

Turning Back the Clock

by Ernest O'Neill

We can turn back the clock by adopting a new attitude and living in accordance with reality, trusting in our Creator's work in us.

Scripture: Romans 6:4, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 2:20, Revelation 13:8

Topics: "Redemption", "Spiritual Renewal"

Description

Ernest O'Neill preaches about the desire to turn back the clock and erase past mistakes, habits, and character flaws that hinder us from living fully. He explores the longing to be innocent again, free from cynicism and negative attitudes, and the struggle to break free from procrastination, indecisiveness, and addictions. O'Neill delves into the concept of time and eternity, emphasizing the transformative power of Jesus' crucifixion in 29 A.D. as a way to eliminate the past's effects on our present selves and start anew.

Transcript

"Turn the clock back- Not on your life -- it's been hard enough getting where I am." Besides, turning the clock back usually means losing all the gains that progress has brought about in our lives.

But isn't there another meaning for the phrase -- Have you not wished at times that you could erase the wrinkles that time and anxiety have made in your forehead? Haven't you wished that you could be INNOCENT AGAIN AS YOU WERE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL? Don't we often wish we could look at things as freshly as we used to? Free from some of our cynical, twisted preconceptions? The ulterior motives and suspicions that spoil our attitude to others?

Don't we especially wish that we could turn the clock back on some of the physical and mental habits that chain us to the past and prevent us doing what we know we ought? How many of us wish we could shed our procrastination, our indecisiveness, our inferiority complex, our financial worries, our physical addictions? But all of these have been built "brick-by-brick" over years of wrong choices -- they are the part of our past that is present with us day after day. "If only we could turn the clock back on the character we have become!"

The best that we can do with our COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOLOGY is -- "let's pretend that we have turned the clock back". So we try to manipulate the way we look at the past. We try to rationalize our actions and experiences. We at times try to sever the cord that ties our memory to our consciousness. But somehow these excursions into our unconscious don't produce permanent results. We wish that there was

some way to actually turn the clock back -- to unlive the past -- so that our present character was free to begin again. What a relief it would be if we could now (given our experience) begin life again!

Time and Eternity

Our Creator knew we would end up in this position. It was necessary if we were to have free wills. We had to have the opportunity to see the full out-working of choosing to put ourselves first. But there had to be some way to enable us to return to "square 1" -- to erase the past's effects on our present personality! Choosing right means nothing unless its consequences completely replace the consequences of choosing wrong.

Turning the clock back is what happened in 29 A.D. on a cross outside Jerusalem when Jesus of Nazareth was executed. Time-wise, this was just the crucifixion of another would-be national messiah who would deliver the Jews from Roman oppression. Eternity-wise, this was the historical expression of the DESTRUCTION OF THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE (as it had become) and its complete renewal and resurrection in the timeless-spacelessness of eternity.

That's why our Creator prompted Paul to write things like -- "If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the universe, why do you live as if you still belonged to the world?" "For you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God" -"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" -- "We know that our old self was crucified with him" (Colossians 2:20; 3:3; Romans 6:4,6).

This Jesus Christ was "slain from before the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8) -- "He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake" (1 Peter 1:20). As Stephen Hawking writes in his Brief History of Time, "the theory of relativity gets rid of absolute time -- just as one cannot talk about events in the universe without the notions of space and time, so in general relativity it became meaningless to talk about space and time outside the limits of the universe" (Ibid p.33). As is shown by the "twins" example of one twin aging faster on earth than the other would out in space, there is a "place" where time is one ever-present moment. Thus our Creator did not simply turn back the clock in Jesus' death -- He eliminated it.

How do we Turn the Clock Back?

Simply by believing reality -- the Creator has eliminated the clock. Because of his work on us in Christ, we have been changed -- that is reality. And that change is effective now -- the tracks your past left in you have been erased. It is as if it never happened! Adopt that attitude now. Look up to your Creator this moment for the original spirit he put into you to guide the development of your life.

Air fills your lungs as soon as you breathe. Reality breaks in upon you as soon as you act in accordance with it. Inferiority complex, weakness for drugs? "The old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Stop pretending any longer. Live now in reality.

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