

Deliverance from Sin and the Soul Life

Romans 6:11

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Let us pray. We would ask you Holy Spirit to break through all that men may share with us tonight and will you give us life and make a hole in our hearts to plant that life so that it may grow up and bear fruit a hundred fold. We ask that in Jesus' name and for his glory. Amen.

Just for about half an hour loved ones, I would like to try and talk about deliverance from sin and the soul of life. I'll just write it down so you'll know what we started with anyways but, I think we will do that. I'd just share with you that the basic minimum for a child of God is to be delivered from sin. That's the basic minimum. Not delivered just from the guilt of sin but delivered from the power of sin and that is stated clearly, you remember, in Matthew's gospel where the promise was given to Mary and Joseph that they would bear the son and his name would be called Jesus because he would save his people FROM their sins. Not IN their sins but FROM their sins.

And all the dear old Jews knew was the salvation in the middle of their sins through forgiveness and some degree of remission of guilt. But when Jesus came he saved us from our sins. And I would just remind you of that again, all of us here that are children of God are to be saved from our sins. Now, some of us have not experienced that and some of you still walk in your sins and you have trouble with the works of the flesh -- with envy, and jealousy, and anger, and greed. Loved ones, all I want to say to you is that is not God's will for his children and there is not one reason why you could not have entered in to deliverance from those at the moment of your new birth. Because, that is God's will that when you were baptized in to Christ Jesus, you were baptized into his death and you were delivered from your sin.

But let's say tonight you're not experiencing that. I would just point out to you that Paul always refers to that in a reminiscing kind of way. He never says to children of God, "Now you better get saved from your sins." He always tells it in a reminiscing kind of way. He says, "Now listen, I'd point out to you all that you've entered into in Christ." And maybe you'd look at that and just notice that in Romans. Because, some of us who reply, "Well, no I'm not delivered from my sin," wonder what do we do then? And Paul is very clear. He says, "You look at what you've already received in Jesus. It's not something extra you need." And he says in Romans 6:3, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?"

You were baptized into his death, you were. If you're a child of God and you have his spirit moving in you and you wanted to come here tonight, you have been baptized into Jesus' death. It's not something you have to struggle to get into, you have been baptized into his death. I put the paper in the Bible. Where the Bible goes the paper goes too so the Bible goes there, the paper goes there also. Whatever is in the Bible goes where the Bible goes. You are in Christ. Wherever Christ goes, you go. If Christ goes to the right hand of the Father where he is now, that's where you are. Not do you feel you're there. Not do you pinch yourself and feel -- am I there? Not do you examine your life and say, "Was I greedy or angry yesterday?" You believe God's word.

"Do you not know that all of you who have been baptized in to Christ Jesus were baptized into his

death?" You were therefore buried with him, so that as you bury this Bible, the paper was buried with it. Loved ones, you'll get nowhere in deliverance from sin unless you begin to tackle it the way the Bible does. And Paul doesn't say, "You better get something extra over what you've received when you were born of the spirit." He says, "No, I want to point out to you all that you received when you were born of the spirit. You were baptized into Christ Jesus so you were baptized into his death, so you were buried with him so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father we too might walk in the newness of life." And he says, "That's all happened to you."

All you actually have to do is believe that. And many loved ones think, "No, no, I have to crucify myself." And they start trying to crucify themselves, and they start trying to think themselves into crucifixion. And Paul says, "Don't you know that if you've been baptized into Christ Jesus this has been already done for you. All you have to do is grasp that now by faith." And that's what he says you see in Romans 6:11, "So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." You've just to consider yourselves that. That's faith, that's the first step in entering into deliverance from sin, believing that if Jesus died you died. That when he died you died with him.

