

# Your Hot-Line

by Ernest O'Neill

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of listening to one's conscience as a direct line to understanding God's purpose for one's life.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 30:21, Acts 24:16, Romans 2:15, Titus 1:15

**Topics:** "Conscience Guidance", "Spiritual Direction"

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## Description

Ernest O'Neill emphasizes the importance of conscience as our personal 'hot-line' to God, guiding us to His original purpose for our lives. Conscience, a supernatural part of our spirit, has been overshadowed by societal standards, leading many to wander through life without true direction. By listening to our conscience, which reflects God's desires for us, we can experience a sense of fulfillment and purpose that transcends worldly influences.

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## Transcript

For years Superpower leaders have had "hot lines" to each other-direct phone lines that were always kept open and available so that they could communicate with each other directly if an international crisis occurred in their nations' relationships. That's what conscience is!

Your Personal Hot-line

You often wonder what you're supposed to do with your life. You face forks in the road and are not sure which road to take. Conscience is the living monitor through which your Maker draws you to his original purpose for your life.

Conscience is part of the supernatural part of you called your spirit. But we human beings have ignored it and substituted the moral, amoral, and immoral standards of our social group. We still call it our conscience, but really it is simply our mind that observes, learns, and memorizes what we have seen in our families and friends. Our minds are an important part of us-but only the human part that relates to the world around us. Unlike our conscience, the mind has no direct connection to the Maker of the universe. This is why so many of us wander through life never really knowing why we're here or what we should be doing with our lives. It's why so many of us are motivated by what others do or think we should do. Because our only guidance comes from our minds. And our minds simply observe or read about others.

Listen to Your Conscience

Deep inside you, God has written a personal code of what Christ wants to be and do in you. That's the only reason God made you-not so that you could "do your own thing", live your own life-and go out like a light into a darkness of nothingness forever. He made you so that Jesus, His Son, could live over again in you-with you alive-but the old selfish, independent part of you destroyed forever in His death on Calvary. Your conscience attests to God's modus operandi-God's ways. This is what Paul meant when he wrote to the Romans (2:15) that non-Jews "show that what the law [God's ways] requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness."

But your conscience does not simply make you feel you were born for some special purpose beyond dying like a dog after 70 years. Your conscience is the faculty which the living Spirit uses to guide you step-by-step along the way Christ wants to go. You never become a robot because you can always do what you want. You never become passive because Christ's mind does not take the place of your mind, nor His will take the place of your will. But, if you attend to the impressions that come from your conscience (as it is nourished by daily study of Christ's human life on earth), your life will begin to sense a direction and fullness that you have never known before.

Is Conscience Infallible?

Is your conscience an absolutely sure mirror of what your Maker has planned for you? Originally-when you were born-yes. That's why Wordsworth, the English nature poet wrote:

"The Child is father of the Man;

And I could wish my days to be

Bound each to each by natural piety."

But as Paul wrote to Titus (1:15) about adults in the first century- "their very minds and consciences are corrupted." Years of looking at what other people are doing-years of trying to please others-leave the conscience unused. The Spirit that informs it becomes grieved, and we ourselves lose sensitivity to it. The result is that conscience itself can be affected by erroneous spirits and can be seared by our indifference to its voice. Thus its clear witness to your daily direction becomes diluted with the fallible judgements of mind and emotions; nevertheless, conscience still seems to retain the original divine "genetic" code built into your creation. Even when conscience is at its "most defiled", it seems still to sense what you could be doing in your life.

Keep the Line Clear

The only life-line you have to the one who made you is this remarkable built-in compass. Your parents didn't make you, nor your teachers, nor your coaches, nor your friends, nor your wives or husbands. Only one made you-and he has hidden his secret purpose in your conscience, so listen to it and obey it. It's like every living thing-use it or lose it. Even a telegraph line can be grounded by something as small as a spider's web: this is why Paul explained in Acts (24:16) "so I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward God and toward me".

Have you sensed deep-down you should do something? Do it! Start stepping out on the journey that was designed for you by your Maker. You're never too old--begin today.

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