

The Normal State of the Spirit No. 3

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

There is a statement that you would use. I think I first met it in Benilde High School [Catholic high school in St. Louis Park, Minnesota], when I was teaching there. And some of -- it was very popular. The Christian brothers were beginning to turn to psychology. There was that period in the Catholic Church after Pope John when we were kind of modernizing everything. And that's when I first heard the statement, "Who am I?" I mean I thought it was dumb because in Ireland, during the war, all the children were given identity disks with your name and address on. And so identity disks were very familiar to us, and I thought, "Well, you just look at your identity disk and see who you are." And I'm Ernest O'Neill, 68 Banbury, Belfast.

So, I could not understand what you were all at when you were saying this, "Who am I?" Or, when all these sensitivity groups came in with, "I'm trying to get in touch with myself," it just seemed so strange to me. I thought, "Oh, these poor souls. I don't know what's wrong with them that they can't get in touch with themselves." And it's only -- honestly, it's really only now that I'm realizing something of what you loved ones, in our mass society, here in America, were fighting. It's only now that I'm really beginning to see how many of you were so overwhelmed by what your parents wanted you to do, or it seems to me, even more, by what your peers expected of you, or by what your friends expected of you. And it seems to me, you were so brainwashed with the old TV encouragement to be like everybody else, that I'm just beginning to grasp that many of you lost a sense of yourselves as individuals at all.

Now, it was harder for me to realize that because in Ireland, we're very much individuals. And we are ourselves. We may be ugly and miserable, but we're very much ourselves. And we're very used to standing up and being ourselves. In fact, we love that. We love a battle. We like to fight to be ourselves. But I can see a little in our mass society, here in America, especially where not only the media, but everybody spreads from mind-to-mind what everybody else thinks of everybody else. I can see a little of the pressure that many of you came under from your early school days. And so, I'm beginning to grasp a little of what you mean when you say, "I'm trying to find out who I am," that many of us, perhaps, have fallen into patterns of behavior that were just expected of us.

Now, with due respect to you, I think you were scared, and fearful, and you were miserable old cards, that you did that. But probably, I would have done the same thing, had I been so brainwashed. But however it happened, I think many of us lost touch with who, we ourselves, really were. Indeed, I can see that many of you, maybe from you were wee babies, began to develop into what somebody else thought you should be. And I certainly, can sense the pressure that was upon you in school days, especially when high school was so empty of content. Because I think that's what I discovered in teaching high school here in America, often it was empty of content. And your preoccupation was what the other guys, or the other girls thought of you, or what everybody else on the team thought of you, or what all the other parents thought of you, or what the teachers thought of you. And I can see that it was very easy for you to become just a little robot that was governed, and trained, and molded by what everybody else expected.

And I can see, too, how many of us tried to break out of that, and in the process became ugly monstrosities really. I think that many of us thought, "Yeah, yeah. I don't know who I am, but I'm

fed up trying to please everybody else, and I'm trying – I'm fed up trying to be what everybody else wants me to be. I'm going to be myself." And so, we confuse being yourself with doing exactly what you wanted when you wanted. And saying exactly what you thought when you thought it, and holding nothing back and that's how many of us got into this 'honest' kind of syndrome, "Oh, let me be real. Let me be really honest. Let me really say what I think."

And then, it wasn't far until we got into a preoccupation with ourselves. And I think many of you maybe, are at times, somewhere between those. You're trying to be what somebody else wants you to be, and yet you're trying to be yourself. And I think many of us come into a fellowship and a spiritual family like this, really aware that things are not right inside, but not terribly sure what's wrong. And I think many of you do actually make the error of receding back into what you were in school. I think many of you realize, "Well, I'm ugly as I am. I shouldn't be wanting my own way. I shouldn't be saying just what I think when I want to say it. Maybe, I should be becoming what Pastor says we should all be, or maybe I should be becoming what the others, who obviously are respected in this group, are like." And so, I think the tragedy is that many of you slip back into the old pattern of trying to conform yourself, not this time to the school world, or to the world of your peers, or your neighbors, but to the Christian world or the religious world. And you end up becoming little robots, except that you're little religious robots this time.

