

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

We'll be able to tell who are really "with it" in a moment. "May the force be with you." You're all "with it". It is interesting isn't it that Star Wars outdrew almost every other movie. It was a real battle of good and evil with good winning out. It's also interesting that an outstanding actor like Guinness should become so famous and well known for a part that was so simple and subtle and that had that line in it, "May the force be with you". Even our little kids joke about "the force". Some of us have our own concerns about what it might say about the world of evil spiritual powers and the world of the occult but many of us see in it a continuation of that tradition that has run right through human history. A tradition for instance that was expressed by Ponce De Leon who discovered whole countries because he was searching for the fountain of eternal youth. Or all the ancient myths that concern heroes who were looking for that life that would rejuvenate them and enable them to live forever that elixir of life.

It's strange that right down through human history there has always been this kind of a myth or a hope or a vague idea that there was some kind of dynamic force or power that we could get and we could receive. It's true that has existed right from the beginning of the world. Actually most of us here could say, "I'm not surprised because I have often had moments in my life when I knew I needed something that I didn't have." I think most of us would admit that we have come to moments when we have felt a great emptiness. Isn't it true, even if it has been just an emptiness that followed the death of a dear mom or a dad or the emptiness that followed the death of a friend or the emptiness that comes when some tragedy occurs in your own life, in your professional or your home life.

Most of us have had moments when we have just had a great sense of emptiness that was somehow deeper than what would have been left by that person. It was as if our relationship with that person kept us from noticing that the emptiness was there. It was as if the job or the satisfactory financial situation we were in kept us from noticing the emptiness. But suddenly when those crutches were gone we became aware of the emptiness. And have you not sat at times at home and just felt depressed? You've felt, "I have no reason for doing anything, there is no urge in me to do anything, there is no pushing me at all. I just don't know what to do to get going again." All of us have felt that. I think it's that kind of feeling that gives us a vague sense, it does seem we were meant to run on something other than our own energy. It does seem as if there is some need in our personality for some dynamic that we haven't got. Of course all of us feel it in relationship to the battle against selfishness. I don't think there is one of us here who has not struggled with that moral perversity inside us -- that streak of irrationality that makes us do anything to get our own way even if it means tearing apart the whole fabric of our lives and of our families and our friends. And many of us have felt there has to be some power that can deal with this lion inside me, this savage beast that will tear apart anybody to get my way.

Some of those things are explained you must agree by the explanation of reality that Jesus and his Apostles have given us. Some of those very things that we have mentioned are explained by his explanation. Even "the force" is explained and the "elixir of life" and the "fountain of eternal youth". Do you remember the way we looked at it last day? I'll just ask you to look at it briefly to refresh your memories of what we said last Sunday and to let those of you who weren't here last Sunday catch up with us.

Jesus explained that these personalities of ours actually exist on three different levels. First of

all we have these bodies that you see outside. Then inside those bodies we have souls. Then inside the soul you have a spirit -- almost like layers of an onion that surround each other. We put it in a diagram like that. It was as if you had a spirit and a soul and a body. Then you remember we said that Jesus and His followers explained to us throughout the New Testament and the prophets explained the same kind of thing in the Old Testament, that your spirit contained three main functions: your ability to commune with God, your ability to know by intuition what He wanted you to do, (without asking other people or without working things out first in your mind) and your conscience which is the part of you that urges you to live up to the best that you know through your intuition. Then you remember if you follow through the Bible the word soul, you'll find that it has the ability of intellect -- the mind. The soul also has the ability to feel desire and to feel affection in your emotions. And it has the ability to make decisions in your will. Then the body in a sense is a trinity also. Do you remember what Jesus explained? He said, "You were made to work by means of a supernatural power." He didn't call it "the force". He didn't call it the "elixir of life" or the "fountain of eternal youth". He called this power the Holy Spirit.

He said you are made to love my Father, your creator with all your heart, to put Him first in your life, to concentrate on pleasing Him above everybody else -- your wife, your husband, your father, your mother, your son, your daughter. And if you will do that you will find that He will give you some of the life that runs through Himself and makes Him what He is. He will give you His Holy Spirit. And as you walk with Him day by day as you walk with any friend day by day you'll begin to become more like him and you'll begin to understand what he wants. So Jesus said as you walk with God, my Father day by day, as you pray to Him and talk to Him in communion you will get to know what He wants you to do with your life. In your particular job you'll get to know what He wants you to do in it day by day. Through intuition He will tell you what to do in situations so that you won't always be walking around saying I am confused, I don't know what to do, I don't know where my life's going. But you will in fact begin to know what the creator of the world put you here to do. And then your conscience will be a guardian to you. Your conscience will always keep reminding you of what you are receiving through your intuition. Other people may feed you things through your mind but your conscience will keep saying yes but you know you should do this. Your conscience will urge your will to obey it. And that was God's plan for you.