Paul says it again in Galatians, "Those of you who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its lust and passions." It's already been done. You don't need to do it it's already been done. Now, all you have to do is believe that and then act accordingly. And you know that's where Satan gets in, I think, on a lot of us here because you think, "Well I have to believe it and then how do I make it real?" Well, you just act, you just act in the light of the fact that it is real. You just make no more provision for the lusts. You make no more provision for your pride because it's been crucified and you've been crucified in Christ. You make no provision for your anger because you have been crucified, the self that used to get angry, you just don't bother with it, you make no provision for it.

So the first step is faith, Romans 6:11. The second step is Romans 6:13, you just yield. "Do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness." And really it's just a matter of accepting it by faith and then going on with God and obeying him. And so it is, loved ones, two steps. Romans 6:11 is just the step of faith and Romans 6:13 is just the plain step of consecration. And everything that you consecrate to him he accepts, buries with his Son, and raises it up perfect and pure and that's how you entered into deliverance of sin.

Now, I would point out to you in Romans 6, God's way of deliverance. Again Paul says, "We know that our old self was crucified with him." Not "has to be". Those of you who are Greek scholars ought to know that that's the aorist tense -- it's not the perfect tense. The perfect tense is the emphasis of something that happened in the past and the present state that results from it. So the emphasis is a little on the present but the aorist tense is a special tense in Greek that means this was one event that took place definitely in the past; it is done with. That's it. It's been done. So your old self was crucified in Christ.

And actually the power that the old self has over you is the power that comes from your dissection that makes you believe in a ghost. You believe in a ghost, you believe that the old self is still alive, that it has every right to its own ways and wishes and that you have to take care of it through this life and you're believing a lie. And actually, why it has such power over you is that you believe it is still alive. Actually, it was crucified and finished and done with on Calvary 1900 years ago in God's cosmic internal realm. And it's crucified now but you still live a lie,

still cossetting something that doesn't actually exist. That's what God says. Our old self was crucified with Christ in the past. It's finished and done with.

Now loved ones, I'd just point out to you that if you look at Romans 6:6 you'll see that there are three entities that take part in producing sin, or anger, or jealousy in your personality. There's the old self, and there is sin, and there is the body of sin. And I mentioned to you before that the body of sin is just this body that has for years been used to getting from people and from circumstances and from society, all the security, significance and happiness that it needs. So it's a body that is enslaved to working inwardly all the time and it's a slave of sin. And sin is just the power of Satan, the sheer power of Satan that maintains life apart from God. And the power of Satan that tries to feed us with security, significance, and happiness apart from God. And the power of sin is expressed through the body via the old self.

Now, in the monasteries they think that if they deal with this they'll somehow get rid of sin and some of us have some of that left with our cold showers and our discipline of the body. And we think the body is the whole problem and if we can only discipline the body we'll be alright. And some of us of course, believe that sin can be eradicated completely from the world. As long as Satan is here it cannot. And it's important to see that what God did was remove the old self. The old self is the inclination to sin. The inclination to depend on people for love instead of God, to depend on the world for security, significance and happiness instead of on God. And what Jesus did was to crucify that old self and that inclination.

But it is important for you to see that you don't have to crucify it yourself. You have to exercise faith and you have to exercise consecration and really God then makes it real to you. Now, I think some of you still wonder, "Oh, is it as easy as that?" Well loved ones, do you see that's the only difficulty there, the consecration. The faith springs up in your heart if you're willing to be treated as Jesus was treated and that's it. And some of us, I think, need to see that you do have to be freed from sin.

Loved ones, that's the absolute minimum for children of God. And I think some of you don't enter in to this more because you keep on believing that you can sin and be a Christian. And loved ones you can't. You can't continue to sin and be a Christian. You'll bark your shins on every verse of scripture from Genesis to Revelation. If you keep on trying to believe you can sin and be a Christian you can't. If you're a child of God you're freed from sin because you've been crucified in Christ and the old self is crucified so that you may no longer be enslaved to sin. And it is good you know to grasp that and not to make any provision for it.