And that's what we've been sharing about these evenings, that being born again, really means becoming what God made you to be. And that the problem that you have in ever finding your own individuality is because your own individuality is actually dead. [He starts to draw on the display a large circle, the 'Body', and inside that a smaller circle, the 'Soul', then inside that a very small circle.] And what you've got is a very live body, and a very live soul with mind, and emotions, and will that work the way everybody else's does, but in here you're dead. [He writes 'Spirit' in the very small circle.] Your spirit, that's where your spirit is. That's where the real you is. That's actually dead.

And do you see that you can never find that by this business of, "Well, I'll try to be my real self, and I'll just speak out, and I'll say what I think, and I'll be myself," because the incredible thing is, there is no self to be! There is only a 'you' in connection with your Father, your Maker. But if you're not connected with your Maker, your spirit has died: there is no real you! And so, there's no way in which you can find a self there, because the self is dead.

And actually, the only way you can find that self is by coming to the One Person who is himself, and who is alive, and who moves from within a real character and a real personality. And that is the only way you'll ever find yourself, loved ones. It is! I didn't realize that this was what a lot of you struggle with. But that's the meaning of being born again. The only person who can bring you, as you were really made to be by God, alive -- in other words, the only one who can make you alive inside, in your 'real you', is the one who, himself, is the only one that is truly alive. And that's Jesus. And that's the only way to come alive. It is. You'll never do it, loved ones, by this kind of robust taking the self into your own hands, and: "I'm going to be my real self. And I'm going to find myself, and get in touch with myself. And I'm going to be no longer afraid of what people think of me." No, you'll create some monstrosity that isn't the real you at all.

There's only one way to find you as you really are, and that is to begin to communicate with the dear person who is the only free person in this whole world. And really there only is one who is free from the external pressures of other people's opinions, and the external pressures of circumstances. And that is Jesus, loved ones. And what each of us here in this room most need is

Jesus. And you have to first of all believe that he's alive. Otherwise, you'll never be able to contact him. You have to first, believe that he's alive. And then, you do need to begin to speak in faith to him. And it does mean long periods of time on your own. It does. There's no other way loved ones. There's just no other way, but long periods of time alone with Jesus.

Now honestly, it doesn't matter whether you're kneeling on your knees or whether you're apparently praying, or whether you're lying back on a lawn with the sunshine. It really doesn't matter. Or whether you're sitting in a chair with the lights out in a room, or whether you've just stopped the car by a lake and you're just sitting there. And your eyes maybe are open, and yet they're not seeing anything. But you're murmuring deep down in your heart to Jesus. That's what's needed, loved ones. It doesn't matter what the format is. It doesn't matter whether it's in here or outside, but you need to be on your own talking to the one person who can begin to bring you alive inside. And that's the only way to do it.

So, you're never going to do it unless you will spend some time alone. And if you say, "Brother, I'm afraid to be alone," loved ones, you have to be alone. You have to sometime stop the mad scramble always to be with other people. You have to stop this mad scramble always to be reading books, or always to be taking things in from television, or taking things in from other people. Sometime, you have to "Be still and know that I am God." You have to quiet things inside and calm that dear old mind that is churning away, and those emotions that are churning with desires, and you have to say, "Lord, Jesus, I don't even -- it's a voice speaking, but I don't even know what this voice is meant to say. I don't even know the kind of person I am. Lord, I'm a conglomeration of things. I'm a mess of trying to please this person, and afraid of that person. I'm a mixture of a robot that is prompted by these circumstances, and a selfish drive inside me that isn't even me, that is driving me in some other direction. Lord Jesus, you'll have to come and calm this lake inside me." But loved ones, it needs to be that. That's what it is to come alive inside.

And I don't know what you thought being born again is. Sometimes, I shudder when I think of all the things that you maybe think it is. But it's communicating with Jesus. It's talking with Jesus. It's beginning to treat Jesus as a real person. It's loving him and allowing him gradually, to speak to you.

