're finished?

Question from audience:

It's very natural. I didn't realize it was happening.

Reply from Pastor O'Neil:

That's good. It is good to point out what Larry has done, that many of us have entered into this without any of the terms or the names being used, and that actually if we follow on after the Holy Spirit, he will lead us into this. It seems, Larry, the tragedy is, that many of us have not followed after the Holy Spirit, or have received some teaching which discouraged us from going on into a complete consecration, and so we have entered into only a partial experience of the forgiveness of sins, and deliverance from guilt, and we still walk in a defeated life, because of the selfish will.

Okay, shall we pray? Lord Jesus, we thank you for the completeness of the victory that is in you and in your death and resurrection. And we trust you by your Holy Spirit to make it real in each one of our lives. To actualize in us what has potentially taken place in you. Lord Jesus, we know that this is your will. And we thank you that all that we need is found in you, and in your death, and in an absolute identification of ourselves with your death and resurrection. We thank you for that, for your glory, amen.

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