WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?
Program 77
What is Real Love?
by Ernest O'Neill

We've been talking about the meaning of life and why we're all alive here on this earth. One of the special authorities that we've been discussing is a man called Jesus of Nazareth, who lived in the first century. We've been talking about what He has told us, simply because He's the only man that seems ever to have been able to break through the death barrier.

All the rest of us are imprisoned here in this present 70 to maybe 80 years, or if we're Churchill's or Macmillan's, maybe 90 years. He seems alone of all human beings to have been able to die and come back to life again...and live on this earth for more than a month and then disappear off the earth.

He's the only one who has been able to give us any sense that He had been beyond the world. That is, that He did actually know the Creator of the world. We have, over the past months, examined His life from an intellectual viewpoint and concluded He is either a lunatic, or he is a liar, or he is a legend, or He is in fact reality; He is actually the Son of the Being, the Supreme Being that made our world, that made the universe.

Of course, we did, as you know, eliminate the possibility that He was a lunatic, partly because He has none of the imbalance of a madman. We eliminated the possibility that He was a liar, because He is unquestionably regarded by all peoples, as the highest and greatest ethical teacher the world has ever seen. It is utterly illogical and makes fun of our whole system of knowledge in the world to conclude that the highest ethical teacher the world has ever seen lied about the central focal point of His teaching: His own identity.

The impossibility of Him being a legend became clear to us, when we realized that there wasn't the time for a legend to develop, because shortly after He died, accounts were circulating about His life. Those were the same as the accounts we have today. That collection of books is called "Ta Biblia" in Greek, or the Bible today.

So, we've begun to examine the explanation that this man gave us of the meaning of the world. One of the things that He said to us was, "You're looking to the wrong source for the love that is built into you, the love need that is built into you. You have a need for love, affection, kindness and understanding.

You have a need built deep down inside you that makes you feel you were made for perfection. You were made for eternity. Actually, that is stated in one of the old books in the Bible that was written years and years ago. It's a book called Ecclesiastes. In it there is the statement that there has been put into our own hearts eternity. Actually you would say that, too.

You would admit that you feel you were made for perfect happiness. You feel you were made for perfect stability. You feel you were made for a perfect sense of security. This present world with its things, and its people and its circumstances, seems unable to give that to you. Yet, we discussed yesterday how we all are constantly looking for it. We're trying to get from people the kind of esteem and self-worth that we feel we were made for. We've tried to get from things the kinds of security and stability we feel we were made for financially, emotionally, materially and physically.

We try to get from relationships -- and if not from them, from chemicals -- the kind of happiness and euphoria we were made for, combined with the great serenity and peace that we think we

were made for. Yet, constantly, we meet frustration because it seems that the human beings around us are not able to give us the attention that we think we deserve. They're not able to give us the sense of worth that we feel we should have.

Now, there is another way to live that this man Jesus explained. He put it this way: "The nicest presents you have ever received come from Someone you've never seen." Did you realize that? Really, it's true. "The nicest presents you've ever received come from Someone you've never seen!" See those fingers you have? Just look at them. They're pretty useful, aren't they? Pretty durable, too. Think of what they've put up with. Think of how they've been battered from the time they were first slapped by a teacher, to the time you closed them in the car door. Those fingers are pretty remarkable little things. That skin is a better self-sealing system than any you could buy. That's right. I mean, poke a nail through it, or cut it with a knife and, give it half a chance, and it seals up.

It's like the old medical man of ancient times who said, "We don't actually heal anything. We just sew up the wound and God makes the skin join together." It is; it's a remarkable self-sealing system. Yet, it's a gift you got, that skin that covers your body.

Those lungs that you have just keep pumping and pumping. Even when you're unconscious, they just keep pumping. Those are remarkable things, those lungs of yours. Then what do you think of sunsets? What about those unique scenes at certain times of the day which only you have observed. You know what I mean. What about the little insect, or the butterfly or the bird which you alone played with when you were little.

You alone remember that little fly or that little butterfly. You alone remember that little moment. It was a moment that nobody else seemed to share with you. You know it. Yet it was very enjoyable.

Those and billions more are love gifts from the one for whose friendship alone you were created.

See? That's the point. That's what Jesus said. He said, "All these things that you have received are the best gifts that you've ever got." You often say that the best gifts in life are free. Well, all those things have been given to you by a dear Father who made you, who loves you.

It's His love you were made for. That's actually the only love that will fully meet your infinite capacity for being loved. Jesus explained that His Father, the Creator of the universe, is your Father, too. It's Him that you need. It's not the things His friendship gives, like security. I mean real love gives you a sense of security, doesn't it?

When somebody really loves you, that gives you a great sense of security, especially, of course, if they have the wherewithal to meet your needs for food, shelter and clothing. If they are even better than your own dad was, and they have even a bigger bank account than his and are able to provide infinite resources to meet the needs that you have for food, shelter and clothing, then the love of that person brings you absolute security.

It brings you absolute security, and brings you absolute peace. Of course, it's real love that brings happiness, isn't it? I mean, the things that are dearest to you are not the things that your wife gave you or your girlfriend gave you or your sons gave you. The real happiness that you have is them themselves. That's why the things are meaningful to you -- because they express to you their love.

Actually, if it's just "Things, things, things!", like the wealthy millionairess says, "Things, things, things, all you give me is things. I need love." ... then if it's only things, they don't give you

happiness. If the things have behind them a loving heart, then it's that love, from that dear heart, that gives you happiness.

If somebody really loves you, that is what gives you a sense of recognition. I mean, they know you. They care about you. It's amazing. It doesn't matter how unimportant the little husband is or how unimportant the little wife is. If they love you, they give you a sense of recognition, a sense of value. Actually, when they die that's why so many of us feel so lost. It's love that gives you what you need.

We keep on thinking that what we need is security through things, or that we need happiness through circumstances, or that what we need is significance through people. No, it's not. Actually, what we need is love that will provide all those things. Of course, what Jesus explained to us was that it's the love of your dear Father, who made you, that actually gives you a sense of fulfillment.