Now honestly, it will be a while, loved ones. And you'd better just face that. You're going to have to spend some time, some considerable time, like that, or times, before you will be quiet enough to hear his voice. That's true. The fact is you're not being quiet. Your mind is churning, or there's a desire inside you to really answer for Him. But in some way, there isn't absolute faith. And you see, absolute faith is when you really do believe he's real, and you really do believe that he does love you, and that he will speak to you, and that he will make you alive inside.

And until you come to that, you'll be trying to do the ventriloquist! You will. You'll be trying to do a little speaking for Jesus to you. You'll think you have to run both sides of the conversation until you come into absolute quietness. And if you say to me, "Is it meditation or passivity?" It isn't! It isn't! It's a yearning. It's an act of yearning for Jesus to speak to you. It's an act of conviction within you that unless he speaks to you, you will not come alive. He must speak you alive! He must do for you what he did with the widow's son at Nain. He must touch you into life. That's it loved ones. And he will! There is a person inside you that is real, and that can be alive, and that has the desires, and the plans that God has planned, and has in his heart for you. He has.

I mean, you are different. You are different. You're different from every one of us in this room. And you have something to do in your life that none of the rest of us can do. Really, that's true. You have something in your life that none of the rest of us have. And the world will be a poorer place, immeasurably poorer. And your Maker who made you, will miss something beautiful in his plan, and will have a tear in his heart forever, if you do not come alive, if you do not get together with your Savior, and receive liveliness and life from him. And loved ones, that's what it is to be born of God. And that's what it means to say that your spirit comes alive.

It was interesting for me, because I love literature and poetry, and have great respect for the old educators that used to be in America and in England. It was interesting -- I read from time-to-time poetry, but I read also old Cambridge lectures. And these lectures were given by a man who was knighted in Cambridge for his work in English literature, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. [1863 – 1944] And he has lectures that were delivered over a period of maybe actually two years all together, on the art of reading. And they were delivered in 1916. And there's just you a sanity and balance that comes through them.

Now, what I'm going to ask you to do is suffer me -- just suffer me because you love me -- because one of the things he does is he quotes a poet called Robert Browning. Robert Browning writes this poem in which he talks about the death of St. John the Evangelist at Patmos. And by the way, I'd just mention to you, oh we need to pray that God would send us lecturers and professors like this Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, because they had a balance about them, and a godliness about them which they never expressed outwardly in their lectures, that brought sanity and balance into education.

However, I'll go on. Robert Browning writes like this -- now, I'll go slowly and explain it because the language is a little different. He says of St. John the Evangelist, "This is the doctrine he was want to teach, how diverse persons witness in each man," different persons in each of us, three souls, he calls them. He didn't know our diagram, but he called them three souls. "Three souls which make up one soul. First, a soul of each and all the bodily parts, seated therein, which works and is 'what does'." And so, he says "First of all, you have a soul," he calls it, that is the body -- made up of the body. "And it is 'what does', and has the use of earth, and ends the man downward." It's the part of man that connects it with the earth downward. "But tending upward for advice, grows into and again is grown into by the next soul, which seated in the brain useth the first with its collected use, and feeleth, thinketh, willeth."

And it just -- it was just--oh, it was just so good for me to realize, "Oh, these dear guys, they knew it all long before we had our little discoveries." And then he says, "Is 'what knows'," and boy, that came home to me that -- that the soul inside us, the mind, emotions, and will, that's so often 'what knows'. And it's interesting, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch says -- his lecture is funny -- but he says later on, "One of the greatest blessings that ever came to the world was when the Barbarians burned the library in Alexandria six different times." Because, they burned up a whole lot of books that otherwise would have filled us up with all that the world knows.

And it's very interesting, then, he goes on -- I'll tell you what he says is the purpose of education. He says then, "Which duly tending upward in its turn grows into and again is grown into by the last soul. That uses both the first, subsisting, whether they assist or no, and constituting man's self..." And of course, what he means is the spirit, the inner most part. "Constituting man's self is 'what is'." And what is, is what our spirits are.