Jesus said, that your will would always obey your conscience. Your will therefore would be a very active connector between your spirit and your soul. Your will would direct your mind in the light of that to understand what God was telling you. So God through intuition might tell a man like Einstein, the heart or the key to the whole Theory of Relativity. Then he would direct his will to direct his mind to understand that and explain it in a formula like $e=mc^2$ or some other formula that could be passed on to the rest of us. But that's the way it would work in our own lives. We would receive through intuition God's direction for us but depending on whether we were carpenters or lawyers or writers or pianists or organists or plumbers, we would use our minds to work that out and to express it in detail to the world.

Similarly our emotions -- instead of dominating our wills, they would be governed by our wills and our minds. You realize that your emotions go according to your mind. You can't make yourself angry. You can only think a thought that makes you angry. So you govern your emotions by your mind. That's the way God intended us to operate. Our emotions would express the joy of our friendship with God and would express that to the world. That was God's plan. But what we did was rebel against the whole idea of depending on any God. We decided we would be God ourselves. We would run our own lives and get from the world, other people and things what we were meant to get from God's love.

That's what we did. We shared last day how we have come under slavery to the world and to each other. We are under slavery to each other often because we have a terrible sense of unimportance and insignificance. So we are always trying to get each other to praise us and to look up to us and respect us. Eventually we end up slaves to each other's opinions. That's what has happened to us. We have become enslaved and the whole personality has begun to work in a perverted way. Even the mind, instead of understanding God now uses itself to manipulate other people, and things so that we can have enough security, significance and happiness. Our emotions -- instead of sharing joy with other people from a great friendship that we have, they are like a parasitic sponge trying to soak up and get joy from other people. And of course the poor will is utterly dominated by the mind and emotions. Most of us have real trouble using our wills, haven't we? Many of us will say oh I can't do it. I just can't make myself do it. Isn't it true that more and more of us are becoming not only the targets and victims of the mass media but we are becoming the targets and the victims of our circumstances?

It's amazing loved ones how many of us here in this room never use our wills. Many of us in this room are like jelly fish. We wobble this way when some circumstance occurs; we wobble the other way when another circumstance occurs. That's part of the perversion of our whole personality that has taken place. We have done all kinds of things to try to correct that. We have seen that our personality operates the wrong way and we have tried to read the books. There are different kinds of books. There are healthy minded books and there are sick-minded books. The healthy minded books say "I'm okay, you're okay" or they talk about "The Power of Positive Thinking". They hark back to what is indicated there by the red arrows (Rev. O'Neill points to a diagram). They hark back to the way we were originally made. Our personalities were made to operate that way -- from our spirits out through our minds, then our bodies and to the world. The power of positive thinking books try to use what is left of momentum in the personality to make it work right. It's always unsatisfactory of course because it's only the dregs of the momentum left. The personality itself is perverted and is operating the other way.

The sick minded books are the "Win by Intimidation" books. They say, forget that heavenly stuff. We are all operating this way let's face it. We all manipulate to get ourselves on 'top of the heap'. All right I'll show you how to do it. And so the sick minded books try to use the evil momentum and the world momentum that is in our personalities. Of course that's why they probably leave us in the worse state than the others. Eventually if you operate that way you'll bark your shins against other natural laws that are built by God into society. Eventually if you operate this way continually you end up destroying family or real love or that kind of thing. Now loved ones that's the problem.

We shared last day what God had done about that. We shared that when Jesus died on the cross -- Paul puts it this way, "Our old self (that self there -- that works the wrong way, that works from the world in instead of from in out to the world), that old self was crucified with Christ." That was God's solution. He actually previewed all our lives, and you admit that He can do that. We have computers that can gauge what America's energy needs will be in the year 2000 so it's no problem for the creator who is far greater than any computer to preview all our lives and to foresee what we would do and what we would be like. And then He put us into His son Jesus to destroy us there and to remake us. Now that's what God in fact has done. That was the way He devised to permit us to have our free will and yet also to have a choice of getting out of the mess that we were in if we wanted to. God previewed our lives and then crucified us in Jesus. That's why Paul in writing to the Corinthians says, "That if Christ died for all then all died." The truth is all of us died with Jesus in eternity.

If you have difficulty with that concept, do you see that even the scientists have caught up with the Bible in perceiving that time is only an accommodation to our time space existence and reality is eternity. There is one great eternal moment and it's because of that, that God was able to take all the people that have ever lived, all the people that will ever live and put them into His son and destroy them there. You remember how the verse runs -- our old self was crucified with Christ, so that the body of sin, the body that dominates our lives at the moment may be rendered inoperative so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin. We might be free in fact to live the way we were meant to live. We might be returned to the kind of freedom that God wanted for us. Now that's what we shared last day.