Now loved ones, I'd point out to you that the sin that most of us have problems with is the sin that is emphasized in these verses if you'd look at them Romans 6:12. Romans 6:12, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions." Sin is the power of Satan to enable us to live without God. And that sin reigns in our mortal bodies. You remember the way that miserable old diagram goes and you remember the way the body is the method by which we try to get from the world the security, and the significance, and the happiness that we were meant to get from our Father's love.

And that comes mainly through the body itself. I think it won't be difficult for any of us to apply it to our own lives. We have built in to us a human urge for self preservation. We have an urge to eat so that we will be nourished and strengthened. That is a gift of God. But what we do is we miss the sense of security that we should get from God through our spirits that would then come into

our souls and would go out through our body and fill the world with a sense of security and we miss that. What we try to do is get that security by actually over exercising this self preservation until it becomes gluttony.

And so in regard to food many of us treat food not as simply a method of self preservation but we treat food as something that will give us a sense of security and so many of us eat more, we drink more when we're worried and when we're concerned. And we actually misuse the body. In this way we misuse the body to get an ability to be secure apart from God's love. It's the same with the whole business of significance because God has given us a real desire to defend ourselves so that when a car comes along the road we do, usually, move out of the way. And we have an urge for self defense like any animal does. And so we do in fact, defend ourselves but we have lost the sense of significance that comes from knowing that God loves us, and knows our name, and is pleased with the way we operate our lives, and we've lost the sense of any significance in his service.

We have no feeling that we're worth anything to anybody or that we're doing anything worthwhile and so we actually prostitute this whole urge for self defense and we turn it into a self glorifying thing. And so we are involved a great deal of our lives in glorifying ourselves often through our bodies -- the guys often through what we can do with our bodies, the girls often how our bodies will look. But most of us find and base the urge for sin through our bodies in some way.

It's the same with the whole need for happiness. We were given a natural urge to propagate the race and that's perfectly natural, the urge for self propagation. And of course, because we so lack a sense of happiness and a sense of enjoyment in God's fellowship we have to somehow get a thrill and an excitement from somewhere, and of course we have prostituted that into lust. So that's what this verse means you see when it says, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies." Because most of us probably find the urge to get significance, and happiness, and security from the world and from people instead of from God, we find that is based in our bodies usually. Some of us perhaps, in our souls, but most of us through our bodies.

And you find that's emphasized in several verses. Romans 6:13, "Do not yield your members," you see your body, your legs, your arms, "Do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members," your physical limbs, "to God as instruments of righteousness." And then if you look at Romans 7:23, you get the same reference to the fact that sin for most carnal Christians works through the body in some way. "But I see in my members," in my limbs, in my physical being, "another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members."

And probably most of you would agree with that. God tells you to go out and visit someone who is sick and the body wants to laze around and lay around. Most of us like to think we're in some way more subtle in our sinning than that but actually most of us are pretty boring sinners. We're mostly the same, it's the body that prevents us obeying what God wants. Either the appearance of the body to other people that we're proud of or the feelings of the body, the body feels tired, or it feels alive, or it feels sick, or it feels weary. Or, the body has strong desires for food, or strong desires for certain clothes, or strong desires for sexual satisfaction. But usually, we're trying to satisfy our desire for love through our body in some way.

And then you see it in Verse 24, "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" And then Romans 8:10-11 lays the same emphasis on the body as for so many of us the seat of sin. "But if Christ is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive

because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you.”

So loved ones, all I would point out to you is, it is not saying the body is bad. God doesn't teach the body is bad at all. But when we misuse the body, when we use the body to try to get from the world and from other people the love and the security, and significance, and happiness that we were meant to get through the Holy Spirit from our relationship with God, then we are making the body the servant of sin. And most of us don't rise far above that. And I would remind you what I've shared with you before, isn't it true that most of society is preoccupied with food, shelter, and clothing? Isn't that right?