And really, in a way loved ones, I think, we in our educational system, and even in the explosion of knowledge, and in the power of the media, we are little people who are all over developed in our bodies, and we're over developed in our souls, in our knowledge. We're absolutely full up to here up the tree of knowledge. And that's why I even hesitate to share the books with you, because it seems as though we read, and read, and read. And we're filled up with 'what knows'. And we're – our lives are preoccupied with 'what does'. But there's very little of 'what is' inside us.

And it's interesting, old Quiller-Couch then talks about the elementary schools, even though he's lecturing at Cambridge. And he says, "This is the task, and the area, in which education moves. It has to do with 'what is'."

It's interesting. He says that school teachers and professors should not be dealing with 'what knows', but they should be dealing with 'what is'. And he goes on to say they should be drawing out the kingdom of God that is within each child.

And loved ones, it's interesting that, in a way we're all a victims of our society. So little of that has been drawn out. I don't know if you know, that education is "educio" – 'to lead out', "duco" begets the word, the English word 'duke'. And "duco" is 'to lead'. "Caesar exercitum duxit ponte," "Caesar led his army across the bridge." "Duxit," "Duco", 'to lead.' And "educio" is 'to lead out' from inside you. And that really was the original purpose of education, 'to lead out' from inside you the real person that God had made you to be.

Now, what I'm sharing with you is our educational system has failed miserably and is utterly preoccupied with 'what knows'. But do you see that we, in the body of Christ, we run the risk also, of being preoccupied with 'what knows', instead of 'what is'? And I would ask you to really approach Jesus, and ask him to bring alive the you that is inside there, because loved ones, if you don't, if you don't come alive inside, if you aren't born again inside, really I think, a fellow like me, or men like me, or women who do this same kind of thing, they'll just intensify hell for you. They will. You'll just go nearer and nearer into hell, unless somehow the real you inside begins to pop up just a little shoot of life, and begins to allow Jesus to develop you. Now it will have to be him, loved ones. It will. It will have to be him.

And if you say to me, "Has it anything of self?" Nothing of self! Nothing of self! When you get preoccupied with developing yourself and you hear a message like this, and you say, "Well, that's good, what pastor said. I'm going to be the real me." You will become a monster! You won't become the real person at all. You have to look to Jesus. You have to fall in love with him, be preoccupied with him. And you will spontaneously find yourself beginning to develop as it was really meant to. In other words, when you're prepared to lose your life for Jesus' sake, when you're prepared to say, "Lord, all I want is to know you. I just want to know you, Lord. I want to know what you're thinking. I want to know what you're feeling today." As you're prepared to lose your life for his sake, so you're going to find your life. You're going to come alive inside.

Now, it is a paradox. So, you need to see that it's concentration on Jesus, and find out what he's saying and thinking. Here's you see the mystery of it. Jesus himself, is the one who made all the universe. That's what the Bible says, "The world was made by him and without him was not anything made that was made." And it was by Jesus that God made all of us. Now Jesus himself, we think of as one person. But that's almost foolishness, because Jesus is just such a rich, many faceted personality, that he has all the beauty, and all the life, and all the wisdom, and all the laughter, and all the humor, and all the love to fill up a 1,000 million universes like ours. But the only way all that wisdom, and beauty, and love, and individuality, and happiness, and liveliness can be

seen is by a little bit being seen in me, a little bit being seen in you, a little bit being seen in you, a little bit being seen in you. That's it.

That's why the key is for you to get to know Jesus. And you know, if you say to me, "Well, then will we not become robots?" Well, that's the beauty – that's what it means, he became broken bread and poured out wine. That's why we eat the bread and drink the wine at communion. This Jesus has given himself so that a little bit of him could be in you, and could enliven you with the individuality that God planned for you to have. No, it doesn't mean you become a robot at all. It does mean that you are preoccupied with your lover, with your dearest friend and Savior. But you yourself become very much alive and very much your own self. And yet the beauty of it is, that it is a speck of Jesus in you that is being seen. And so the whole world begins to be filled with him. And then God looks down and sees his own Son in many lives and he's glorified by that.

