

CLOUDY VISION

Transcript of a clip from the talk A CLEAN HEART by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

You remember those things that Jesus spoke about that come out from the heart. Many of us are able to abstain from fornication but our heart wants to fornicate. Many of us are able to abstain from adultery, but our heart wants to commit adultery. Many of us are able to abstain from murder, but our heart wants to murder. We find a rising from within us that would do damage to a person if we possibly could. That's why we're often able to abstain from theft, but our heart wants to steal. We are often able to abstain from slander, but our heart wants to slander. Now of course, the last two are what usually give away those Christians whose carnal nature is still alive inside them. That is, slander and backbiting. And that explains also why so many of us who are really carnal Christians with unclean hearts are so complacent about our state. Because most of the church is afraid of what the law can do to us or what society thinks of us. So many of us, who have become aware of God, don't want to have a reputation spoiled by getting into trouble with the law, so we abstain from murder and theft and adultery and fornication, but there are no legal penalties for gossip and backbiting and slander. And that's why so many of us in churches expose our unclean hearts not so much through the fornication or the adultery, but through the slander and the backbiting and the gossip -- through the talking about other people behind their back. And loved ones, that's how you can tell if you have an unclean heart.

Have you ever found yourselves talking about somebody behind their back instead of going to them in love and sharing with them what you can see or what you think? If you do that, if you talk about people behind their back, then your heart is unclean and you'll continue to allow that unclean heart to take you in an up and down Christian experience for the rest of your life -- if you can last throughout the rest of your life -- because increasingly that unclean heart clouds the voice of God, just as that does.

It clouds the voice of God and it clouds your sight of God and the more years you walk with that unclean heart the more difficult it is to hear His voice and that's why you'll find as you go on in your Christian life, without having your heart cleansed, you'll find: "I don't think I hear Him as clearly as I used to, I see men, but as trees walking." You haven't been touched the second time to be able to see them clearly as real men.

And have you ever found yourselves in one of those little negative complaining groups where everything you say is: "Oh, this is wrong, and that's wrong and I'm complaining, because they should do this, this way." Loved ones, if you find yourself doing that kind of thing, it's because your heart is unclean, your heart is dirty and that heart of yours will continue to send up that kind of motivation to you as long as it remains unclean.