

Santification Faith

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Tonight I would love to try to conclude the introduction to this evening series on the Spiritual life, so that next Sunday evening we can get on to discussing the various parts of the soul, starting with the emotions. But I thought loved ones that it would be good to spend one more night on the very beginning of a real spiritual life. I would simply remind you of what we talked about last Sunday; how we said so many of us have become pretty twisted up compared with the way God intended us to be because the amazing thing is that Jesus said, "A sparrow does not fall to the ground without my Father knowing, but every hair of your head is numbered and you're of much more value than many sparrows."

That's where I think we started last Sunday evening; that you are unique and different from every one of us in this room, and not only from every one of us but from everyone in the whole world. You're different, you're unique. You're a unique creation of our dear Father God, and he has a unique thing to do through you that none of the rest of us can do. I know it's hard for you to grasp that, but it is true loved ones. It's just that we, in our mass society, have been so used to being treated as one of a crowd that you sit there and try to grasp what I'm saying, but you keep on toning it down in some way so that, finally, it isn't true. But loved ones, it is true -- you are different from everybody else and you're dear to God. And our God has put you here for a special purpose, something that you can do that none of the rest of us can do, and that's truth. You have a special place to live in that nobody else can live in, and you have a special thing to do that nobody else can do.

Last Sunday we shared how very few of us have that feeling at all. We feel, "Ah, I'm just one of the crowd." We believe there's a God somewhere but we don't really believe that he has engineered us for a special task that we alone can do -- for a special expression of himself that we alone can enter into -- we don't really believe that. And of course because we don't believe that, we feel very empty inside and we feel that this is a very lonely world, we really do. That's why it would amaze you how many of us in this room would say, "Paranoid? Yeah, I'm paranoid." It would amaze you.

In fact, we'd all laugh at each other because we'd wonder who's doing all the persecution if we're all being persecuted! But you'd be amazed how many of us in this room feel the same way; we feel kind of very much on our own, very much as if we're not as good as everybody else, and we feel very inadequate about many different situations. Some of us feel adequate for our jobs and inadequate about home, some of us feel adequate for home and inadequate for our jobs, but it really would surprise you how many of us feel very lonely, very insecure, very much on our own.

And of course, what we do and what we're taught to do from the very beginning of our lives is to try to overcome that, and that's where all the twisted-up-ness comes. Because if we would just believe that our dear God is our personal Father, and that he has a task for me to do -- it may be to saw wood out in Seattle for the rest of my life. It may be to do mining up in Alaska, it may be to go to Australia and open a little store. It may be to be a secretary in downtown Minneapolis, but if I only had the confidence to believe and to be content with the fact that he knows why he put me here, and he's got it organized, and he's taking me step-by-step, then there would begin to come out of me

a peace, and a freedom, and an energy that would come from contentment. But because so many of us don't believe that, we feel this loneliness, and we feel we're not sure who we are, and we don't know why we're here, and we feel insecure, and we feel, "Well, we have to thrash about and make something of ourselves."

Now I don't know about your mums and dads but mine pretty well hammered it into to me that if I didn't get up and look after myself nobody else would; it was up to me to get out there and make whatever money was needed, and keep myself, and begin to look out for myself -- and some of that was good. Some of it is good. But for many of us it became a way of life where we really felt our security depends on us alone. And so, subtly, we wanted to help; we wanted to do nursing, but we wanted to rake in the old dollars as well, and we wanted to help people, but we wanted to keep an eye on the dollars. So it became that kind of thing; you wanted to give, but you wanted to make sure you were secure. And of course as life goes on and more and more of us are doing that, it becomes harder and harder to be sure of your security, especially in this world. The whole inflation thing takes away any security you've built up over the years and so it's very easy to get almost neurotic about just that fact of security. And in fact, that's what happens for many of us; we become virtually neurotic about this business of security. We spend nights, at times, worrying and anxious, we spend days eventually trying to scramble up the mountain -- especially in corporations and businesses that are competitive. We find we're scrambling up to try to get to the top of the heap to try to get a little more secure in our own job situations.