So loved ones really, you're precious. You're precious. It's something -- you remember, somebody put it this way, that you yourself are a picture frame. [He draws a double rectangle as a picture frame.] Your life is a picture frame within which God intends to paint a portrait of his Son. [Inside the frame begins to draw brush strokes as if painting.] But your portrait of Jesus is going to be different from all the rest. And it's probably not going to be any more religious a portrait as Jesus himself was.

So, loved ones, that is important. When we talk in these evenings about the spirit, your spirit inside of you, that's what we're talking about. We're talking about the real you inside. It's the real you. And the reason why many of you have problems, "Oh, where's my spirit? Where's my spirit?" is, many of you have not really come alive. And so, you're very fearful people, and you're very preoccupied with maybe, what I would like you to do, or what somebody else would like you to do. And you're very preoccupied with becoming what you think you should become, instead of finding a moving life within you, that you sense is real, and is authentic, and is original, and is creative.

And I think you would say that wouldn't you? You would say -- many of you are fearful at times. You're fearful. You think, "Oh, well, I want to make sure I do the right thing." And you feel that even about guidance in your lives. You feel, "Well, I want make sure. Oh, I'm not sure if I'm doing the right thing." Well, it's because there's an emptiness inside. There is no movement inside you. All you are is a mirror that is mirroring what all the other people think you should do. But it is possible to come alive inside so that there is a movement within you. It is, honestly! It really is! It's possible for you to have an authentic, original life and movement within you that is really you, that is the 'real' you.

And you'll find that that gives you, of course, a great sense of stability, a great sense of satisfaction that you're alive, and that you really exist, that you don't have to pinch yourself to see if you're there. Or you don't have to do something wild to authenticate yourself, as old Sartre [Jean-Paul Sartre, 1905 - 1980, French philosopher, playwright] would say. But you are real inside.

And it brings a rest, too. It brings a rest inside you. No longer do you have to prove yourself, no longer do you have to win arguments, no longer do you have to do something to show everybody that you're there. You know you're here. And you just know it. You know you're alive. You know that you're here for a purpose that God has for you. And there's a great stability and steadiness comes inside. But loved ones, it only comes when your spirit comes alive.

Now, all I'd like to share is just a few of the qualities of your spirit when that happens. I think some of you think, "Well, that's a pretty, pretty quiet feeling, then, yeah? Yeah?" Well, it is. But some of you have the idea, "Well, it's kind of – it's kind of passive." Well, no, no it isn't. A spirit that is alive in Jesus, is anything but passive. And you'll find that in a verse in Romans 12:11. "Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord." And here the RSV translates, "Be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord." The King James' version says, "Be fervent in spirit." And fervent means burning, and eager, and full of enthusiasm, and full of zeal.

Now, could I just make clear the distinctions? Transcendental meditation, Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, all Eastern religions that encourage sinking into yourself, end up with you growing fat like Buddha, just sitting there, really. All those approaches to discovering yourself end up in passivity, and end up in a sense of deadness inside until you can stand it no longer. Or eventually, you just split off your religious life from the active life that you have to live outside. And so, they're no use to each other. So, that's one distinction.

Another distinction is fervency of soul. Fervency of soul is often what happens in religious circles. Everybody says, "Let's go out witnessing." "Okay, go out witnessing." First, we sing a chorus to get ourselves riled up and roused. Then we read a lesson in the Bible. Then I preach a good sermon to you, and then we all hit it -- hit the fraternity houses one after another. Now, that, that's a kind of fervency of soul where it has the same life as any of our cheerleader days had, or any of the days when we were rah-rahing our team in order to win at school. It's that kind of thing. Or it's even the kind of soulish oneness we feel over the Iran crisis. It's very much a soul thing, an emotional thing, a mind thing.

Now, loved ones, fervency of spirit is not that. Fervency of spirit is Jesus maintaining deep down within you, a deep enthusiasm and desire to do what, he himself, is wanting to do in you. In other words, it's a knowing, it's a preoccupation with Jesus, and with his life, and his activity. And that imparts to you an activity, and a fervency. And actually, the way it is maintained by the Holy Spirit, is by you continuing to do what God tells you to do. That's it. When you at last discover yourself and realize this life within you, when that life begins to prompt you to do something, do it. Do it at once! Do it at once!

