

Internal Gyro-Compass

by Ernest O'Neill

Our conscience is a vital gyro-compass that guides us towards our purpose and spiritual rebirth.

Scripture: Psalm 139:13, Proverbs 20:27, John 16:13, Acts 17:26, Romans 2:14

Topics: "Spiritual Guidance", "Conscience And Faith"

Description

Ernest O'Neill delves into the essence of conscience, highlighting how our spirits enable us to communicate with the Supreme Being who created us. He emphasizes that our conscience, rooted in our spirit, guides us towards a higher purpose beyond the physical realm, reflecting a memory of God's image within us. O'Neill explains that conscience serves as a vital personal guidance system, unique to each individual, urging us to align our actions with what God intends for us, ultimately leading to a spiritual rebirth.

Transcript

Most of us feel deep within us that we know what we ought to do. Even if we have lived amoral lives for many years, we still feel stirrings within us that urge us to do what we know is right. Although we try to dismiss these feelings as childish inhibitions or a throwback to Victoriana, we find they continue to persist through the years. They seem to come from the same instinctive part of us that makes us feel we were made to live forever. It's the same part of us that makes us feel we're unique and that there's some special purpose for our existence. It's the part of the personality that is called 'spirit' by Jesus of Nazareth.

Spirit - Soul - Body

Through our bodies and our five physical senses, we are able to communicate with the world of things and people. Through our souls we can use our mental and emotional faculties to communicate with our selves. But our spirits are capable of taking us beyond both these realms -- they enable us to communicate with the life from which we all came - the life of the Supreme Being that created the universe. There are several capacities our spirits possess, but this first one that we're discussing is the one that seems most alive. Because of disuse and abuse of our Creator, our spirits seem to be incapable of contacting Him, but our consciences still appear to retain a memory of His image within us. This expresses itself first as vague yearning within us for our roots.

The Essence of Conscience

Paul put it like this when he was speaking in Athens in the first century. God "made from one every nation of men to live on the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation, that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel after him and find him. Yet he is not far from each one of us, for 'in him we live and move and have our being'; as even one of your poets has said 'For we are indeed his offspring' (Acts 17:26-28). All of us - at some time or another - sense this 'homing' instinct within that makes us feel we were made for some purpose beyond the bounds of this physical life. This sense of 'ought' - this feeling that we know something higher and should live up to the best that we know is the essence of conscience. It belongs to the highest part of our personalities the 'spirit' part that relates us to the world of God above us.

Memory of What Has Been

Without this urge to live up to the best that we know, moral standards would have no influence in our society. But conscience is more than an urge to live up to the highest we know. For besides this sense of obligation we seem to have some memory of what we are meant to be. Though races may differ about whether unselfishness should be expressed to your family or your neighbours or everyone in the world, nobody thinks it's right to be selfish. Similarly, no one thinks it's right to be a coward in battle or to do something bad to a friend. In other words, conscience seems to retain some vague memory the image of God in which we were originally made.

This is what Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome in 57 a.d. - "When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus" (Romans 2:14-16). Probably you yourself are surprised at feelings that you have about me shortness of life being inappropriate to the intricate personality you have. Perhaps you've also wondered at times where you get the desire to bring things into order: even if some of us can trace it to our parents, still we wonder where the first human being got it. We appear to have within us a vision, however blurred, of what we were made for. Conscience preserves a memory of God's image within us.

Our Personal Guidance-System

This, then, is a vital gyro-compass that each of us has. Whatever our position, whatever forces govern us, however far we may have strayed from our origins, there is within each of us a unique memory of what the Creator intended us to be. This is different for each of us because each of us is unique. Our conscience judges us - or urges us according to what God wants us to do next. At times, these motivations may be stricter than society's mores or religion's laws; at other times, they may be broader, but the first step to our own 'spiritual rebirth' is immediate, honest, practical response to our conscience.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ernest-o'neill/internal-gyro-compass/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net