

# The Pivotal Point

by Ernest O'Neill

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*The pivotal point in your personality is the relationship between your conscience and will, determining whether you enter into real regeneration or temporary reformation.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5, Ezekiel 36:26, John 3:3, Romans 2:15, 1 Corinthians 2:11, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 4:23, 1 Timothy 1:5, Hebrews 9:14, 1 Peter 3:16

**Topics:** "Spiritual Regeneration", "Conscience And Obedience"

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## Description

Ernest O'Neill emphasizes the pivotal relationship between our conscience and will, highlighting that our spirit and soul intersect at this point. Obedience of our will to our conscience allows God to infuse our soul with His life, leading to true regeneration. However, rejecting God's laws in our conscience hinders the flow of life into our spirit. The key to experiencing supernatural life is responding positively to our conscience, which can lead to a re-orientation of our spirit by the Spirit of Christ.

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## Transcript

The pivotal point in your personality is the relationship between your conscience and your will.

This is the meeting-point of your spirit and your soul:

If your will is ruled by your conscience, then God is able to infuse your soul with the life that He has imparted to your spirit. But if you consciously reject the laws of God in your conscience, then the flow of that life into your spirit is suspended also. So the key to your entry into and continuance in supernatural life is the positive response of your will to your conscience.

### Reformation or Regeneration

It is this obedience of will to conscience that determines whether you initially enter into real regeneration or temporary reformation of character. Many of us experience guilt in our conscience about our independent attitude to God or our indifferent attitude to mankind, but, instead of exercising our will as our conscience direct, we do some other "good" works that are more convenient. Thus we begin some reformation or improvement of our behaviour, but nothing supernatural occurs in our spirits-there is no regeneration.

If, however, you exercise your will to direct your mind's thoughts and your body's actions or words in obedience to the pangs of your conscience, then the Creator's Spirit begins to regenerate your spirit. This can be the beginning of a complete re-orientation of your spirit by the Spirit of Christ if you continue to

respond to God's work in your conscience. Many people do this and are "born from above" so that they become conscious of the whole world of God and His Son and Spirit. But many stop right there!

They fail to see that the conscience and its signals come from a deeper level of their personalities than the ethical standards held by the mind and intellect. So, they begin to "grieve the Spirit" (Ephesians 4:30)- "for the very best reasons". The standards that the mind holds may mirror what God is communicating to you in your spirit, but they may not! Whether they do or not, the danger is that you will ignore the vital gyro-compass that God has placed in your conscience (enlivened by the Holy Spirit) and will sink into a fleshly, mental life of trying to imitate Christ.

#### Consequences of Substituting Mind for Conscience

If you exercise your spirit, it grows stronger, and you become more sensitive to the constraint your conscience exercises on your will. These two vital partners coalesce and form the beginnings of a joyful, spontaneous life of Christ within. If, instead, you exercise your mind to settle what God wishes, then you eat of the "tree of knowledge of good and evil" and subtly develop an independent "Christian" life.

In such a life, the will loses its executive position in the soul and body because it lacks the superior guidance of conscience. Volition then gradually succumbs to the thoughts of the mind, the feelings of the emotions (and eventually, therefore, the desires of the body). All liveliness of spirit and guidance from God fades; the formerly "born from above" spirit sinks into inactivity, and the Christian settles into a carnal life governed by the "group" needs and standards.

This is why there are so many boring people who are called Christians! While the Creator feeds constant bright originality into the spirits of those who come alive to Him and His existence, thousands cut Him off by exercising their will according to mental opinions instead of according to their conscience. Consciences are "seared" (I Timothy 4:2) as much by this kind of mental self-righteousness as by vice or crime. The plain reason is that conscience is a supernatural part of your spirit that knows what will melt you supernaturally into God's life, whereas the mind is a natural part of your soul that is oriented primarily to the world of people and things and circumstances. As Aldous Huxley implied, the mind can defend whatever you direct it to defend-it's an instrument. The conscience, enlivened by God's Spirit, is an agent of Christ.

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