Most of us get our significance from having nicer clothes than somebody else, or a bigger Honda than somebody else, or a bigger car than somebody else, or a bigger house than somebody else. It's the same with happiness. Most of our little happinesses are connected with getting something new for wintertime, or summertime. It's almost so pathetic, isn't it, when you think of it. Except that's where most of the world lives and that's probably where most carnal Christians live. They care a lot about Jesus but when it comes to a choice between him and these little treats that they feel they ought to have then they go with the treats.

And so most carnal Christians are governed by what they get through the body. Now, when you're crucified with Christ you accept that the world has been crucified to you and you accept, "Lord I'm willing never to look to clothing, or to food, or to shelter for what I'm meant to get from your love. Lord, I am willing with Jesus to die now to having anything but the cloth that he had when he was crucified. Lord anything else I have beside that it's yours, I'm willing to die to it. I'm willing no longer to regard it as my own to possess, or to give away, or to keep. Lord, it's the same with my shelter, my house that I have. Jesus had nowhere to lay his head. Lord, being crucified with him is being willing to regard my apartment, my room, the little things I have, my car, as belonging to you. I'm willing to die to those, they're yours to do what you want with."

And the same with all the other things, loved ones. Being crucified with Christ is being willing never to get through your body any longer the security, and the significance, and the happiness that you're to get from God alone. And of course, once a person comes down to that it's like dying to the physical world, you can see that. See, it's like being buried, that's why God uses those terms. It's like dying as far as the physical world is concerned. No longer do you depend on those things. No longer are you concerned or worried when you don't have them. No longer do you get irritable, or anxious, or annoyed when somebody affects those things in your life, takes them away from you, or gives you more of them. No longer are you concerned with that. No longer are you concerned with what comes through the five senses. That's what being crucified with Christ means.

Now, the great tragedy is that there are many children of God who cease to be carnal in that way. That is they do accept their crucifixion with Christ. They do die to what self gets from other people and from other things through their physical body. They are crucified with Christ in that way and they think they have arrived because they have ceased from sin. And actually, you will, you will be able to cease from sin once you accept your death to the physical world with Jesus. There's no reason why you can't walk free from sin.

But the tragedy is that many loved ones think they are utterly freed from the flesh and from carnality when they have entered into the crisis experience of being crucified with Christ and being

baptized or filled with his Holy Spirit. And the truth is loved ones, it's only the beginning. And I know many brothers and sisters who have hit rocks because they have imagined themselves to have hit the heights of spiritual living because they have at last died to self will, they've died to the rights, they've died to the right to have their own way, they've died to the physical world as a source of love, and security, and happiness, and they think that is the end and the goal that God had for them and loved ones, it's only the beginning.

Let me explain it to you. The reason we get a sense of excitement and thrill from lust is because it touches something in our souls. That's how we receive it, that's how we enjoy it. It touches our emotions and our emotions receive a thrill and an excitement. The reason we get a sense of self glory and a sense of significance from the respect or the admiration others give us because of the way we look, or because of how strong we are, or because of what we can do, is because it gives us a sense of domination in our wills over other people. The reason we can work up a sense of security through having all the food, and all the shelter, and all the clothing that we need is because it appeals to our mind's sense that we have things under control.

Otherwise, do you see we would not have any consciousness of those things. We'd be like a little animal that hasn't a tremendous consciousness at all of what is happening to its body. And if we only existed up to that level (our bodies), that is what we would be like. But we don't. We operate as well with souls -- with the whole psychological being -- and it's the psychological being that actually receives these things through our bodies. And when Satan sees a child of God with the world crucified to them and them crucified to the world, when Satan sees a child of God who has died to what he can get through his body as a substitute for God's love, Satan simply moves from the body back to the soul.

And he then concentrates on the soul life. And he begins to try to get that child of God to get from his own soul or her own soul what should be actually coming from the spirit. And so where you remember before, the child of God had the spirit of giving security, and significance, and happiness and had the body coming there, the conflict was at that point. The spirit was against the body, the spirit was fighting against the flesh as far as the body was concerned. Now the conflict just moves back one level. The spirit is still bringing God's love but now Satan is working on the soul, and the spirit and the soul are clashing. And the child of God begins to be utterly preoccupied with the powers of his soul.

