

The Life Within Us

by Ernest O'Neill

The sermon explores the concept of sin as a disconnection from our true purpose in Christ and emphasizes the need for direction and stability in our lives.

Scripture: Romans 3:23, Romans 5:8, Romans 6:14, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:1, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:1, 1 John 1:8-9

Topics: "Sin Nature", "Identity In Christ"

Description

Ernest O'Neill delves into the concept of sin, explaining that it is not just immorality or evil, but rather the feeling of emptiness and lack of purpose that arises when we miss the mark of our true identity and origin in Christ. He emphasizes that living in sin is living in unreality, disconnected from the reality of being created in Christ with a specific purpose and direction. O'Neill highlights the need to grasp the reality of our existence in Christ, which brings about a desire to fulfill the plans God has for us and live with confident certainty for the future.

Transcript

The dreadful angst or anxiety that many of us feel these days is not simply due to the increasing sense of insecurity that humanity's complex diversity causes. It is due primarily to the vacuum in which so many of us live our lives. This vacuum is called "sin", but we all have made this word mean "immorality" or "evil" or "bad" or "irreligious", so we've missed the whole importance of it.

What is Sin?

In Greek it means "missing the mark" - shooting an arrow and missing the bull's eye! Sin is that vague feeling that we're missing it - that we're on our own in this vast universe and we don't know where we're going or what we're here for. That's what it is - it's this terrible feeling we have when we try to imagine infinity or eternity - time and us going on forever and ever. It's the dreadful emptiness and frustration we feel when someone's death or a financial disaster in our life makes us feel we have no fixed points of reference left in our existence here on earth.

As years go on and we contemplate the possibility of death, this anxiety or sense of emptiness or pointlessness can become almost tangible. We become aware of our own smallness and unimportance and nothing seems to have been worthwhile. The things that have distracted us for years from looking at our relationship to the whole universe fade into the background as children and friends grow up and move

on. We end up sitting alone in rooms that were once filled with friends and relatives - and suddenly we seem to be only little balls of flesh that have no importance for anyone. This is sin - a feeling that we're on our own and have no real control of our destiny or future.

What Causes It?

It's caused because we have spent years missing reality - we've spent a lifetime in unreality ! We've lived as if we were simply little animals that popped out of our mother's bodies and in turn produced other little clones like ourselves: we've thought of ourselves as part of a closed universe or system that is just what we see around us - we really do believe that "what you see is what you get". So we've missed the real truth about ourselves and our origin. Our life did not just start when our mothers and fathers had intercourse with each other - our existence began long before that - when our Creator conceived his own Son to be not only his own divine descendant but also the human being that would express the billion facets of his own nature. At that moment you were created inside this dear Son, known to us as Jesus Christ.

This position that you have from eternity gives you the context in which your whole life on and off this earth is lived: it is the reality in which you exist. For it is Christ through whom and by whom God made the earth - and it is in Christ that God prepared the life that you have here on earth. God foresaw your whole life and the things he wanted his son to do through you: he saw the billions of moves you would use your free will to make out of your independence rather than his wishes. And he planned the billions of counter-moves he needed to make to draw you willingly back into his will for your life in Christ. This, of course, provides you with a substantial infrastructure for your life that gives immense stability and strong direction for your acting and thinking.

Living as if this doesn't exist is "sin" - and it obviously seems very empty and unsatisfying and finally - devastating. What we feel increasingly that we need is direction and confident certainty for the future.

The Way to Live

When we grasp the reality of all this, there naturally springs up within us a desire to do the things that our Maker planned for his son to do in us here on earth. We feel the steadfast love and infinite patience that His Son has shown us as he has kept us alive inside himself so that we could do all these years just what we wanted. We see that He himself must have borne in us not only frustration but real pain as we buried Him and his wishes under our own self-centered whims and desires. Alongside this comes also an understanding of why we found ourselves driven at times by the physical and emotional needs of our bodies while at other times we lacked any sense of direction or guidance. Once we rejected the reality of being part of the Creator's Son with a job to do we became a physical and mental organism that had no purpose or direction.

But all this time we have sensed intuitions that seemed to come from something or someone other than ourselves. At certain critical moments in our lives we would momentarily see into the heart of life or would know what we should do without anyone telling us. Often these moments of truth or second insight would come when we ourselves were absolutely confounded about what we should do. It seemed as if there was a deep source of knowledge or insight within us that we had never tapped. Each of these moments of light were manifestations of the wishes of your Maker's Son inside you - indications of what He Himself wanted to do through you and in you. These unusual instances of deeper insight are actually the normal way the Creator of the universe planned to enable his son to live and act inside you throughout your life. This

intuitive direction within you not only gives us guidance for living but also gives you a strong, solid sense of purpose and stability.

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