

Is My Heart Like Christ's?

Transcript of a clip from the talk BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Loved ones, it's easy to think you're going to heaven and end up in hell. It's easy to think that you are Christian because you know all the things and all the stories and all the truths. And may be you're an elder or may be you're a great choir leader or may be you're somebody else. You've told all kinds of people about Jesus, may be you've led people to Jesus and yet your own heart does not react as the heart of Christ. It reacts as an evil pagan heart.

Now, if that happens, you know you need something from God. Here's one example I know where God spoke to me. It's in Matthew 7:1, and of course we've known this from when we were children. It's one of the earliest things we learned at Sunday school.

Matt 7:1-5

"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

Quite apart from the fact that do you realize every time you say something bad, something a little critical, something just a little super wise about the other person, you are putting more and more distance between you and that other person. You know it because there's a furtiveness that comes in. Thank God, at least He doesn't let us become insane. He still witnesses to us; "You said something bad about that person behind their back, now you cannot look straight into their eyes with open honesty." Thank God at least the Holy Spirit witnesses that. He keeps us from becoming insane, dishonest deceivers. But the tragedy is that's what happens.

Every time you say something about another friend, another colleague, another relative, another person in the body, something bad about them, behind their back, the world becomes a little lonelier, a little lonelier. It goes back a little further, it withdraws a little more, you get back into your own little circle just a little more until you're eventually hemmed in a corner, in a straighten place where you feel no one is close to you and you feel you have no friends. Then as many others as do that to you, they feel the same. And so loved ones instead of this being a loving, warm, family fellowship in this world, we're all withdrawing more and more from each other.

But many of us are in that position. We know it's wrong. We know the consequences, but our hearts, our hearts grab every opportunity to tear somebody else down in somebody else's eyes and build ourselves up. We find ourselves with hearts that aren't like Christ. You remember how Jesus put it in Matthew 15:18.

"But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a man." So don't get caught in the old humanist ploy or "I just said it, I mean, I shouldn't have said it. It was a careless word to say. It was just a manner of speaking." No, no it wasn't a manner of speaking, not according to Jesus.

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." Oh no, you really meant that. You meant that

when you said, "Why is she so stand offish?" "Why is he so cruel?" "Why does he not spend more money?" "Why doesn't he do this or that?" No-no, you meant that. Your little heart was out to kill that other person and to make yourself appear nicer or better than them and to put you in good with the person you spoke with.

Oh no, it was your heart, and loved ones many of us I think are in that spot. We know what's right to do and we know what's wrong to do but our heart dominates us and we speak what is in our hearts and it's not a Christian heart. It's not the Christian heart. I would urge you to see that. I would urge you not to pretend. I would tell you that my own life changed when I stopped pretending. When I started to admit what my own heart was before God and I started to ask Him to change my heart. Above all, don't get used to it, just don't get used to it, don't. It's wrong. It's wrong. It's just wrong.

It's wrong before God, it's wrong for you psychologically, socially, and spiritually. It is cruel and death dealing to the little soul, that you are talking about. It's just wrong, stop it; stop it, before it destroys you.

We need hearts that are different. If you're in that spot, say to God, "God, my heart is not like Jesus' heart. I know how I should be responding to these people. They have taken absolutely unfair advantage of me, but they took unfair advantage of Jesus. They have been unjust to me, but they were unjust to Jesus. Lord God, I need that heart of Jesus inside."

Remember William Penn said, "The person who is angry with someone else does more harm to himself than the other person", and so it is with us. You could so easily loved ones, be on the unfair end of this kind of criticism and this kind of gossip. You could be on the unfair end. You could be perfectly right and perfectly innocent and yet by your response to this other person, you could become a dirtier slough of messy despond than even their hearts are. Because there's nothing like resentment to make you sick inside and out, always worrying what the other person is saying about you, moving more and more towards a kind of paranoia where you think everybody is against you.

It's not just a little problem you have with gossip. It's not just a little problem with criticism. It's not just a little problem with harshness in your marital relationship. It's not. You have the heart of an evil man, the heart of an evil woman. Say what you like. May be you're born of God. May be you know all about God. May be you know your sins are forgiven. May be you know all of that, but your heart is not the heart of Jesus. That's what God explained to us, and what we shared some weeks ago. There is an Old Covenant and the Old Covenant is what the Jews knew. They knew that God had forgiven them for their sins and they knew what they ought to do but their cry was, "The good that I would, I cannot do."

Jesus came to baptize us with the Holy Spirit. Jesus did not come simply to forgive our sins. Our sins were forgiven because of His death from before the foundation of the world. God assured all the Jews down through thousands of years of history that their sins were forgiven. But He knew their hearts had to be changed. Jesus came to baptize us with the Holy Spirit and to change our hearts. That's the only thing that will change your heart.

Jesus is able to baptize you with His own Spirit. Now I would say to you that the first step is to be honest about your own criticism, about the dirt and filth that comes out of your own mouth about other people, about the hardness in your own heart towards your family, towards your relatives and towards your roommates. That's the first step. The first step towards the baptism of the Holy Spirit

is the honesty and humility to say, "God that is me. What was described this morning is me. Lord I know that such a person will not enter heaven." And that's you remember, what God says.

He says if you have envy or jealousy or strife in your heart, people who have that kind of thing in their lives will in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven. And so loved ones, for us who live in times of the New Covenant, it's not this outward stuff that counts. It's the inner heart by which we're judged by God. Jesus came to change your heart and mind and He is able to. He is able to give you His own heart. He is able to baptize you with His own Spirit.

BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT