

Consecration and Deliverance

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Normally in the evening service we've discussed the process experience of victory. We've been doing that for years and all the time, at the beginning of each three year period, I would realize now there is a crisis experience of victory that is vital if you're going to be able to go on into the process. I would try to preach that for some part of the first period of every three year cycle.

But, this year, I felt more and more that God was emphasizing let's spend some time on the crisis experience of victory because so many of us here want victory in our lives and we have not yet experienced that. So, that's what we've been doing, loved ones. Just been talking about this crisis experience that is able to deliver us out of the defeat that so many of us Christians live in year in and year out.

I don't apologize for repeating some of these verses because those of us who are in victory think of them as dear water that we enjoy drinking again. Those of us who aren't in victory need to see the issue clearly again before our eyes. So, the defeat, loved ones, that I'm talking about is that outlined in Romans 7:19-21, "For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand." I would assume that everyone here who has not been cleansed by the Holy Spirit or has not entered into the crisis experience of deliverance from self knows the reality of that.

All of us who have been delivered remember the reality of it. You go home well prayed up after a good service like this and you're ready for Nos. 1-10 temptations, not for No. 11. You get in and the one that you live with says something that you weren't prepared for at all and your temper flares out. You didn't want to do that. You were all set up to be good. You were all set up to be kind to them but you found that there was another law working inside you that was prompting you to do something you didn't want to do. Now, that's what we mean by the defeated Christian life. It may not even show itself outwardly like that. Many of us have through the Holy Spirit gained a great degree of power and control over our bad habits so that they don't often show themselves outwardly. But, inwardly, we are seething. We are seething either with critical attitude, critical thoughts or resentment.

Now, loved ones, that's defeat. Inward sin, even if it's not expressed outwardly, is defeat and you know it is. We all know it is, even though no one sees it, we feel it within. We do not commit sin but we feel sin and it steals from us our peace and brings guilt to our consciences. Now, that's what we're talking about, loved ones.

Now, the reason for it is stated in the next two verses. Romans 7:22, "For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self..." So, there's a part of us that wants to do right. We want to be patient. We want to be clean in our thinking. We want to be patient. We want to be kind and gentle. "...but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members." That's the reason for the defeat. It's as if we want to do what's right inside in our hearts, but this equipment that we have, these members, our arms, our hands, our

mind, particularly under emotions, it seems at times our whole body, works in its own way and does what it wants to do. There seems to be another law that works inside it, so that when we want to obey God, we find we have equipment that doesn't seem to want to obey him. But, that seems to have been trained and tamed to obey something else.

Now, last...well, it's two weeks ago, we discussed what that was. You find it, loved ones, back in the account of the fall in Genesis 3:6. We touched it a little two weeks ago. "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food," (that was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil), "... and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate." Many of us find that that's the law that is at work in our whole personality. We seem first of all to be driven by certain desires that are premium: food, delight to the eyes, happiness, happiness, desire to be wise, desire to be well thought of by other people, thought of as important or special.

Many of us when we want to be humble like Jesus find that these things are working inside us. This desire for food often many of us want to go out and help somebody else but just the simple desire for food, the simple desire to please ourselves and have what we want overrides everything else. Many of us want to help somebody but just the desire for delight to the eyes, somebody tells us something that they're going to do that we would enjoy doing and we're off doing it. So, we find these other things are at work inside us.

Moreover, we find that we try to get these by our knowledge of what is good and evil. We determine, now, what would be good for me? Yeah, now, that would be good for me in the way of food. That would be a good way to get food. Now, that would be evil for me from the point of view of my own happiness. We find ourselves dominated by what we want even though we hear a voice within us saying, "Now, look, tonight, you see that person that was sitting over from you, you see that they need some friendship tonight." You can see that. But, there's another law that works inside us when another group of people suggest to us, oh, let's go and have pizza. And we say, well, yeah, we'll go and have pizza.

We find a law at work inside us that drives us according to this business of what we want for our own selves, what we want other people to think of us and what we want to feel that's good. We're driven by those things. Those things drive us so much so that they become real lusts inside us. That's the way they're described in I John 2:16, they start off it seems as harmless, little desires. A little desire to look at a picture on a magazine cover or a little desire for just a little bit of ice cream or something that we'd like or a little desire for some praise.

But, gradually, these things begin to dominate our lives as lusts. It's I John 2:16, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it." But, we find ourselves often driven by these things. I don't know if you're desperately tempted by drink or something like that, most of us aren't. Most of us have been delivered from those very obvious sins when we were converted. So it's not those that we think of as the world. When people say, the world, the world, it's not so much the gambling or the prostitution or the drunkenness, but nevertheless we do find that the things in the world and the circumstances in the world and the security that the world can give us, that draws us, that drags us out again and again. We find that that makes us compromise with what Jesus is prompting us to do.

Now, loved ones, that's what we mean when we talk about this law at work inside us. It's a law of

sin. Sin is life lived independent of God. It's life lived dependent on the world of things and events and people, instead of life lived dependent on God. We find ourselves in that situation. We find we're dominated by the things and the circumstances and the enjoyment that we can get out of the world, instead of God himself.

Loved ones, what is that? Where is it located? Well, just look again at where it's located in Romans 7. These things are located right in the heart of our whole beingness. Romans 7:23, "...but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members." This whole independent life is located in my whole personality. Verse 18, "For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh." So, this whole law and this whole attitude is right in the middle of our personalities. We've inherited it. That's what the theologians call it. Inherited depravity. Original sin. We've inherited it. It's been bred into our race over centuries. We've inherited a personality that is bent on depending on the world and not bent on depending upon God. That's why we have such trouble dealing with it.

What we have talked about these evenings is the glory, the glory of it is, that you are delivered from that power of sin by the same method, and I know these are simple words. But some evening these will light up in your heart as they did in mine and you'll receive them and you'll enter in. The glory of it is that we are delivered from the power of sin within us and from these evil natures by the same method by which we were delivered from the guilt of sin...by faith! By faith! It's by faith we are delivered from the power of sin.

Here's why we say that, loved ones. Look at Romans 7:24, "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" The answer -- Basic Youth Conflicts? No! Andrew Murray's books? No! Well, Watchman Nee's books? No! Prayer, discipline, willpower, trying hard? No! You see, that's the glory of it. That's the glory of it. Growing in grace? No! No! You can't grow cancer out of you. You have cancer cut out of you. If you feed yourself so that the good part of you grows more than the cancer, the cancer just grows with it. No! "Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ Our Lord!"

We are delivered through what Jesus has done for us. And, what he has to do for us is get rid of that thing that is mentioned in the rest of that verse. "So then, (apart from this deliverance through Christ) I of myself serve the law of God." The Greek word, 'autos' comes first in that sentence actually. 'Autos' is "of myself" in Greek. So then, of myself, left on my own, I serve the law of God with my mind, but I serve sin's law with my flesh. What we have to do is get rid of that "myself" or that old self that is trained to depend on the world, instead of God. That's what God did for us in Jesus.

If you look back just one page, that's it, Romans 6:6, "We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin." God has destroyed that old perverted personality of ours in Jesus. He has already done it. That's why Jesus died. What have we to do? Well, Romans 6:11, "So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." Logizo, in Greek, is the word for "consider, reckon." Have faith. You must treat yourself therefore as dead to this power of sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. Not because that's a little tricky power of positive thinking. It will give you victory. But, because that's truth, that's reality, that has already been done. What you used to be has been crucified with Christ. Believe that. Reckon it. Consider it. Because it's truth. When you get to heaven, you're going to find that that was truth. You're going to find you have lived a lie, if you don't believe that. So, reckon that, have faith.

Then, in verse 13, “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.” That's consecration. The faith is in Romans 6:11, “...you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus,” but that faith is just the power of positive thinking without consecration. Consecration is verse 13, “...yield yourselves,” [the second part of the verse] “...yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness.” That's what I'd love to share a little with you tonight about...consecration.

Some of us here will say that's what I did when I was born of God. That's what I did. When I was born of God, when I was converted, when I was born of the Spirit, I consecrated myself. Well, that's amazing that you did that. Because, do you see, what Paul says consecration is in verse 13? “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.” But, before you were converted, you were dead in your sins. Now, how could you come to God and consecrate yourself to him as men and women who have been brought from death to life when in that state at that moment you were dead in your sins?

