

Supernatural Living

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

This is a piece of bread and if you eat it, it will give you energy for the things you have to do, it will strengthen your body and it will give you a sense of well-being, ability and health. Do you believe that? Now do you feel a lot better now that you believe that? Do you feel the energy pulsing through you now that you believe that? Do you sense that you have power and ability to do everything that you have to this coming week? Do you? I feel good. You say, yeah, you should. You ate it. We believe what you say because we've done that kind of thing. Sure, we've eaten bread and we've eaten potatoes and taken in protein and all that kind of stuff. Sure, that's how we are here. We believe that but we don't feel what you feel. You ate it. We didn't. We just believed you. Oh, I see. Well, do you understand that you take in the bread, you eat it, you swallow it, and then little acids and enzymes get going on it and break it down into a kind of fluid that then is filtered through the various organs of your body and then it turns into energy. That's how it works. Now do you feel a difference, do you feel the energy pulsing through the body now that you understand how it works? You say no, I understand how it works, but I didn't eat it. I believe that it works and I understand now a little more you've explained how it turns to energy, but I still don't feel the energy. It hasn't made any difference to me because even though I believe and I understand, I haven't eaten it.

Isn't that true that a little dog that actually eats the bread is still better off than you are even though you believe that if you ate it, it would give you energy and life? A little dog that eats it -- that doesn't believe and that doesn't understand -- is still better off than you are who understand exactly how that bread turns into energy -- if you don't eat it yourself. Now there are all kinds of loaves and fishes situations that you and I get into, all kinds of moments when the energy we have is not enough, all kinds of moments when we feel worn out, all kinds of moments when we feel emotionally worn out, when we just cannot stir up the love that is needed or the persistence or the endurance that is needed. All kinds of moments like that, all kinds of moments when we cannot stir up the patience that is needed, all kinds of moments when we cannot get rid of the resentment that is in our hearts, all kinds of loaves and fishes situations, situations when the few loaves and the few fishes of your love or your patience or your physical energy, or your mental understanding are not sufficient. Now there is a life that we were never meant to do without that can do the same miracle for those loaves and fishes as it did for those loaves and fishes that we read about in the New Testament lesson.

Loved ones, there is physical life and physical energy that comes from eating this bread and drinking this wine but there is a supernatural life, a supernatural energy that we were never made to be without and it alone is the catalyst that makes life possible in the way that God intended us to live it. Without that life, your life will always be filled with inadequate loaves and fishes, it will. That's what Jesus said. He said your fathers ate bread in the wilderness, the manna that my Father gave them, but I am the living bread from heaven and whoever eats of it will never die and the bread that I am will provide life and energy for you and for your life such as I have for mine. Loved ones, that's Jesus' promise. Some people have called it the Holy Spirit, some people have called it abundant life, some people have called it Jesus' Spirit, but it's that invisible power that affected the protons and the neutrons of the bread and the fishes so that they were somehow stirred into life and they multiplied beyond what they would have done otherwise. This is the same

life that touched the withered flesh of a leper and made it whole, this is the same life that turned a petty, little, small minded, bitter heart like Paul's, into a magnanimous, generous, gracious, courageous heart. That's the life that Jesus is offering you this morning. Do you believe that? That's good. Do you understand exactly how it works? It doesn't really matter. Will you receive it this morning? That's what matters. How do you receive that bread? You believe that it will give you energy and you eat it. How do you receive Jesus' Spirit this morning? You believe that Spirit alone will transform your life into the supernatural life that God intended it to be and you eat it. How do you eat it? You turn from all substitutes for it. That's it.

So this morning you simply believe that Jesus is here and you turn from all the substitutes for him in your life. The Holy Spirit will show you what those are. Some of you is Valium, some of you is tranquilizers, some of it is the nicotine, some of it is the right to be resentful, some of us it is the right to be proud, some of us it is the right to be gluttonous, some of us it is the right to be an invalid. If you'll turn from those sins -- because sins are simply things that you do because you haven't Jesus' supernatural life within you -- if you turn from those and receive him by faith this morning that life will become real in you. So loved ones, that's it. This morning all you need to do is believe that Jesus is alive and that he has this life within him and he can give it to you and then you turn from all the substitutes in your life that you have at present. If you are honest about your sins this morning and put them far from you, Jesus' life will become loaves and fishes, patience, purity, generosity, energy to you.

