

# The Something Missing

by Ernest O'Neill

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*The sermon explores the unique human experience of feeling incomplete and the distinction between the spirit and soul in relation to our connection with God.*

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 18:1

**Topics:** "Human Spirit", "Spiritual Perception"

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## Description

Ernest O'Neill delves into the deep sense of uniqueness and longing for something more that many of us experience, exploring the eternal aspect of our beings and the spiritual perception of beauty and reality. He highlights the distinction between the human spirit and soul as described in the Bible, emphasizing the spirit's ability to perceive things beyond our physical and psychological senses, including God Himself. Our spirits play a crucial role in sensing the lack of completeness in our lives and the infinite exhilaration meant to be found in oneness with our Creator.

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## Transcript

Do you feel that you have experiences and thoughts that no one else has? Do you wonder at times how others live without the sense of uniqueness that you have? Do you feel glad at times that you aren't like others but are in fact as different as you are? Your mind and your emotions and your physical appearance may be like some other people's, but inside you--in the very depths of your being--you know you're unique and different from everyone else that has ever lived in the world. Why is this? And what part of you senses this?

Something Missing?

Do you ever feel a sense of missing something in life? Have you ever thought that somehow you're not quite hitting the whole point of life dead-on? Even though you may be quite successful in your career and family life, have you ever felt that you're not experiencing the full exhilaration that should characterise life on the earth? Do you ever sense there's a deeper peace or a more exciting sense of exaltation than you've experienced thus far? Why do you sense that you are somehow falling short? What part of you gives this sense of missing something?

As the years pass, do you ever feel that you were not made to die? Are there not moments when you think that the unique conviction of selfhood and personal existence is so complex that it must continue forever? When you think of some of your personal relationships and some of the people that are dear to you, have

you ever reflected that they must surely continue to exist even after they die? That it would be an thinkable shame for them simply to cease to exist? What part of you has this sense of eternity?

Have you ever sat by a lake or the ocean on a summer afternoon and felt as if you could touch some spirit that lies behind the beauty of the scene that surrounds you? Have you been overwhelmed by the beauty of a sunset or a painting or a piece of music so that you seemed to be piercing to the very heart of the universe and touching the deep spirit that lies back of everything? What part of you perceives this kind of glimpse of reality?

## Spirit and Soul

The Bible, which is that collection of history books that best recounts the events in which the Creator of the universe has revealed himself to us humans, calls this part of us -- our spirits. God makes a distinction between the human spirit and the human soul. In Hebrews 4:12, the writer is inspired by God to state "the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit". The term "soul" is used to express the psychological parts of our personality like emotions and mind and will. For instance, 1 Samuel 18:1 describes that "when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul". So, soul means not only personality but the emotions of the personality. The Greek word for "soul" points to the same truth etymologically: it is transliterated "psyche" which is obviously part of our English fish word "psychological".

But "spirit" is a deeper part of us than "soul" and is distinguished from soul by our Maker. Moreover, "spirit" is regarded by Him as a part of us that can perceive things that neither our physical nor our psychological senses are capable of perceiving. Thus Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 2:9 "what no eye has seen nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him, God has revealed to us through the Spirit...because they are spiritually discerned". Our Creator states through Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:17 that "he who is united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him". In other words, it is our spirit that senses God and is able to communicate with Him.

## Function of the Spirit

It is our spirit that senses this lack of wholeness or completeness in our lives. Usually it is in our spirits that we find the lack of infinite exhilaration that we are meant to find in personal oneness with our Maker. On the other hand, it's through your spirit that you sense at times what Wordsworth described when he said "and I have felt a presence that disturbs me with the joy of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime of something far more deeply interfused whose dwelling is the light of setting suns, and the round ocean and the living air". However, Wordsworth also described our modern state when he said "the world is too much with us, late and soon, getting and spending we lay waste our days-little we see in nature that is ours; we have given our hearts away, a sordid boon". How do we get in touch with our spirits which seem so dead? Let's discuss this next time.

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