You see, the fact is, loved ones, you can't consecrate yourself as a sinner. What we did as sinners was we repented. That's all we could do. We repented. Repent and believe the Gospel. That's the only thing we could do. We could come to God and repent and tell him our sorrow for our sins and turn away from the life we were living and turn to Him in faith that Jesus had died for us and that he would give us the Holy Spirit. But, we had no ability to consecrate. We had nothing to consecrate, except our sins. We could consecrate our sins to him but you don't consecrate sins. You do away with sins. So, you see, we may have used the word loosely when we were born of God. But, actually, a person who is dead in their sins can only repent. They can't consecrate. Now, you remember, that's reinforced if you look at that famous chapter in Romans where Paul concentrates on the whole business of consecration.

If you look at it in Romans 12:1, “I appeal to you therefore, brethren,” [not I appeal to you therefore, sinners, or I appeal to you therefore, people who are seeking conversion or who want to be born of God] “I appeal to you therefore, brethren...”, those of you who are children of God, “by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” Now, you see, you can't present your body as a living sacrifice when you come as a sinner under condemnation. All you've got is a mess of a life. You have no living sacrifice. You have a mess of a life that is filled with sin and filled in it with rebellion against God and all you can do is bow the knee to him and repent and submit to him. But, you have no living sacrifice to present to him. In fact, you only begin to have a living sacrifice to present to him when God's Spirit begins to move in your heart and show you the parts of your life that God has, in fact, touched in Jesus.

Actually, if you go through the Old Testament, you find that whenever consecration is mentioned the only people who can consecrate are God's own people. Now, you'll see that, if you'd like to look back to Exodus 29 because, of course, consecration is really the key to coming into deliverance from the old self and so it's vital to see what it is. Exodus 29:33, “They”, that is, if you want to look back at verse 31, “You shall take the ram of ordination, and boil its flesh in a holy place; and Aaron and his sons,” you see. It's them, the priests. “...shall eat the flesh of the ram and the bread that is in the basket, at the door of the tent of meeting. They shall eat those things with which atonement was made, to ordain and consecrate them...”

It's the priests. It's the children of God that will consecrate them, "...but an outsider shall not eat of them, because they are holy." An outsider cannot consecrate. Only God's children can consecrate. In verse 36, "...and every day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement. Also you shall offer a sin offering for the altar, when you make atonement for it, and shall anoint it, to consecrate it." Only God's own people can consecrate.

Part of the reason for this would be very clear to you...the Hebrew for "consecrate" is actually, it's *lemale et ya dam*, it means "to fill your hands". Actually, the Hebrew reads there, you have to fill your hands before God. Now, you see, as sinners, we have nothing to fill our hands with, except our sin. So, we have nothing to fill our hands with and give to God. Indeed, we have nothing to give to God, except our repentance when we're born of God. Consecration is for those who have become children of God.

Then, loved ones, it's good to see too that consecration is what we do. That's what we do. We consecrate. Consecrate means "set things aside from ordinary use and set them for God's use." It means set yourself apart from unholy things and set yourself apart to God. But, then, God acts when you do that and you find that in Leviticus 20. Leviticus 20:7, "Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy; for I am the Lord your God. Keep my statutes, and do them; I am the Lord who sanctify you." Loved ones, that's the mystery of it. Consecrate yourselves. You set yourselves apart for me. I will come and sanctify you. The very word "sanctify" that we repeat so often in that famous verse in Thessalonians, "May the God of peace himself sanctify you holy," comes from two Latin words *sanctus* and *theo*, "to be made holy."

So, actually, you or I can't cleanse our own hearts. You or I can't sanctify ourselves. All you and I can do is consecrate ourselves. We can set ourselves before God. He alone can sanctify us. That's why we say that being delivered from the old self is a two-fold work. It's a human act of consecration and a divine act of sanctification. But, it is not just consecrating. It is not just a human giving over of the will. It is in the light of a human giving over of your whole self that God, the Holy Spirit, falls down upon the altar. Then, you get some of the shadows of the real truth that we'll come to at the end in Exodus 29:3.

It is one of those strange shadowings of things to come, you know, that you get in the most primitive days when God first approached this people. "Seven days you shall make atonement for the altar, and consecrate it, and the altar shall be most holy;" and then that remarkable phrase, "whatever touches the altar shall become holy." Whatever touches the altar shall become holy and there God, you need to prepare our hearts to believe that there is an altar. That when you set anything on it, it is burned up and made holy. Of course, that altar was raised outside Jerusalem in 29 AD and was in the shape of a cross and anything that touches that is made holy.