I would like to point out to you that probably most of us in this room are trying either a healthy minded approach to making that real in us or a sick-minded approach. We probably are. Even though many of us would claim to be Christians, most of us are saying, "We want that done in us. We want that crucifixion that took place in eternity. We want it made real in us today. How do we do it?" We TRY. That's what we do.

"I see what you are saying, all right, you are saying that that has happened in Christ and that instead of manipulating with my mind, I should concentrate in understanding what God is telling me to do. Okay I am going to do that." And most of us try to make our minds stop manipulating and start understanding. Most of us try to make our emotions stop concentrating on getting joy from other people and begin to express joy. Most of us who call ourselves Christians are trying to do it by dint of will power and autosuggestion. Loved ones it will never succeed.

Jesus gave a simple way. He said I am not leaving you desolate. It's to your advantage that I am going to go away. If I don't go away the counselor will not come to you but if I do go, I will send him to you. And when the Holy Spirit comes, He will convict the world of righteousness and of sin and of judgment. And He will take up the things that are mine and He will impart them to you. When the Holy Spirit comes He will bring to remembrance all the things that I have said to you. Loved ones Jesus said, "He would send us another person who would make this real in our lives."

It's very interesting, when you consider all the degrees that we all probably have here in this room - and it must be an incredible number -- when you consider all the degrees and all the studying that we have done and all the books that we have read and you realize how few of us have entered into this deliverance compared with that group of uneducated, ignorant people who listened to Peter and Paul in the first days of the first century. They didn't have all our books. They hadn't all our knowledge, they hadn't all our understanding of psychology but they had a simple Gospel. When they said to the Apostles we believe this happened, we don't understand it, we believe it happened and we believe we need that in our own lives. We need to be changed, we need to have that crucifixion and resurrection made real in us, we need to have our personalities un-entangled. What shall we do? The Apostle simply answered, be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of your sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. And when they said what do you mean be baptized? Do you mean go down to the river? The apostles replied, yes we do.

And when you go under the water you must regard yourself as buried. As far as you have been up to the past, up to the present moment in your life, you have to regard yourself as buried. And when you come up out of the water, you have to regard yourself as newly made as God has made you and Jesus. In fact don't you know that those of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was

raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. So reckon yourselves therefore to be dead indeed unto sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. That's what those dear people did in the first century.

They regarded themselves as dead -- all that they had been up to that moment. They regarded themselves as completely made new. That's faith. And then because they did that God gave them the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit miraculously made this real and true in their own lives. That's how it worked loved ones.

You see they didn't take our right to deal with each individual sin and offer Jesus' blood as a bribe to God to forgive us for it. All we are involved in is constantly trying to get rid of the guilt of our individual sins. But we are not dealing at all with the great problem that we live the wrong way around. I could almost point anywhere in this audience and I'm sure that my finger would pick somebody who was under man fear. Somebody under tremendous man fear is just fearful of what the people in the office thought of her, or what the people at work thought of him, or is fearful to stand up and say what he thinks, lest he be made a fool of. There is probably none of us here who aren't under tremendous slavery to what people think of us. Our personalities are perverted. We try to stand up for what is right but we cannot because our personalities have worked the wrong way for so long.

The only way for them to be changed is for this dear Holy Spirit who is Jesus' successor to make these things real in us. That's the only way. It's like this and I think I have shared this illustration with you before. It's like if I brought into this room from all the great art galleries of the world, the most magnificent masterpieces that have ever been painted. There's the Last Supper and there are paintings by Rembrandt and Van Gogh and other paintings around the walls of this room. Then I put the lights out. I bring you into this room, and I say to you, aren't the paintings magnificent? And you say, what paintings? I can't see a thing. You can't. It doesn't matter what beauties there are around this room, if there is no light you won't appreciate any of them. None of them will be real to you. Then I switch on the light and it all lights up for you. You see the beauties and the truths around these walls. Now, that's what the Holy Spirit does for us.

The Holy Spirit is a person and he makes these things real to you. I am sure you have listened to me present this a thousand times, the whole reality of our cosmic death, outside time and space in Jesus and our cosmic resurrection in eternity. I am sure you have wondered, yes I am grasping it, I think I can make analogies with Einstein's theories, I think I can grasp it but how does it become real in me? There is no way on your own -- no way. We human beings are caught in time and space. We are caught here. We cannot reach outside it and bring a cosmic eternal miracle inside. If that cosmic eternal miracle is to come into us, it must come into us by operation of some cosmic eternal spirit of God. And that's why Jesus said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. He is my successor; He is going to do in your life what I am not meant to do. I came here for a purpose to reveal my Father to you and to allow you to see what I had done for you in eternity. I have taken the worst of your sins, the worst of your perversion into myself and allowed it to be exterminated by the wrath of God. That's what I did for you. I rose again to show you that I was really God's Son. But you see I can't make any of that real to you. It's my dear friend the Holy Spirit, who will make these things real in your life. He is already inside you. I am with my Father at the right hand of God though in some sense I can be in you because the Holy Spirit reflects me in your life. But really it's the Holy Spirit who will lead you into all truth." And loved ones that's true.