And it's interesting how even the most peaceful among us develop killer instincts, in ways, or defense instincts in regard to our jobs and of course it affects the jobs that we do. Many of us are not now doing the jobs that we really wanted to do, we're doing jobs that we feel will make us secure. Many of us enjoyed doing certain things when we were teenagers, and we thought, "Yeah, I'd like to do that for a living" but we lack the courage to keep on doing it and so we chose instead the safe thing that the SAT test said we should do. And so many of us, strange enough, are involved in jobs that don't excite us very much, and actually don't satisfy very much no matter what we do. So many of us have our little benches down in the basement where we do what we really enjoy doing and we spend eight hours a day doing what somebody else will give us money for, and we spend the evenings at home. And many of us end up, and many of our dads and mums end up, looking forward to retirement because, "At last I can do what I want to do." It would surprise you how many of us are involved in that kind of thing.

Well of course, that twists you inside because eventually your stomach begins to knot when you think of each day's work coming up, and you begin to lose some of the abilities, the natural abilities, that God has built into you, because you don't use them. And of course, then other things take over because you try to force yourself to do things that you don't terribly like doing, and you try to do them better than somebody else. So, more and more, personalities become important in work. I don't know how many of you have found that in your offices, in your businesses, how preoccupied everybody is with all the other people they work with. They're not preoccupied with their job, they really don't enjoy, so much, their job so that they can forget about everybody else, they're preoccupied with the people they're working with, and that's where the whole personality conflicts come in.

If you can think about an Einstein or a Van Gogh or any of those guys that we regard as geniuses or as utterly preoccupied with their work, they're so taken up with it that they haven't time to worry who's treating them this way or that way. But so many of us see our jobs as a second or third choice for us, so the people that we work with become all important and we get into all kinds of

conflicts with them -- all kinds of competition, all kinds of jealousy and rivalry. And then of course, we get into the whole business of trying to find a place for ourselves in the world and that's very hard because there's only one place for us; that's the place that God has designated for you. God has designated the men and the women here in this room for special places. It might be to look after her two children, it might be to build houses, it might be to paint walls, it might be to write or to teach and it might be to do it in some other country, or in some country area here in the States, or in some large city. But many of us here have never found that place and yet we feel we ought to have a place, and that's right -- we were made to have a place. So we feel we must make a place for ourselves and we must make a place that is our own.

That's where we get into the whole peer approval problem because we feel, "Well, the way to make a place for ourselves is to make a place for ourselves in the "significant others" hearts that we work with." And then begins that dreadful slavery to try to get the approval and the recognition of our friends and our colleagues at work and that is just so stupid that it ends up a clownish circus. We are horrified when we see the petty little monkeys we've become because that's what we do; somebody gives us three nuts if we smile so we smile, somebody gives us a whole bag of nuts if we do the job fast, so we do the job fast, somebody likes the President and they'll give us a can of nuts if we say we do -- so instead of saying what we really think, instead of being what we really are, we become imitations of other people who have gained approval. And of course, what we shared last Sunday was there are times when we waken up and we wonder, "Who on earth am I? Who am I?" And that's why when we come home; we're such bears at home, actually. We think, "Well, we'd really be ourselves at home. I'll be my own miserable, grotesque self." Because by that time we've lost the beautiful self that God made and we've turned into a kind of self defensive rival; a competing, defensive animal. So we come home and we aren't even our beautiful selves, we can't even find the beautiful self because it's now twisted up and perverted. We say, "We'll really be ourselves," and we let it all hang out and then the poor souls at home have to put up with us being ourselves.

So it's interesting how many of us end up pretty twisted. And of course the killer about this church stuff is that most of us just hook that right into it. We think "Oh, they say they believe the Bible from cover-to-cover. Well, they'll probably like you if you believe the Bible from cover-to-cover, so boy, I believe the Bible from cover-to-cover. Whether I believe it or it, I believe it because they say they believe it. And they pray quietly so I pray quietly because I want them to like me. They say "amen" in the middle of prayers so I say "amen" in the middle of prayers because I want them to like me." It's terrible. So we hook the church into the thing too, as well as any community, any group, because we so desperately want a position of some kind because we were made for it.

See, that isn't the wrong thing; it isn't wrong to want a position. It isn't wrong to want to feel at home in this world. Jesus came to this world and he was at home in it. He was at home; he came into his own home. When he said to his parents, "Did you not know I would be about my Father's business" the Greek translation really should be, "Did you not know I would be in my Father's things?" Jesus was at home in his Father's things, so we were meant to be at home -- but none of us are. So we try to make ourselves at home by this kind of substitution of other's approval for what we really need most; God's approval.

