

Dead Inside

by Ernest O'Neill

The sermon explores the state of our spirits, feeling disconnected from our true selves, and the desire for a deeper, more meaningful life.

Scripture: Psalm 139:14, John 4:24, Romans 8:6, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 2:11, 2 Corinthians 4:18, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 6:12, 1 Peter 5:8, 1 John 4:1

Topics: "Spiritual Identity", "Inner Transformation"

Description

Ernest O'Neill delves into the struggle of feeling like mere objects in a consumer-driven world, exploring the loss of individuality and the yearning for a deeper sense of self and purpose. He discusses the inner depths of our spirits, the desire for self-worth, and the search for truth in a materialistic society. O'Neill touches on the distinction between soul experiences and true spiritual experiences, cautioning against being misled by deceptive forces in the psychic realm and the dangers of seeking fulfillment through drugs.

Transcript

Do you ever feel at times that you're just a consumer statistic, a head to be counted or taxed, another bundle of learned responses and programmed behaviour? More of us than ever before feel we're becoming objects to be manipulated rather than free human personalities with our own individual wills. As we examine why we do the things we do, we wonder at times if there's any individuality left in us. So much of the way we eat and work and play seems to be influenced by what we see on TV or read in magazines that we seem to have lost our real self in all the pressures.

Our Inner Depths

This explains why we have difficulties with self-esteem and self-worth. We seem to be nonentities with no individual life of our own. Yet something deep down inside us keeps making us feel we are unique and we will continue to exist after this earthly life ends. But, though this inner part of us which the creator calls our 'spirit' appears to be very weak - almost dead, yet we feel it's the real us. We wish it could grow stronger or come alive so that we could set our own individual direction in life for many of us feel at times that we're here to do something special that no one else can do. But when we look at the pettiness and unimportance of our lives, we are easily laughed out of this as sheer egotism. Still, at certain moments, when we're watching a movie or sitting quietly by a stream, we sense somewhere deep-down inside that somebody somewhere up there knows we're here and has a reason for putting us here.

Trying to Get in Truth

This 'spirit' part of us is the deepest part of our personalities deeper than our feelings or our thoughts - our Maker showed certain people who wrote the Bible that this is the part of us that is conscious of Him. In most of us it's almost dead -- we're like a tone-deaf person who just can't hear the difference between two notes of music. We sense there's something there, but we can't quite make it out. We're drawn to the occult and are curious about unidentified flying objects; if religion were less materialistic we'd be attracted to that also, because somehow we suspect it's possible to develop our spirits. We see how we can strengthen our bodies through sports and strengthen our minds through study, so surely it should be possible to strengthen our spirits. However, though you have read volumes on how to improve yourself, get in touch with your inner feelings, develop your inner resources through transcendental meditation, or enter cosmic consciousness through communion with nature and the spirit of the universe, you find things are still as vague as ever in this part of your life.

The Psychic World

What often happens to us is that our spirits are so weak and comatose that we mistake soul experiences for spirit experiences. In other words, soulful thoughts and feelings from the psychological parts of our beings seem to our weak spiritual eyes to be from the spirit. Thus, we become involved in the 'world soul' (which in its lighter side you touch when the crowd at a football game roars in excitement) and are drawn towards the psychic realm where and fortune-tellers live. But this is not the realm of the spirit though frequently comes under the influence of the deceiving spirits which Jesus described as the 'elemental spirits of the universe'. However, it is easy to waste decades of your life exploring dangerous substitutes for real spiritual life. The reason is that we feel shallow. We feel there is a deeper depth to life than we have plumbed, and we are so hungry that we are willing to do anything to find it.

Drugs

This is why so many of us end up experimenting with consciousness-raising drugs. We will try anything to intensify our experience of life in order to get out of it the juice that we think has to be there. Others of us become drug-addicts just to blot out the pain of the utter pointlessness of this frustrating mental and emotional existence. Whatever our predicament is, all of us know that there is something deeper in life than what we have experienced up to now. And we believe it has something to do with this part of us that senses we're unique and that we're here to do or be something that no one else can do or be. But why we're in this position - we do not know. And how do you get out of it - we do not know. How did we end up in such a crippled state? How is it that the deepest part of our beings seems to be dead? Is there any way to bring it alive again? Let's talk further about this in the next article.

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