WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?
Program 154
How We Communicate With God
by Ernest O'Neill

We're talking on this program each day about the meaning of life. That is, why are you here? What's the point of it? What's the meaning of it? Is there any purpose in it? Over the past six months we have tried to follow through intellectually some of the basic facts upon which we are founding our discussion. We have come to the point where now we are discussing the personality and trying to make some sense of what your personality is and what my personality is and how they were meant to work originally by the Supreme Being that created us.

What we have said recently is that He made us like Himself so that we could enjoy His friendship and have a personal relationship with Him. That is why we are here actually on earth. That's why He gave us His own capabilities and capacities. So, we actually have the same capacities as He has.

He gave us three levels of existence. We can't be divided up into three parts, but rather we operate on three levels: the spirit, the soul and the body. We know what the body is. That's fairly obvious. It is our physical being that allows us, through the five senses, to be conscious of the world around us, of circumstances and of people, and of things.

The soul is the psychological part of us. The spirit is the part of us that is able to contact God Himself. That is He Himself, the very essence of the Creator of the universe, is Spirit. Now if you say, "Well, what do you mean by my spirit?" You talk about the spirit of Churchill and his indomitable spirit; you talk about his courageous spirit; it's the very essence of the man.

If you say, "What spirit he has!", you mean the "umph"...that which makes him him. If you regard yourself, it's you. It is the very essence of you. It's not your mind, not your emotions, not your will, which you share with everybody else. Though they are formed through habit different to everybody else, yet they are, in a way, neutral equipment. Your body, which in a way, you vary just a little from everybody else's body. But your spirit is the real you. It's the very heart of you.

One of the classical writers, you remember, said, "What the man is when he is alone, that he is and nothing else." That's the real you. So your spirit is you yourself, the very heart of you. When you're alone and quiet and you're not being provoked or stimulated or motivated by anybody else or any circumstances or any needs that you have, that is you, your spirit. That's the very heart of you. It's you yourself.

Of course, you're dead right if you say, "I don't know who I am. I have no idea what my spirit is." You're dead right, because most of us have spirits that are now pretty dead. Most of us have become little robots and little automatons that operate simply by physical stimulus or sometimes the higher animals among us operate at times by emotional stimulus and some few of us, like Einstein, operate by intellectual stimulus. Most of us have spirits that are pretty dead.

So, you're dead right, many of us are bewildered. We can't find ourselves. We talk about it that way. We say, "Oh, that person has never found himself." We talk about ourselves and say, "Oh I have to find myself." Unfortunately, as the years go by, we are dominated by either the needs of our body or the needs of our job or the needs of our relatives, our mothers, our fathers, our children, our wives, or our husbands. We become just little "need-meeters". We cease to know who we are or what we are or what we really ought to be.

I don't blame you in saying, "I don't know what you're talking about when you're talking about my spirit." I think most of us have great difficulty having any idea that we have a spirit. It is true that you have a spirit. If you wonder why you should believe it, there are many verses, many parts of that old book called the Bible that refer to man's spirit.

There's one verse, if you ever want to look it up, in the New Testament, in a book called Corinthians. It's in 1 Corinthians and chapter 2 and verse 11. "For what person knows a man's thought, except the spirit of the man which is in him." So every man has a spirit. Every man and woman has a spirit that separates you from the animals. Animals don't have spirits, but you have a spirit that is actually the only part of you that can communicate with God. Your spirit is the real you.

It is true that for most of us it has died or become comatose, has gone to sleep years ago. Your spirit IS there. That's the part of you that is able to commune with God. That's because, in fact, He Himself is a spirit. There's another part of the Bible that happens to say, "God is a spirit. They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Or, they that commune with Him must commune with him in spirit and in truth.

Actually, that is one of the functions of your spirit. It can actually commune with God...commune in the sense of converse with Him or communicate or interact with Him. It's your spirit that has the capacity to interact with God or communicate with God. You can know God directly through your spirit. There happens to be another verse in the Bible. It's in Romans 8 and verse 16 and it says, "The spirit of God bears witness with our spirit..."

So you have a spirit and God has a spirit, and that bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. So the way you know

God is actually through your spirit. I'm not surprised at all that you think to yourself, that's far beyond me. Most of us have spirits that are dead to God and that we're not conscious of at all. But it is in your spirit that you commune with God.

Of course, if you say, "How will I ever do that?" That's what we'll be talking about in future months, how you commune with God. Maybe it would be helpful to say that one of the basic factors in exercising your spirit is to want to really get through to God. It's the real you wanting and desiring. It's not words that you speak. It's not feelings that you have. It's not some kind of practice of transcendental meditation or of cosmic consciousness. It's not even necessarily even going to church or singing hymns or even reading the Bible.

It's a strong desire inside you to get to the person at the heart of the universe and who made and created you. Jesus put it like this. He said that you're happy if you hunger and thirst after God. If you want to find God, you must seek Him with all your heart. So it's a strong desire, a strong wanting. That's maybe the best way to put it to people like ourselves who are at the very beginning of trying to understand where our spirit is.

So if you're listening to this in your car or in your home and you're thinking, "Oh, the guy has already left me miles behind..." accept this: your spirit is the real you. If you get time (and maybe you don't need to get down on your knees; you can sit in your car there and put it in neutral), if you want God, with all your being, that begins to get down nearer your spirit. In other words, it doesn't matter what you're thinking. It doesn't matter what you're feeling. But if you desire God with all your being, that often brings your spirit into some kind of activity.

That's why many of us feel we were nearest God when we were in some kind of crisis situation. There we sank into our real

selves at last. We had to put off all our pretenses, all our big show. We had to be ourselves. Often that was the time when we were nearest to God. So our spirit is the part of us that communes with God. Let's talk a little more about that tomorrow.