The result is loved ones, we become twisted inside. So twisted that whenever someone tells us to be ourselves, we have great difficulty finding out who that person is. It always amused me, when I came to America, when you used that famous saying: "Who am I" because I didn't understand it! I always felt, well, we had identity disks during the Second World War, just look at your identity

disk! Mine said Ernest O'Neill, and had my address and you'd know who you were! But I now understand why you said that; because I think in this mass society so many of us have played at living, that we've lost the sense of who we are and we've become silly little perversions of the dear person that God made us to be.

Now of course the tragedy really comes when you try to find yourself -- that's why Jesus said you have to be born again. He realized that most of us are dead inside and if we looked inside we couldn't find ourselves -- we couldn't. There's nothing inside now, where there used to be a person, a beautiful person. It's interesting to see little babies; they're very much their own person. Little babies hang onto it till about four or five, and then they become little imitators too. But it's interesting how rich a little personality is up to the age of four or five and then they fall into the same hideous robot life. That's why Jesus said "but you have to actually almost become a little baby again. You have to be born all over again."

Now loved ones, this is where I think many of you are mistaken, I really do. And this is what I'd like to share just briefly tonight. I think many of you are mistaken about how to find yourself, and how to find that personality that God originally made you with. Let me outline just what has happened using the diagram that we use and it's only a diagram; you can make up any other model, this one just shows it in a kind of graphic way. You remember there's that verse in Paul's letter to Thessalonica, and I'll just mention it to you and you don't need to look it up, he says "May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly, and may he keep your spirit, and soul, and body blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus." That's what we have taken seriously from God's word; that you have three different levels of your personality: your body, which you can see; your soul, which is really your psychological part of you; and inside all of that, your spirit. And when you lose yourself, when you lose the real person that is you, when you can't find yourself any longer, when you feel emptiness inside, when you wonder who you are, it's because your spirit is dead.

Your spirit is dead and that's where all the trouble comes from. You feel, "I have to do something to try to make that alive." The spirit is the real you inside, but because of this play-acting that most of us have been involved in -- depending on other people, and depending on society for our security, and trying to get our security from it -- the spirit has died, and so what we have is the soul and body. Now if you track it right through scripture, you see that the soul consists of the parts of us that we normally regard as the psychological being. The soul concerns the will; the ability to make decisions, the mind; the ability to size things up and judge things and reason, and the emotions; the ability to feel desires, and to feel feelings about other people. The spirit is the part of us that is able to commune with God and is able to know what he wants us to do and our conscience, normally, is meant to constrain our will in the light of that. Our body, of course, is the flesh and the bones and the blood that expresses that to the outside world.

What we are saying in the conversation so far is that we were meant to operate like that (from the spirit outward through the will, then the body to the world). That's it -- you were meant to operate like that. I suppose that's what people like Montessori and all the great educators actually were about. I don't know if you know, but the word education is from two Latin words *e* and *duco*. *Duco* is to lead and *e* is short for *ex*, to lead out. And that's what all real education is meant to be; it's meant to lead out the dear, rich personality that God has placed inside. Education is meant to be teaching children how to know their God, so that they can sense what he has put them here to do and to lead that out. That's the way we were meant to operate, and that's the way our personalities were meant to operate -- you can see that we were meant to express joy to other people just from the sheer joy of knowing God, knowing our Father -- the sheer joy.

I remember when I was 12 years old coming in and just singing madly because life was so great, it was just so wonderful! It was so good to be able to run fast and do what you wanted to do. There's a delight and a joy in being fulfilled, and that's the way we were meant to be. You see the killer is that we've become such perverted shadows of what we were meant to be; all the time doing what we're forced to do rather than what God designed us to do and to be; we were meant to express joy, our mind was not meant to be figuring out, "How will I make another dollar? How on earth will I make do with these dollars that I have? How will I fiddle this deal to make enough to cover this cost?" The mind wasn't meant to do that, the mind was meant to do what, actually, Einstein's mind did. Einstein's mind concentrated on trying to understand the things that God gave to him through his intuition.

