WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?
Program 171
The Importance of Our Personality Working Right
by Ernest O'Neill

We're talking on this program each day about how our personalities are intended to operate. We're discussing this in connection with the main topics of the broadcasts over the past eight or nine months, which is: "What is the meaning of life? Why are you alive? Why are you here? Why am I in existence? How did we ever come to be here? We've talked about the origins of life, and what we believe is the reason for accepting that there is an intelligent person behind the universe.

If you want to follow through those intellectual bases of our discussion, then please do write for some of the cassettes of those early broadcasts. However, we have reached the point now where we have said that we believe that we are here, created by a personal Being who actually loves us, and who created us to be His friends. That's why we're here. We're here to become completely like Him.

He's made us with the same capacities as Himself, so that we could live with Him forever and develop the universe in an infinite way with Him, but He has given us just the capacities to be like Him. The choice to be like Him is ours. Of course, He had to give us that free will, so that we would truly be like Him, because He is a self-determining Being. So, our task here on this earth is to do what He has put us here to do, and in the process of that, He will make us completely like Himself.

So, we have been discussing now how our personalities were meant to work. Of course, it's a rational and relevant question for many of us today who wonder at times, "Did I do that just because I was emotionally stimulated?" or, " Did I act on that just

because I was tired?" or, "Did I do that just because I had analyzed the thing and thought it was the wise thing to do?" So, many of us, I think, have those kinds of questions.

We wonder, "Now, why did I do that? What would be the right thing to do?" The question comes up continually, "How is my personality meant to work? How are the various parts of it meant to relate to each other, so that I will perform as an integrated, mature person?" So, that's why we have started to look at the outline of the personality that is presented by our Creator through His Son, and the things that His Son said.

Of course, you remember how we examined the historicity of this man who lived in the first century, who was so different from all the other religious leaders in that He destroyed death. All of them, including Muhammad and Buddha, died just like the rest of us, and were buried and were never seen again. But, this man had obviously the ability to destroy death, and come back to life.

When we were examining the documentary evidence and the manuscripts that substantiate His existence and the kind of person He was, we began to realize there is not only His explanation of the way our personalities were meant to work, but that of His followers, and indeed of His predecessors, in a book which we have known for many years, of course, as the Bible. So, we've been looking at that to see what God's own explanation of our personalities was, and how they were meant to operate.

You remember how we've come up with the fact that He has made us on three different levels of life. We have physical life: our bodies and our five senses through which we perceive the world of things and people and circumstances. Then we have inside of that our soul. That is, "pseuche" in Greek, but psychological it becomes in our English sound changes. It

means, of course, the psychological part of our being -- things like our mind and our emotions and our will.

Then, inside that again, we discovered there is a level of life which is deeper than the other two. That is the level of the spirit. The spirit is the real "you", the very essence of you, you as you really are when you're alone, and no one else is present. That's the part of you that contacts God -- your spirit.

We've been talking about the make up of the spirit, as being capable of communing with God, of getting to know God, so it has the ability of communion. It has the ability to know by intuition what God wants us to do. Then, it has the ability through conscience of judging our actions in the light of that information.

When we move to our soul, we find that there is a will that has the ability to choose and make decisions. There is the mind, which is able to evaluate, and reason, and perceive relations and correlates. Then, there are the emotions, which are able to feel desires, feel feelings, and feel affection for people. Then, there is the body itself, which is able to communicate with the outside world.

If you wanted to see how the majority of us live, you would simply divide a page of paper into three sections. In the top section, you would put the body, in the middle section, you would put the soul, and in the bottom section, you would put the spirit. Then, you would simply draw an arrow from the body right through the soul to the spirit. That's exactly the way most of us live today. That is, we live from the body, from the outside to the inside.

This is what we try to do when we take cocaine. We try to stimulate the body with a chemical so that the emotions will be

elated, so that somehow we're hoping we'll get to the level of spirit, and somehow contact the transcendental power behind the universe. Of course, it won't work, because actually by living through our bodies, influencing our souls continually, our spirits have become virtually dead altogether.

That's why some of us have great difficulty finding ourselves. We wonder who we are, because our spirit is virtually non-existent. It exists a little in the sense of conscience at times. Some women, with "women's intuition" sense a little bit of intuition, but few if any of us actually have any of the spirit alive as far as communion with the Creator is concerned, because we've been utterly dominated by the body.

The body sees that it needs rest. So, it goes to bed. It feels the emotions are heavy, because it itself feels tired, so it goes to bed. Often, you must admit, many of us go to bed just because we're depressed or because we can't face life anymore. So, often our bodies lie heavily on our emotions and depresses them completely and utterly. Then, of course what we do is we try to take stimulants to stimulate our bodies, hoping by that means we'll somehow rouse our emotions.

So, we keep pulling our souls up by virtue of our bodies until, of course, our bodies are worn out and our souls are worn out. Our souls were never meant to be dominated by the body like that. It was meant instead to work from the inside out. In other words, our personalities were meant to work exactly the opposite.

If you take a page, divide it into three, and then, in the top piece put "spirit", in the middle space put "soul", and in the bottom space put "body". Then, draw an arrow from the top (spirit), right through the "soul" to the "body". That's the way we were meant to operate, actually, from the inside out, from our spirits.

Our spirits were meant to dictate to our souls, and our souls would then operate our bodies. Of course, the result of this would be that our bodies would be under the control of our minds and emotions, but our minds and emotions themselves would be under the control of our spirits. In other words, we were actually meant to work from the inside out, not from the outside in.

When we work from the outside in, from the body to the soul, we find that the spirit is virtually dead completely. We feel a great emptiness inside us, as you do, you remember, when you have a tremendous night at a party, and you drink a number of whiskey and sodas. You come home elated and then you get to bed. You get up in the morning. First of all, the body feels wretched, as you know. Then, there feels a great emptiness inside your life. You feel, "What is it all in aid of?"

It's interesting that it's particularly at those times when we stimulate the body to stimulate the soul, that the spirit feels the greatest emptiness. This is, of course, because it is empty. It's not being used. It's not being exercised. It's hardly alive at all. Let's talk a little more tomorrow about the way it was meant to operate.