And I could give you instance after instance of even loved ones here in this very room who have simply sunk into soul life. They are not free instruments through which the spirit of God passes joyously, through the soul and the body and out into the world. They are people who are -- well it's your term and I'm learning it because it covers so many of us, they are "bummed out" [depressed] most of the time. They're not bummed out because they are sinning; many of them have accepted their crucifixion with Christ. They're bummed out because they spend all their time here looking at themselves and feeling their feelings, and thinking their thoughts, and willing their wills, and they just go around in circles. And they constantly try to get from their souls what they used to get from the body.

And the worst of it is they're getting nothing from their spirits. Because of course, one of the marks of the spirit life is there's a beautiful freedom from self consciousness, a beautiful preoccupation with Jesus and what he wants you to do. So that it's like, you remember, what I described to you before when we were eight or nine years old and we were out with dad, and mum, and all the family and we just went out and we were sailing, and we were swimming, and we were playing

football, and the day just flew by and you weren't aware of yourself at all. It was all through in a day and suddenly it's been a wonderful day, you hadn't thought of yourself once. And you can think of many instances like that.

That's what's spirit life is. But loved ones who live in the soul are the most miserable, depressing, melancholic creatures to be with. They are utterly preoccupied with what their feelings are feeling, and what their minds are thinking, and what their will is willing and so they live in their souls. They have been delivered from sin as far as the body is concerned but as far as the soul life is concerned they are absolutely dominated by their feelings, by what's in their minds, by what's in their wills. In other words, they don't look to Jesus at all, their eyes are here inside themselves. They are introspective people.

I've seen loved ones who have been delivered from self and they have moped around in their jobs. There's no joy or delight in their job. There's a preoccupation with themselves, a preoccupation with, am I feeling the right feelings, am I thinking the right thoughts, am I willing the right actions? There's no joyous preoccupation with the Savior, there's just a complete immersing in self. It's a self preoccupation that paralyzes them completely and of course it's Satan's trick. And what they don't realize is this is now the daily bearing of the cross that Jesus intends for us.

You see there is a crisis experience of the cross that happened in Romans 6. Our old self was crucified, it's done. But there is a daily bearing of the cross as the Holy Spirit frees us from the domination of our soul life. Because of course, the soul life is just an extension of the flesh, loved ones. It's just an extension of the old flesh of the body and so if you're laying under the soul life really it's a little more refined than laying under the body but it is still the spirit. Your poor little spirit is being squashed to death, not now with the body but squashed to death with the emotions and the mind.

That's why I've shared with you that the only right worship is a worship that is preoccupied with Jesus. That says like Thomas, "My Lord and my God!" A worship that is preoccupied with itself is soul worship, you see. Do you ever come in on a Sunday evening and think, "Hmm, did I really feel Jesus' presence?" Does it matter? Jesus is here, he promised you that "where two or three gathered together, there am I in the midst." He expects you to accept that by faith and to worship him with joy. But, there are many of us who come into a service like this and our first thought is to dive immediately into the soul and we begin to dwell in the soul. Once in a while, if the tune is a good one, we get wrapped up in our emotional preoccupation with the lift of the tune but it's still an emotional experience. It's not a preoccupation with Jesus.

It's the same in our prayer times. We get up in the morning and many of us of course, never escape from the body. Many of us get up in the morning and say, "Oh I'm so tired. Oh, Lord I haven't much time. I can't breathe very freely. Oh, I'm hungry and my tummy is rumbling." And many of us don't get beyond that. I mean many of us haven't the sense to go and open the window and breathe fresh air and do some exercises and get the body under us where it should be. Many of us don't get free of that. But even if we do, many of us kneel down and then immediately we go right into our souls and we say, "Now, do I feel Jesus present? Lord, I have to conjure up a feeling of your presence. Now, I'll imagine him over there at the end of my bed." And you're right in the soul. Imagination can be an instrument of the spirit but with most of us it's a substitute for the spirit and a substitute for faith. And we immediately sink into a soulish experience.