The Holy Spirit is the key to all of this becoming real in you. I don't know if you realize the way

the early church operated. You caught a glimpse of it in the old movie called "The Robe". In the book especially you find the details of the way the apostles lived after Jesus' resurrection and his appearances during those 40 days. There was one moment when the man who had got the robe was in an ordinary house; this was about two months after Jesus had died so the resurrection appearances were passed. He was in this house and they were talking. Suddenly a door just clicked open with the wind behind them. He swung around. The other man who was investigating the whole thing said, "Why are you so nervous? Why do you swing round so fast? It's just the wind." And then you remember the fellow replied, "Ever since Jesus has been with us during the resurrection time, we have always been expecting Him to appear any moment because that's the way He did. He just would come through a wall. He would come through a door. He would suddenly appear in a room and ever since then we expect Him to appear at any moment. And we know that the Spirit of Jesus is here in this room with us every moment of our lives."

And loved ones that's the way they operated in the first century. The church regarded the Holy Spirit as its master and as its Lord. The Holy Spirit was Jesus' successor. He was Jesus' servant. He was Jesus' emissary. He was Jesus' executor. Jesus had made a will leaving each one of us here in this room, a personality that is unperverted and that works right. The Holy Spirit will distribute that to each of us in the right way. Loved ones, do you think of the Holy Spirit that way? Because if you don't I think that's why you will probably find yourself in the death grip of so much of today's religion. So much of today's religion knows what to do, knows what's right, knows what it should believe but none of it is real.

And if you find yourself in that situation, it is possibly because you are totally ignoring the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not someone to be afraid of. He is in fact the Spirit of Jesus.

You remember the Apostles were going to go into a certain country but then they said the Spirit of Jesus wouldn't let them. So obviously they walked with the Spirit of Jesus day by day and they regarded Him as a real friend. Of course many of us would be delivered from our introspection if we would take the Holy Spirit for real, that's true. I think a lot of you do what I did. I said, "Yes, I want to enter into that so what should I die to? Yes, I love this person too much and I should die to that. Or, I like coke and I should die to that. I like people saying this about me and so I should die to that." Before long you have got yourself into such an introspective tangle that you can't make heads or tails of anything. Despite all the introspection you will know nothing. You will introspect as deep as it doesn't matter.

The Holy Spirit is different. He will take you down under the levels of your own selfish motives, deeper than any psychologist or psychiatrist can take you and deeper than you can take yourself. He will show you yourself as you really are. He will make real to you and reveal to you the way in which God crucified you in His Son and raised you up. He will show you the things that you are to be willing therefore to do and to be in order that that should be made real in your life. That's the truth. Acts 5:32 -- to whom does God give the Holy Spirit? God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him. That's it. If you are willing to live inside out, God will give you the Holy Spirit. But as long as you are determined to live outside in, God cannot give you His Holy Spirit.

So loved ones will you think a little about Him and pray a little? I'll try to share some more next Sunday how to actually receive the Holy Spirit. But meanwhile this very day you can begin at least to acknowledge Him. I think you know how bad you feel if somebody ignores you, you know what it's like. You know what it's like to go into a room and they talk on as if you haven't appeared. They cast sand in your eyes. That's what it's like for the Holy Spirit while you ignore Him. That's it.

He has been with you ever since you were born. Any good desire you have had has come from him working inside you. And possibly many of you have ignored Him all these years. So at least this morning, at least say, hello to Him. At least do that. At least acknowledge Him as a person and you will find what I find that He began to work in my life and began to make sense of these things. I pray that He'll do that for you. Let us pray.

"Dear lord we thank you for your dear friend, your other self, this dear successor that you have sent to us, the Holy Spirit. And dear Spirit of Jesus we apologize for the way we have ignored you and regarded you as an "it" and a "force". Holy Spirit we want to tell you that we will begin to treat you the way the early church did. We want you to be our Master. We want you to take of Jesus' commands and directions and share them with us so that we'll know what we are to do in our lives. And most of all Holy Spirit we ask you to begin to lead us into this deliverance that God worked for us in His Son on the cross. Deliver us from our old selves. We ask this so that our lives may be what they were meant to be -- lives as princes and princesses of God that walk the earth with a light heart and touch with love and kindness all that they meet. And now the grace of our Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with each one of us, now and throughout this coming week." Amen!