

ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN IN KNOWLEDGE OR IN SPIRIT?

Video clip transcript extracted from the talk: IS YOUR CHRISTIAN LIFE MAKING YOU DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS? (Acts 5:32) By Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Meta description: Our Christian experience is one of head knowledge of good, evil, the right thing to believe, abortion etc. but not life in the Spirit.

Many of us have been coming to church for most of our lives and probably all of us can outline very clearly to one another what Christianity is about and yet it probably is amazing how many of us here this morning do not really live it through Monday to Saturday. Even though many of us might in some way feel part of the prayer time this morning, yet it would probably surprise even us how many of us here do not have any real prayer life of our own at home. I think many of you would say, "Yes, that's me." If I say it would surprise us how few of us ever look at the Bible in our own homes and how few of us ever read it.

Then it might surprise us, too, how many of us have all the miserable troubles that everybody else has. It might surprise us how many of us have all the same struggles with the Playboy kind of approach to life that the people who don't go to church have. It might surprise us how many of us have trouble with ordinary little dishonesties in our everyday work and school experience. Yet, all of us have probably been attending church of some kind from when we were six or seven years of age and we know Christianity very, very well. If anybody asks us what religion we are, we would answer, "We are Christian. We are of the Christian religion." Many of us might even say, "I, myself am a Christian." Yet it is surprising how few of us really live the Christian spirit Monday through Saturday.

In other words, we are Christian because Christian ideas are up here filling our heads and we're Christian because Christian ideas fill our understandings but Christian spirit does not fill our hearts.

When we get out of here at noon or shortly after we find that inside we are just the same as everybody else who doesn't go to church. There is nothing different inside that comes up from inside us to direct us differently. We just work the same way everybody else works, we think the same way, we act the same way, we feel the same way. It is really because we're just Christians in knowledge. We have taken a lot of knowledge of good and evil into us over the years that we've attended church and Sunday school but we've never, ever contacted the spirit of life that comes from God. You may say, "Oh, well I am born again and I know my sin is forgiven. I've been through that thing that you're talking about."

You still regard yourself as born of God because that Spirit from time to time is able by the tremendous struggle to break out and let you know once in a while what God wants you to do. In those little crisis moments maybe you make the right decision but on the whole your life is not governed by that Spirit, it is governed by the attitudes of the people around you, by the people that you live with and work with, by the books that you read, by the newspapers you absorb, by the television that we watch.

Loved ones, we are really Old Testament people who are not eating of the tree of life and that's why your life Monday through Saturday is no different from everybody else's. If you say to me, "Well, I've heard of this Baptism of the Holy Spirit and I've heard of speaking in tongues and gifts of healing and all that stuff. All right, but that's not very much what I need. I need something that will keep me in God's presence Monday through Saturday in my thinking, in the way I tackle my business problems, in the way I tackle the commercial decisions I have to make, in the way I tackle things at home and at school. I need something that will keep me in line with the Spirit that I feel at times in service on Sunday mornings."

When you talk about a person being baptized with the Holy Spirit you are talking about a person who is not just ready to have the Holy Spirit within them as a kind of advisor or consultant but as a person who absolutely commands everything in that dear one's life.

God will only give His life to people who will let Him be God completely every moment of their days. That's really what the baptism of the Holy Spirit is about. There's a verse that I could show you in Acts 5:32 and it takes all the mystery out of the truth about the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is just a very plain verse, "We are witnesses to these things and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him." That's it.

Which is sane, for you to be god of your life or for the God of the whole universe to be God of your life? Which is sane and which is insane? Which is intelligent and which is unintelligent? But above everything else, which is God's will, which is the Creator's will for your life?

Loved ones, you can make the choice this morning. You can, you know. I would ask you, if you have up until now lacked the sense of God's Spirit within you Monday through Saturday, if you are tired of coming on Sunday for a vital injection to try to keep you going until at least Tuesday, if you know that you don't have great delight in God in your daily devotions--it's kind of a bore, it's kind of a weight and responsibility--you don't often read the Bible, you are overwhelmed by all the same kinds of strong feelings of lust and envy and hate that everybody else has. In fact, you wonder in what way you are a Christian, if you are in that situation where you have had some experience of the forgiveness of your sins but you have little experience of life from God.

If your Christianity is a knowledge thing, a knowledge of this is right and this is wrong, this is the right thing to believe, this is the wrong thing to believe, this is where the Methodists stand, this is where the Pentecostals stand, this is what somebody believes about war, this is what somebody believes about abortion. If your Christianity has been just the sum total of your knowledge and the facts that you've absorbed and if you have no experience of this life that flows like a river and that begins to bring into you the joy and the light of the One who said, "Look at the lilies of the field. They toil not, neither do they reap and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Look at the birds of the field, birds of the air. They don't sow or reap or gather into barns and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of much more value than the sparrows?"

If you want the Spirit of that Son, of that Lord Jesus Christ within you, all through the week and throughout your life, then let God be God of your life. Be baptized in His Holy Spirit this morning. Immerse yourself in Him and say, "Lord God, I will obey You from this time forward. I will not debate with You or discuss. I will obey You in every area of my life, whatever it costs." That's what it is to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

Full sermon: IS YOUR CHRISTIAN LIFE MAKING YOU DIFFERENT FROM OTHERS? (Acts 5:32) By Rev. Ernest