You've experienced that at times; you've gone to bed with a problem and you've wakened up in the morning with the problem solved because it's been solved through the intuition inside and all your mind does is understand it. A poet, when he writes a poem, works that way; the whole poem is there, his mind just understands what is there and he uses its ability to concentrate his lips or his hands so that he expresses it outwardly -- but the mind is meant to do that. The will is meant simply to obey the conscience. But in fact, loved ones, we have become twisted up because of this desire to try to be secure and to try to make some kind of significant position for ourselves so we've started to operate the other way completely; we try to get from the people in our office, our employers, our friends, our relatives at home, the security and the significance and this happiness that would come automatically if we knew our God and we begin to sense what he wants us to do.

That's the problem we're in; what do you do when that happens? Because you see, the next step is that the spirit dies. So we are not only perverted personalities but the spirit has died inside. Many of us have made a move towards some kind of deliverance because what this does is this produces all kinds of things in your life that are wrong. That's why sin comes about, do you realize that? When you look to your friends for a sense of importance and they don't praise you at the right moment, you get irritated. Irritability is a sin, so irritability is an expression of the fact that you actually are depending on someone for your significance that actually can never give you that significance consistently and that's where the sin comes from. You depend on other people for your security and then when they don't supply the right money for you, or give you the right promotion you get worried and anxious. Worry and anxiety is a sin -- it produces things in your life that you know are wrong because the conscience is still half-alive in most of us.

So even though, to a great extent the spirit is dead and we don't know God at all, the conscience still says, "Yeah, but that shouldn't be -- you shouldn't get irritable, you shouldn't be worried, you shouldn't be anxious, you shouldn't be envious." And we know we shouldn't -- that's why we seek peace with God. That's why when somebody tells us, "Jesus has died for you," it deals with the guilt. We sense, "At least God is on my side." So for many of us at least we take the first step back in the new birth; we receive God's spirit into us and our spirits come alive.

Here's the center of what I want to share this evening: but we still find we have a personality that is perverted. You know you've tried at the office, you feel Jesus' Spirit within you saying, "Love that person. Love them. Don't criticize back. I know they criticized you, but don't criticize back. Love them." And you want to love them but before you know it, the tongue has struck out at them and you've criticized or been sarcastic with them. That's what happens. You have Jesus' Spirit within you, but the old personality is still perverted. Now loved ones, there's only one way to cure that and it is not these endless books that try to renew the mind, "If I could

just renew my mind.” Or some of us talk about our emotions, “I just need a bit of healing in my emotions.” Loved ones, you don’t know what you’re condemning yourself to when you talk that way; you’re condemning yourself to an endless series of treatments that will never, never cure you.

That’s what many loved ones who regard themselves as Christians are involved in today. They know there is something wrong with their personalities and they somehow think that by reading good books, or by some community trying to give them a healing experience in their emotions, they’ll become right. Loved ones, it’s easier than that and yet harder than that. That’s why Jesus died -- if you could only catch that and not do your own kind of misinterpretation. “Jesus died for all, therefore all died.” (2Cor 5:14) “Our old self was crucified with him” (Rom.6:6), that’s what Jesus died for. If you say to me, “Well then, what do I have to do” praise God, all you have to do is believe that, and ask him now, by his Holy Spirit, to begin to make that real in you. It’s by faith. It’s by faith that your personality is changed. It’s by faith.

Once you say to him, “Lord, I believe that you crucified me with yourself and that you made me new, and that there is a new personality in you that rose from the dead and operates like that.” Once you say that and then submit to the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit will make this real in your life. For some of us he will do it suddenly in a big crisis experience followed by a lot of little experiences, and then for some of us a lot of little experiences followed by a big crisis experience. But it’s by faith; it’s by faith that you’re made anew, it’s not by these endless books. I sympathize with those of you who said, “I just need a little more healing, a little emotional healing.” It’s not a substitute, it’s not a substitute. And I know what you mean when you say “My dad didn’t love me so I am emotionally wounded. So if I can get some other person, or some other group of people to love me truly, and to teach me how to love, I will become all right.” You won’t -- you’ll just become dependent on them for love. You’ll just become a little drug addict with them. And when you meet your dad again and he still doesn’t love you, you won’t be able to love him.

The truth is loved ones, it’s not emotional healing you need, it’s this dear Cross. That’s why all those dear men and women say, “In the cross of Christ I glory.” That’s why we sing, “At the Cross, at the Cross where I first met the Lord.” Because it’s in that dear Cross, it’s what Jesus has done for you, that’s where the victory is. And if you say to me, “I understand you but how is it made real?” The Holy Spirit will make it real in you if you’ll go to him and say, “Holy Spirit, I need that new self that was raised with Jesus. My emotions are ridiculous; my emotions want to get fun wherever they go, my emotions lust after joy and happiness wherever they go. Holy Spirit, I need to be changed; show me whatever I need to be willing for to be changed.” That’s it, loved ones.

