

# The Great Choice

by Ernest O'Neill

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*We have the choice between living for self or living for God, and our significance depends on God's will and plan for our lives.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 19:21, Romans 8:28, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Galatians 6:7, Ephesians 1:4, Ephesians 2:10, Colossians 3:23

**Topics:** "God's Plan", "Free Will"

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## Description

Ernest O'Neill emphasizes the importance of facing reality during moments of despair and anxiety, highlighting that we are not insignificant beings but rather part of the Creator Himself, uniquely created in Christ Jesus for good works. He delves into the concept that our lives are intricately planned by God and that our choices between self-will and God's plan have significant consequences on ourselves and others. O'Neill challenges listeners to align their lives with God's will and plan, emphasizing that true significance, satisfaction, and peace come from fulfilling God's purpose for our lives.

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## Transcript

We all have times when we are carefree and happy. And we all have other times when we sink into depression, fear, and anxiety. In those times everything seems dark and there is no consolation that can lift us out of the pit of despair. Even the universe itself seems a terrifyingly large place in which we seem mere specks of nothingness. Death seems to be the only certainty as problem upon problem, difficult circumstances upon difficult circumstances occur to our minds. Even death holds little relief for us as we consider our past life and try vainly to force some comforting consolations into our minds. Indeed as life moves on, death itself can become a black cloud that blots out everything else in our field of vision. The certainty of life's end fills our thoughts and the insignificance of our lives and the events that filled them seem to overwhelm us with the futility of it all.

### Get Real

In those moments particularly it is vital to look steadfastly at reality. Reality is not that you are a little, insignificant piece of matter spinning momentarily through space only to fade to nothingness like a smoke-ring. You are -- of all things -- part of the Creator Himself !! And not just part of that mysterious, impersonal "OOOM" that some religions talk about -- not just part of the "spirit of the universe" -- the "elan vital" that flows through all things. But you are a personal part of the only Son of God Himself. You are Him himself in a unique being different from every other expression of Him that exists. This is why you feel at

times that you'll live forever -- because you will ! You are 'God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus' and you share His eternal existence. And your life is far from being " a tale told by an idiot" or a vague, unknown journey that wanders you know not where.

The reality is that the Maker of the universe foresaw and planned the whole life of mankind in a milli-second before there was any world. It's plain common-sense that the great Being who devised the structure of DNA, the chart of the elements, the intricate beauty of the eye and the orchid did not set loose upon the universe a self-propagating horde of complex human beings to see what they would do by chance and luck.

That is the meaning of the phrase in the Bible "we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works that he has prepared beforehand that we should walk in them...even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world". Just as the planned orbits of the planets are necessary and appropriate for lumps of matter flying through space, so the Creator and his only Son have planned the life that He will live in each one of us. Yet his infinite intelligence is able so to govern every contingent circumstance and event so that we are able to exercise our wills freely while he bears the effects and works all things in accordance with his plan.

#### Life as it Should NOT Be

The result is our present lives and world. Both our lives and the world itself attest to the results that follow when we live as if none of this is true. Daily we see what happens when we live as if there were no overseeing intelligence -- no loving Father who has a plan for each part of his creation. Daily we see where our own self-will and self-centeredness causes pain and disruption for ourselves and others. But daily also we see the ways in which our Maker still expresses his beauty and love and peace in the kindly acts of little people. So, we are presented continuously with the choice of self or God -- of our plans or His plan. In the midst of all our personal frustrations and disappointment we can see that our own life is our Maker's will and He is working each moment to draw us willingly into the things He has made us for.

Finally the issue is not whether we are successful or fulfilled or happy, but whether our Maker's will and plan for his life in us is successful or fulfilled. Our own significance depends on that alone -- and our satisfaction and peace derives from that. So, each time we ignore this reality and behave as if we are little independent specks in the vast universe, we impose upon Him in whom we exist immense strain and pain. Yet his respect and love for us is so real that He continues to endure our indifference to Him even as He gives us the strength to live. How then do we live in the light of all of this ?

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