Now just think for a moment, pause for a moment and think what you'll do at lunchtime. Will you struggle over that hamburger? Do I believe that will give me energy? I'm not sure. Do I understand how it will give me energy? No, I don't. Could you explain it to me again, enzymes, acids break down? You don't. You know. You eat that hamburger and don't fiddle around forever with mental games. You don't juggle thoughts back and forward, you eat the hamburger. That's what it's like. Today get rid of the sins in your life and receive Jesus by faith and go out rejoicing, depending on that life by faith. That life will become energy that is supernatural to you. I felt I should share this because I think that many of you got into the same difficulties that I got in at college where I was constantly thinking that if I only knew it enough, if I only understood it enough, somehow Jesus' life would become real in me. All the time I was eating at the tree of knowledge. Stop that. Stop trying to understand. Put away your sins far from you this morning, be done with them, and receive His Spirit by faith this day.

Jesus is so good, that's why He did the bread and wine thing. He wanted us to realize that it's not believing in the bread, it's not the understanding how the wine turns into energy, it's eating the bread and drinking the wine, very simple acts. So it is this morning. Are you aware of any sin in your life? Do you know of any sin in your life? Anything that your conscience is troubling you about? Then stop it today, this morning, at this moment. Stop it. Have done with it. Say to Jesus, "Lord, I'm finished with that. No more playing with the unclean thoughts, no more playing with resentment, no more pretending that I'm not angry or I don't lose my temper. Lord, I am turning from that now whatever it costs me. I am stopping that." Do that and then as you take the bread and wine into your own body say, "Lord Jesus, I receive your spirit now into me and I trust that you will make it whatever I need this coming month." He will. Suddenly you will find energy that is supernatural.

Loved ones, if you're willing to do that in all honesty then I would ask you when we do stand to take these words of invitation into your own heart and to do what you're encouraged to do by those holy words. Let us stand.

You that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins and are in love and charity with your neighbors and intend to lead a new life following the commandments of God and walking from henceforth in His holy ways, draw near with faith and take this holy sacrament to your comfort and make your humble confession unto almighty God. Let us be seated as we pray.

Lord Jesus, when we want to eat we take the knife and fork and the spoon and we eat. Lord, we see that we do not juggle thoughts around or get all twisted up inside, we just do this. Lord, you have given us clear directions that we have to repent and believe the Gospel, we've simply to turn from our sins and receive you by faith without getting all entangled in endless thought processes. So Lord, we would be honest this morning and we would put our sins out of our lives this day. Lord Jesus, especially those darlings that are the very ones that prevent us receiving you into our lives, Lord, we would turn from them now, stop them. We commit ourselves to stopping them now.

Lord Jesus, we reject the rationalization that would try to continue within us that these aren't too bad. Lord, you've given us no doubt about them. Whatever is not faith is sin and we know that doubt is not of faith. Lord, if we even suspected that certain mushrooms were poisonous we wouldn't touch them. Lord, we intend to do the same about our sins. If there is any question about them we are putting them far from us this moment. We commit ourselves, Lord Jesus, to stop doing those things. We know that your grace can only come in when we set our wills fully against these things.

We do not presume to come to this, Thy table, most merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table but thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so by faith to receive Thy Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, that the bread which we break may be unto us the communion of His body and the cup of blessing, which we bless, may be the communion of His blood and we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us. The Lord Jesus, on the night in which he was betrayed, took bread and broke it and said this is my body, which is broken for you. This do in remembrance of me. In like manner, he took the cup after supper saying, this cup is the New Covenant in my blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat the bread and drink the cup you proclaim the Lord's death till He come.