That’s why I called the sermon “Sanctification Faith” in the bulletin this morning, because that’s what we call it; being sanctified. It’s being made whole. It’s being sanctified wholly, but it is by faith in your death with Jesus. I think some of you look at this and do a double-take and say, “I believe it, you know. I believe it, I believe it. Now, how do I make it real? Oh yeah -- now I have to get my emotions right.” You don’t. You don’t get them right. You can’t get them right; Jesus has done it for you. There is a new person in this universe with your name and with my name that was raised with Jesus at the resurrection, and that being shines down here to Earth through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can make that new person alive inside each one of us. That’s it. He does it by faith.

Do you see why I lay such importance on this? When you think it works and not faith; when you decide, “Oh, now I have to work at this, I have to have my emotions healed. I have to get my mind

renewed.” There is a place for all those things under the guidance of the Holy Spirit later on, but when you say that, you are denigrating faith. You see, it’s either faith or works -- you can’t have both. Either this miracle is made real in your life by faith or it’s made real in your life by works. And when you go the works way, you actually cut out the faith way. I think many of you do not see that the way to have Jesus’ death and resurrection made alive in you is by faith, by simple faith.

That’s what I did, loved ones -- I was at the end of my tether with my personality. I did not know how to deal with this twisted up little creature that was Ernest O’Neill. If you think you’re twisted up, I was twisted up worse than you were -- I’m sure I was. I could not see things straight: I was full of criticism, full of sarcasm, full of anger, full of hatred, full of envy, full of discontentment, full of selfishness, and I could not see how to deal with that mess. And really, if you had told me what I needed was emotional healing, I’d still be seeking emotional healing today -- it would have taken me centuries to get fixed that way. But it was such a glory when I saw that that’s why Jesus died: he took this Ernest O’Neill mess to the Cross with him and he destroyed it there, and in eternity he raised up the new Ernest O’Neill that was originally made by God in the beginning. And I saw that it was possible for me to receive that new Ernest O’Neill by the Holy Spirit through simply believing that the old one had been crucified and by submitting to the Holy Spirit as he give me directions, and he did. He’ll be faithful with you.

The beauty of this is, of course, he will do it in a way you’re able to bear it. If you do it yourself - well, you just have to look around to see the dear ones littered along the road, the Calvary road, who are determined to do it themselves. They end up saying, “Oh, I can’t do it, I can’t do it -- I can’t get into the cross. I can’t crucify myself.” Well, you can’t crucify yourself; nobody can, so they end up more defeated than they started out. But when you look to the Holy Spirit and say, “Holy Spirit, this has to be a miracle by you. Just tell me because it’s in your hands; you’re the doctor, I’m the patient, what do you want?” He’ll tell you gently. Maybe he’ll tell you to do something that apparently has nothing to do with your problems at all, but if you obey him in that, in that little detail, you’ll find a strange strength coming to you that you’re surprised at. Then he’ll tell you another little thing to do, maybe it seems equally remote from your problem, but if you do it, he’ll make another little part real in you.

See, it’s something like referred pain. Do you know that you can have heart trouble and you feel it down your arm? It’s referred pain. It’s the same in our personalities: we think we know exactly where the problem is. No, we don’t, only the Holy Spirit knows where the real trouble is and that’s why he’s needed as a counselor. But loved ones, it’s by faith and by listening to him that our personalities are changed. And of course, that dreadful direction (living from the outside -- from the things of the world) often is changed because it is so hopeless to try to change that direction by dint of will power. You can’t, the whole thing is utterly perverted, and it just keeps on working backwards: you want to praise somebody, but you find yourself trying to get praise, trying to get significance. You want to give money to somebody, but you find the old worry and anxiety about your own security coming up. You want to give happiness to somebody else, but you find yourself, with an eye out to your own happiness, trying to enjoy it too, so you can’t do it. The only way to get the personality going the way it was meant to is by the miracle that took place on Calvary. The miracle that is stated so clearly in Romans 6:6, “Our old self was crucified with Christ so that the body of sin might be destroyed and we might no longer be enslaved to sin”, but we might walk in newness of life. And that’s how it happens, loved ones. It is by faith.

