WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?
Program 145
We've Been Given a Second Chance
by Ernest O'Neill

Jekyll and Hyde. Does this ring a bell with you? Jekyll and Hyde? You remember, this was the novel Robert Louis Stevenson wrote. The Dr. Jekyll was a respectable, philanthropic, kindly doctor who was anxious to help the poor and those who were sick, and who did deeds of kindness in the city of London. He found within himself another character developing that had all the opposite feelings. Mr. Hyde, who was violent and immoral, and who wanted to roam the streets at night doing all kinds of hideous deeds.

Of course, Jekyll eventually found a drug that would release that Mr. Hyde and would enable him to assume a physical appearance which would give that Mr. Hyde the kind of expression that he wanted. Eventually, you remember, he found that he turned into the Mr. Hyde even without the aid of the drug. Of course, that's what so many of us have experienced.

We experience within ourselves a person we can hardly recognize. It's a person that seems so hideous and so selfish and so utterly hostile towards all that we think of as the ideal life that should be lived, that we cannot believe it's us. Some of us actually are afraid we're schizophrenics, split personalities. We find we go home at night planning to be kind, planning to give everyone a good time, and think only of others. Before we know it, we have destroyed the evening in yet another bout of selfishness and pettiness and bad temper.

What we have been sharing is that this double personality comes from the fact that there are two ways in which we can live life here on earth. One of them is the way that was suggested by

that man in the first century called Jesus. He said His Father was the Creator of the universe, and He knew you by name. He knows you intimately. He has put you here to do something only you can do in His universe. As you do it, you will begin to know Him and to trust Him, and you will become more and more like Him.

As you become like Him, you will be fitted to do what He has for you to do in the rest of the universe after life on this planet ends. This is really the purpose you're made for. But, of course, this man, Jesus, explained that most of us have no time for that kind of stuff. We say, "Forget that! We're not going to depend on some invisible Creator to provide for us. We're going to provide for ourselves. We're going to get from this life what we need."

So, we set out to get all the food we need, all the shelter we need, and all the clothing we need -- except the other five billion are all trying to do the same thing. So, the greater part of us spend most of our lives trying to get food and shelter and clothing. If you ask us why we're trying to get it, we'll say, "To keep ourselves alive so that we can get more food and shelter and clothing, so that we can stay alive." But we don't really know why we're alive, except that we feel like little animals, an instinct to stay alive. So, the life becomes very frustrating.

It's the same with the desire for some sense of self worth or value. We feel we're unique; we feel we're different from everybody else, and, actually, we are! Of course, the important thing to see is the only person that can give us this sense of uniqueness is the one who has made us unique. But once we cut ourselves off from Him and forget about Him and try to establish our uniqueness in the eyes of the other five billion, we find we have a little competition. They're all trying to establish their own uniqueness. Nobody wants to be interested in us.

So most of us end up dreadfully frustrated and feeling we're worth nothing, and feeling we're a zero. We're filled with inferiority complexes and that everybody is valuable but us. So, we end up frustrated and filled with futility. It's the same with happiness. We try to grab what happiness we can, because we think we're not going to be here this long. We find that we can never somehow make the circumstances satisfactory enough.

Somehow, the circumstances are always unsatisfying. Something happens to prevent us from having the perfect holiday we always planned. Something happens to prevent us having the perfect marriage that we always planned. Something happens to prevent us having the perfect job we planned. So, we end up very unhappy and very sad, usually trying to simply blot out the pain and the unhappiness through drugs.

We end up in this hideous situation, that even when we try to live the way we think maybe we should have lived all along -- we find we're unable to do it. This is because our personality has become perverted. It's because we have depended on the world of things and people and circumstances. We've tried to live from the outside in instead of from the inside out. We've tried to live by depending on people and things and circumstances, instead of beginning to give some trust to this God who has made us, beginning to concentrate on finding out why He has put us here, what He thinks of us, and what He wants us to do. We have lived the other way, and we have become little monsters that are unfitted to live the right way.

Of course, most of us have tried to change, but it seems impossible to change. Actually, it is impossible, because your whole personality has actually been perverted. The only way you can be changed is if the Maker of the world changes you. That was the purpose of Jesus' death. Jesus used to say, "You know when I die, all of you actually are dying. In other words, my death

on Calvary is only a temporal expression of a cosmic death that I have died. I have taken the whole of the human race to death with me."
Actually, He called it your "old self", the old self that wants its own way, that wants to get the food, shelter, and clothing that it needs for itself, whoever it tramples over to get it. That old self has been crucified with Christ. That's what one of His followers said. In Romans 6 and verse 6 in the New Testament in the Bible, he said, "Our old self was crucified with Christ."

Actually, that's true. The Creator foresaw the kind of life you would choose to live, and He actually planned for your destruction ahead of time. So, the life that He has allowed you to live now is the life that has actually been destroyed. He allows it just to take place so that you will see what it would be like. The amazing thing is that we have been given a second chance. We're among the most privileged people, because the Creator of the world has allowed the perverted personality that you developed to continue, so that you would see the effects of your own decision and your own choice.

Yet, He has given you seventy years here on earth to choose the remedy for this which He has provided in the death of His Son. That's actually the only way to be delivered from that old self. What I'd like to do over these next days and weeks and months, is to begin to outline to us all the kind of life in detail the Creator of the universe wanted you and me to live, and wants us to live.

As you see it, and as you hear about it, it'll just ring true. You'll begin to see, "Yes, that's right." It is the real explanation of your own personality. It will help you actually to understand yourself better. But the greatest thing is, it will set before us all plainly what the kind of life was that He intends us to live, and what the purpose of life is, and how you, yourself can begin to live it.

So I hope you'll stay with us over the three or four years that it will probably take me to do it. You'll have to concentrate. If you want to get some of the recordings of the earlier broadcasts, we've been going now for probably about six months. They're all available just by writing to the address that I'll give at the end of the program. So, I hope that you'll stay with us, and that you'll begin to think through this carefully, because it is important to know why we're alive, and to know why the Creator has made us the way we are.

Tomorrow, I'd like to start with that: start outlining the kinds of personalities that He's given us, try to outline the makeup of our personality and how one piece works with the other, and most of all, how you can live in trust of Him and in love of Him, and live above the pettiness, and the worry, and the selfishness, and the anxiety that comes upon us when we try to get from the world of people, and things, and circumstances what we can get alone from the Creator of the universe. So, I look forward to beginning tomorrow. Will you join us tomorrow to find out why we're alive?