You dare not reject or resist that life. Don't loved ones. If you resist it, you'll grieve the Spirit of Jesus. And you'll notice a deadness coming inside yourself. And then, you'll fall back into soulish enthusiasm to try to prove to yourself that you're alive.

So, when you sense a moving within you, when you're in quietness with Jesus, and you sense, "I should do that," do it, whatever it is. Whether it's write a letter, whether it's go and see somebody, whether it's commit yourself to a certain course of study, or do something, or speak to somebody, do it. Because, it's that commitment to his will that he expresses inside you, that will enable his Spirit to make your spirit continually fervent.

And you see, what a fervent spirit will achieve in you, is it will give you life when you come into deadness in the office, or when you come into a deadness in the momentum of your own family life, your own church life, your own friendship life. You know there are certain moments when your lives – your life just stops up. It is kind of a gridlock. There's a gridlock takes place, and it just comes up dead. And there's no movement. You're involved in some spiritual ministry and suddenly the whole thing goes dead, and cold. And you just can't move it. Or your family life just jars to a stop, and there's no opening, there's no way through. Or your life at the office, or at work, just all dies. That's when a fervent spirit enables you to keep on, little-by-little, edging forward.

It's as if you're in a boat, and you're frozen in with ice. And yet there's this little motor still churning inside, and turning the propeller round and you're edging forward through the ice. Now, that's what a fervent spirit enables you to do.

Whereas loved ones, if you haven't that liveliness inside you, then you'll find the outside circumstances make you die too. And many of us come to that. We come to a place where everything goes dead in the family relationships. Everything goes dead in the personal friendships. Everything goes dead at home, or everything goes dead in the spiritual work in which we're engaged. And there's no movement anywhere, and we just don't know what to do. Now loved ones, a fervency of spirit keeps you moving whatever the outside situation is like. And you can obviously see in what we're involved in how that vital that is. But you can see it too, in your own situations.

In other words, a fervency of spirit, even though the thing – even though Jericho is walled up tight, and there isn't a chink, a fervency of spirit keeps tapping along to find if there's a brick loose. Really, just keeps at it, keeps tapping along until it finds the little brick. And the fervency of spirit produces a little more life. And before you know it, the walls are down. But that fervency of spirit is something that will continue inside you, if you really come alive in Jesus.

Just one more, loved ones because the time is moving. Maybe you'd just like to look at Proverbs 17:27. It's something that we have shared before at times, the normal state of your spirit. Very much, 20th century language, "He who restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding." Real cool! And that's what happens when you're preoccupied with Jesus. When it's Jesus and you're alive, there's always a quiet coolness, whatever the situation. When everybody around is losing their head, you have a coolness inside in your spirit, just a quiet coolness that enables you to be at peace.

Now loved ones, that comes from realizing that in a way -- here's a strange thing, in a way, you're only your true self when you're with Jesus. In a way, that's true. In a way, you're only your true self, at least until you mature and grow strong. It's amazing how quickly you cease to be your true self when you just have to speak to one other human being. It's incredible how quickly you start playing the little actor again to act up for the audience. And so in a deep way, especially in the beginning of the new birth, you're only your real self when you're with Jesus, alone. And that's why you have to be often with Jesus, especially in the early days. But actually, you have to be – that's why Martin Luther said, "I'm so busy that I cannot afford to spend less than three hours a day in prayer," because when you get very busy, or when God gives you more things to do then it is very important to be often with Jesus, because really, you're only your true self with him.

Now, when you're with Jesus, all is quiet and cool. And if you're often enough with Jesus, you carry that coolness into all kinds of ridiculous situations. And what is important, of course, for all of us here is, never to move apart from that coolness. Never move in the ardor of desire. Never move in the strength of emotions, "I feel I should do that." Don't! Don't! You're dumb. The emotions come and go. The emotions can be influenced by all kinds of things apart from the real you inside. Always move in coolness of spirit, when there's quietness and calmness.