As you believe God for freedom from guilt by faith, in the same way you believe for freedom from

this personality that has been so perverted -- by faith. I'll purposely stop there so that you can push me with questions.

Question:

Isn't that you consider yourself dead to him and crucified and seeing yourself on the cross, isn't that paying just a little bit too much attention to the self, all the time that we have to take away? Half of that's in person to consider ourselves [Inaudible 37:39]

All right, Pat, let me answer that because I think lots of loved ones say that and you don't notice what you're doing -- I think you'll see it in a moment. What you're doing is you're saying is, "What you say is true, but I have to believe it in the right way. I have to balance it. I don't want to put too much emphasis on the death to self; I want to put equal emphasis on the resurrection." What you're doing is -- you're trying to do it. It's just the old psychological game, "Don't emphasize the crucifixion with Christ too much. Emphasize resurrection and if you emphasize them both just exactly right, it'll come right." No -- cast yourself into Jesus; believe that the miracle actually happened. Believe that you were actually crucified with Christ, believe that. Cast yourself into Jesus and say, "Lord, I don't know which bit of me was crucified and which bit wasn't crucified. I don't know how long I have to be dead before I get resurrected, but Lord I'm with you. Here I go." And throw yourself into Jesus. Pat, that's it.

It seems to me it has to be abandonment into Jesus. And in answer to your question, I think the Holy Spirit keeps the right balance. And I know, love, why you say it, but I do think the loved ones that get into the negative stuff don't get into it by submitting themselves to the Holy Spirit. They get into it by trying to stage-manage the thing themselves. And loved ones, the truth is it's not a matter of believing this thing in the right proportions; it's a matter of believing that it actually happened; that you were crucified with Christ and a new you was raised up. And you go to the Holy Spirit and say, "Holy Spirit, I don't know how much of which is raised and how much of which is crucified but I give myself to you now. Now you make it real in me." It seems to me, Pat, that's right.

It's the same with the loved ones that say, "Now wait a minute, don't say it's the self that's crucified because the self is the personality -- it doesn't need crucifying." Well all right, the good self, the perfect self that we were made with originally doesn't get crucified but the old perverted one does. Oh, it's a bit like Moody (or someone like him): there was a fellow yelling in the back of the service and Moody eventually just couldn't take it any longer so he went down and turfed (threw) the guy right out. Then a man in the front row said, "He had a demon -- why didn't you cast out the demon?" And [Moody] said, "I couldn't tell the difference between the demon and him so I threw them both out." It's that kind of thing.

You can trust Jesus; you can trust the Holy Spirit. He's not going to destroy something precious in your personality -- give yourself to him. It's not a stage managing thing, its give yourself to Jesus, "Lord, you have done a mighty miracle in eternity for me. You have taken me and you have absolutely remade me. Lord, will you actualize that in me, whatever way, it's up to you, and I trust you to do it, Holy Spirit." It seems to me it's that, loved ones. And don't push me on it -- but if you can kick me into some sense, that's good. But I do think loved ones that those of us who have come through that dear resurrection have come through not by clever emphasis.

One of my problems was I was thinking, all the time thinking. I was a manipulator in my mental thought processes, and I thought at first, "Oh, how do you make this real? Oh -- I was crucified --



I just keep thinking that. I was crucified; I'm dead, I'm dead, I'm dead, I'm dead. Now, what part of me is dead -- that good part, no, not that good part -- the bad part? Okay, the bad part." But I saw I'd end up in a psych ward if I went on like that because I couldn't tell which was the demon and which was me, so they both needed to be thrown out and left to the Holy Spirit to distinguish.

It seems to me, loved ones, the glory of it is it actually happened. Stop thinking of it as a metaphor, stop thinking of it as, "That's a nice way to think of it; I have to pretend that my old self was crucified. Oh, yeah, my old self was crucified and as I think that thought, so I'll find relief as long as I think that thought exactly right, but if I think it too negatively I won't find release." You see the whole presupposition there is? "That thing hasn't actually happened; this is just something I have to make real by dwelling upon it." No, the miracle is that Christ died for all, and all of us died. All of us were crucified just the way everybody was destroyed in the flood but Noah. They were all washed out, they didn't have to think, "Now, which bit of me was washed out?" They were all washed out. You don't have to think, "Which bit of me was crucified with Christ?" You say that lot was crucified and Jesus raises what he wants. Holy Spirit, I give you the right to raise what you want." It seems to me that's it, loved ones.