You get another shadowing of it in connection with the way they sprinkled blood, you see it in Leviticus 8:23. "And Moses killed it," [the ram] and took some of its blood and put it on the tip of Aaron's right ear and on the thumb of his right hand and on the great toe of his right foot." This was to signify that Aaron's right ear and the thumb of his right hand and the toe of his right foot were all tucked inside Jesus when he as the Lamb was slain from before the foundation of the world. Of course, it looks forward to this great certainty that we have that Christ, in fact, has been slain. You and I were slain with him.

Loved ones, consecration is not looking around your life and saying, now, God would want that, now,

God would want that. Or asking yourselves little tricky questions to try to get yourself to see what you haven't given up to God. Consecration is going to the Holy Spirit and saying, Holy Spirit; you know what of me was crucified with Christ. You know what was touched with his blood. You know that it has already been sanctified in him. Holy Spirit, tell me it so that I can agree with that and say Amen. Because I know the moment I agree with what my Father did to me in Christ on Calvary, that moment all of the reality of the resurrection bursts into my life. That's consecration.

A certain man had great trouble, you know, tried to consecrate, tried to consecrate year after year after year until he read that verse in the Old Testament where the blood touched the ear and the thumb and the toe and he began to realize, that's right. The blood has already touched me. I've already been crucified with Christ. All I need to know from the Holy Spirit is which bits have been destroyed and renewed that I'm not aware of so that I can accept that and receive it by faith. That's it, loved ones. It's only now that you're in a position to consecrate. But, consecration is not a self-directed thing. It's a directed thing that the Holy Spirit does. He shows you. He is faithful. If you go to him and say, Holy Spirit, will you show me what has been crucified with Christ that I am not aware of or that I don't want to let go, he will show you. The moment you say "yes", it's gone like that!

I have one of the old books, you know, that I got from England and it has a little homey thing at the end. A little boy and his mom went to a conference where they were seeking a victorious life. As his mother was putting him to bed -- they were in tents outdoor -- as his mother was putting him to bed, he heard a noise in an adjacent tent. He asked what it was and his mother responded, "It is a man praying and I judge by the way he prays that he wants to be wholly given up to the Lord." The little boy replied, "Why don't they then, mom?" That's it, you know. You can do a lot of praying and say, oh, Lord, I want to, I want to, but there's a little boy or a little angel sitting on their shoulder saying, well, okay, let's cut the talk, why don't we just consecrate. So, that's what it is, loved ones. Consecration is giving your whole self to God for him to use as he wishes.

Clyde would bring up at times to me and, well, some loved ones kind of have trouble with the 10,000 abroad stuff. Go all right for the other but this business of going abroad and God showed me, God doesn't care about the 10,000 abroad. What he's getting at in some of us is consecration. He's not necessarily asking us to go abroad. But, he's passing his hand over us with that phrase, '10,000 abroad.'

I don't know if you know but sailing, I sail a bit, and on rigging, after you've used the rigging wires for a long time, you get little tags, little bits of wire stick out. So, at the beginning of each season you run your hand down to find if the wire is okay. Of course, if it's not, you have blood all over your hand. That's it. God runs his hand over us to see if there's blood, to see if there's a little tag sticking out, something that doesn't want to be tucked into Christ on the Cross, but wants to stick out and have its own way. Consecration is giving our whole selves to God for his use, whatever it is, abroad, here, wherever, to be rich, to be poor, to be friends of all, to be friends of none, to do what our own job is, here and now, or to do something entirely different. That's consecration. Giving ourselves to God for his glory alone and no longer living for ourselves. It's something that sinners cannot do but probably most of us in this room are able to do it. When we consecrate, the fire falls and he sanctifies.

Let's spend a little time in prayer, shall we, before we close.

Dear Lord, we would seek your face this night. Lord, we would seek to come into a place of full

consecration. Lord, we do not want to experience or exercise ourselves in just a human consecration where we give all the things that we think you want us to give or all the things we want to give. Lord, we ask you by the Holy Spirit to show us all of us that was crucified in Christ on Calvary. Lord Jesus, you are our Savior. We know we died with you. Show us, Lord, by the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, reveal to us what part of us has your blood upon us and we're trying to wipe it off. We're trying to get out from under it. We're trying to live independent of you in that area. Lord, will you reveal that to us if there's anything that we are not willing to say Amen to that you have died to destroy in yourself on Calvary.

Song: Search me, oh, God, and know my heart today.