And you remember, the illustration I've used because it was surreal to me the first time I ever snorkeled. I had never snorkeled at all. And then this time I went under. And really, the amazing thing is you don't have to scuba dive way down deep. Snorkeling just with your face in a mask, under the water is enough. But it was incredible to me! Up on the surface of the water, the waves



were really rough. And it was dangerously rough. And everything was moving fast, and furiously. And then you looked underneath the water, and everything was moving like that. [Waves his hand slowly back and forth] Just so calm and so quiet! And then of course, the deeper you went, the more still it became. Until when you get low enough, it's 'real cool' [Says it in the vernacular tone of voice]. And that's it with you! See, that's it with you!

There is a place in you, inside you, where Jesus dwells, where all is peace, and all is quiet, and where there is real coolness, and where there is peace and quiet, however chaotic things are outside. And actually, I think you can see it in all kinds of controversies. I mean, if you look at this controversy -- that I hope is over now. But if you look at it, you can see how dear human beings are the victims of each other's movements. One moves this way, and that knocks a little domino down, and that little domino knocks another little domino down, and that knocks a whole pile of dominos down. And before you know it, they're all back and forward like that. And what is desperately needed in times that human beings begin to collide with one another, is some human beings who will dwell in a place of coolness and just act calmly, and quietly, and consistently.

And you think of a family—we called them 'rows' [rouse] in Ireland. I don't know if you'd call them 'row'. Think of a family 'row' or a family fight. Think of any situation in the office where things get heated up. And you know the greatest need is for just one, if there were just one little calm person, who had a cool spirit, and who could just speak without rancor, and without responding or reacting to the situation, but could initiate from within them, a different life, there would be hope.

Now do you see, that you're going to come into situations tomorrow to which you can produce 25,000 programmed responses that you know? You just know them. They're just built in to you. You've come into situations and you can produce 25,000 different responses. The tragedy is that many of them appear to have some effect on the situation. The real tragedy is, of course, none of them have life from God, in them. None of them have 'life giving' life and energy. And what you will need is to have that life moving within, you so that you can act, not in response or reaction against, but act from within, initiating a life that is totally different. And that's why often what is needed in situations, is what no one in the situation thinks of. Often, what is needed, is some other comment completely from a different world! But there's no one there to voice it!

Now loved ones, that's why you and I were put on the earth. Really! Every one of us here was put on the earth to initiate that kind of life and energy. And our world is dying for it! And you have it within you! Really! And if you only knew what a unique person you are! Really! And I'm not -- boy, I think you're miserable. I think I'm miserable apart from Jesus. But I think with Jesus, we are unique people, who are just what this world needs. And that's part of your value. And that's why you're invaluable to God tonight. If you only realized it! If you only knew how much he looks at you as you go to sleep tonight, how precious you are, how dear you are to him! Really, you have no idea! You have no idea how precious and valuable you are to the One who made you.

And oh I pray, that you will find out who he has made you to be, and will begin to act. Because I tell you, that's why the world was virtually evangelized by 12 or 70 people. And oh, this is more than enough. There are more than enough of us here, to do it in the world, if we began to act that way.

Let us pray. Dear Lord, we do sense that we're treading on holy ground that is real and is your plan, and your will for us. Lord, we -- Lord Jesus, we want to come alive. We want to come into

life. We realize that in very real ways we've been dead corpses. The Bible says dead in our sins, but Lord, we just sense that we've been dead in living patterned lives, and lives of habit, instead of lives of liveliness, and life, and energy, and originality from you.

Now Savior, we'd ask you for forgiveness for our own stupid attempts at it that have ended up so ugly and monstrous. Lord, we realize that they're just another version of patterned, habit formed lives. But Lord Jesus, we believe that you, in the quietness of prayer, and conversation, and communion are able to bring us to life, and to enable us to find out who we really are. Lord, we would begin to talk with you, begin to spend hours with you during the day, and at night, where you can begin to give us light and give us life, and reveal to us the beautiful people that you have made us to be.

Thank you, Lord for your patience with us. Thank you for your goodness to us in explaining these things to us. We give ourselves to you for their fulfillment, for your glory.

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 ever more. Amen.