Question:

How do we become willing to adapt, because it seems like that is a privilege?

I can only tell my own experience, but I just saw the dreadful contradiction between the Bible description of a child of God and my own life. I saw the Bible describing the fruit of the spirit; love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, and that was not my life. I saw the utter contradiction between my own life and the life that God obviously wanted me to lead. And to be honest with you, I did see that it was either hell or heaven for me; if I kept on living this hypocritical life I was going to end up in only one place -- the place that Paul was talking about when he said, "I tell you, those who do such things -- who have envy, strife, jealousy, those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." That's all I know, brother.

And it seems to me all the great theologians say the same thing, whether they're neo-orthodox like Karl Barth or not, they say, "The greatest thing we can do for each other is show each other what God is like, and show each other what we are like, and then we have to leave each other with that." A desperate hunger -- Jesus said, "blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled." The will is a mystery and Jesus leaves it a mystery in the New Testament. You'll notice he doesn't cut into that will -- he doesn't explain why one person wants this and another person wants that. In fact you remember that at one point he says, "They will not believe. They just will not believe." He can't even explain that.

Question

Does the witness arise from the realization of your need?

If you don't see the need, you don't want it?

Yes, I agree: if you don't see the need, you don't want it, yes. Well in a way, we're helping ourselves. This society of ours of course, preaches such a low level of Christian living that many of us don't terribly much see the need unless we do get into scripture and then we see it plainly that it's separate.

[Question inaudible 45:57]

Yes brother, don't you think we're an instant society -- instant coffee, instant joy, instant happiness? I don't know about the rest of you, we have several generations here this evening, but I do think we are used to things like that (in the snap of a finger) and the precious and valuable things don't come like that; they take a lot of hungering, a lot of thirsting. And of course conviction of sin is not fashionable because if you get somebody on the conviction of sin, everybody calls them sick and they feel they ought to be relieved immediately with Valium or something like that. So nobody believes too much in conviction of sin, or in any kind of sadness. And of course that's dreadful, it's a parody of life because great things are done through sadness, probably most of us have come to most of the truths in our lives through sadness and hardness so I think I agree.

[Question inaudible 47:00]

Are you proud now? It seems the joy is that it has been done. The delight is it has been done, but we tend to look at this and we tend to think, "How am I going to make it done in me?" It has been done. It has been done. And as you realize that, you praise God for it and as you look at it, the Holy Spirit reveals. I don't know even that you need to know the things he picks out -- I don't know that we even need to know those things. I think at times he'll show you and at times he'll just deliver you from things that you didn't realize you even had. At other times he'll get down to nitty-gritty things and he'll point to this, and this, and this. But really, it is not a matter of making it real by picking them out of yourself; it's a matter of letting the Holy Spirit make it real by seeing that, praise God, it has been done.

Let us pray.

Dear Father, thank you that your word is so clear; our old self was crucified with Christ and it's finished, it's done. It is like the worn out little skeletons of bugs and sins -- it's finished, there's no power in it. And even when they occur, you lovingly look down upon us and know that that too will fade away as we look to you. And we look Lord Jesus, at you, and we thank you that you took all that we used to be, and all that we were, and you crucified it dead with yourself, and you've made us new. And as you rose from the grave we rose with you; new pristine people -- as we came originally from our Father's hand; clean, and pure, and holy, and healthy. And Lord, as we keep our eyes upon that new being that you have made us in yourself, so through the Holy Spirit, you will actualize that in our lives so that others will see it too.

Lord, we thank you. Thank you Lord Jesus, that it is a great bath that we cast ourselves into, the bath of Calvary that washes away all our sins. We simply throw ourselves into it and you, by your Holy Spirit, reveal to us the cleanness that we have and the cleanness that the world sees. Lord, we thank you. We pray for each other, Lord. We pray for each other this evening. We pray Lord Jesus, for those loved ones who still don't quite see it. Oh, we pray for revelation for each one of us simply to believe the truth; that when you died we all died and when you rose we were all raised, and we were all made new. Thank you, Lord. Thank you.

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 ever more. Amen.