You know the way it goes. You know the way it goes from then on because you're utterly preoccupied

with your soul so you get nothing but a counterfeit experience of Jesus' presence and it's an experience that usually takes you about a couple of hours to work up and that flies away very fast as soon as you get outside and get preoccupied with getting a car started and so there's no satisfaction at all from it. It's purely an emotional soulish experience. Why? Because, you're still not walking by faith.

Faith is believing that God is there, is looking at you, is listening to you. You blast on and say what you have to say to him and glorify him and praise him. So many loved ones never get clear of the soul life and because they're not delivered from the soul life they actually never find out what God wants them to do because most of their guidance is coming from what their minds think they ought to do. And so they get wrapped up in the kind of thing that Peter did, you remember, he didn't understand Jesus at all. Jesus explained, "Now listen, I'm going to have to be crucified and on the third day I'll rise again from the dead." And Peter said, "Far be that from you Lord." And Peter was using his own mind. He didn't understand at all where Jesus was going and what he was talking about.

And you remember Jesus did not reply to him, "Oh now you have still a little further to go in your spiritual walk." Jesus said, "Get thee behind me Satan." Because the Savior knows that if you're under the control of your soul life you're still under the control of his arch enemy Satan. Now loved ones, that's the kind of truth I'd like to share with you over the next few Sundays. And I do think we could have a question time but honestly I really think it would be better if you heard out the teaching over the next three or four Sundays because I think it will become increasingly clear to you.

But perhaps you'll just at least, now, ask the Holy Spirit to tap you on the shoulder when you start sinking into the soul. And I would say anybody here that gets into depression -- loved ones, there's no question you're at least living in the soul. You're at least living in the soul, possibly even worse than that but you're at least living in the soul. Or those of you who are moody, or who get down about things, you're living in the soul. Faith you see, is Jesus stretching down his hand and saying, "Hang on to me and I'll lift you." And you hang on to him and he lifts you. Soul is, "But what will happen to my feet if I..." That's self consciousness, preoccupation with "but how is this going to work?" Faith is, "Lord, you said it -- I'll do it." Soul is, "How am I going to do it?"

One dear old saint said, "If God says jump through that wall you jump and he'll make the hole." And that's it, you know. You obey God, you do what he tells you without question, without examining how you feel about it and God will take care of giving you the grace and enabling you to do the thing. But, walking by faith is a joyous, spontaneous, self forgetful experience. Walking in the body is being dominated by the desires, and the passions of the body. Walking in the soul is a preoccupation with your own inner personal experience and will bring sadness, and misery -- but faith will bring joy and peace in the Holy Spirit.

Let's pray. Dear Father, thank you that it's all so clean and clear Lord. Thank you that it is so simple that a little child can enter the kingdom. Thank you Lord that it always gets back to that simple hymn: "Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey." And Lord, thank you for showing us tonight that Satan is content that we should enter into a crisis crucifixion with you and die to ourselves as far as our bodies are concerned as long as we still allow him to control our soul lives. And Lord thank you for showing us that it is your will that by bearing the cross daily with you and dying daily to self, and self consciousness, and self

preoccupation we should gradually by the Holy Spirit be freed from the power of the soul so that our minds, and emotions, and wills will be the servants of our spirits and not the masters.

So that our minds, and emotions, and wills will be instruments through which you exercise your will in our lives -- not the source or substitute for your love. Lord, thank you, thank you for showing it to us. Blessed Spirit, I trust you to reveal it more clearly to my brothers and sisters this week so that we may walk in joy, and peace in the Holy Spirit. 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 week. Amen.