WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?
Program 200
However Lost We are, God Can Make Us Come Alive!
by Ernest O'Neill

What is the meaning of life? Why are you here? What's the point of it all? What is the purpose of it? Is there any purpose? That's the topic we've been discussing now I think for 199 broadcasts, and I think this is the 200th this year. And you remember we've tried to follow the question through from the intellectual basis that we've laid in connection with the question, "Is there any Supreme Being behind the universe?" And we have progressed to the point now where we're trying to deal with the problem that is so prevalent today -- the problem of trying to block out all that we see around us.

And you know that that's what we're doing. We used to try to do it just with the old, I suppose martini in the States and the double whiskey here in England and we try to block it out a little with the nicotine before that and now of course we're big boys and big girls and we're trying to block it out with the crack or with the heroin or the cocaine. And then, of course, there are various middle ways to do it, such as the blasting music that we love to have with our stereo earphones or our stereo speakers. And wherever you go, if it's a really modern store, you ought not to be able to hear yourself think.

The big aim is the same as the aim in concerts of famous stars -- to try to block out things by the sheer hypnosis of the beat drumming through our ears so that we can somehow eliminate the consciousness of life or of the world around us and fade into some kind of coma that brings us a little of the ease and the respite and the relaxation of a hypnotic trance. And so, many of us have come to that point in life where the nearest we can get to happiness is to just block it all out. And that's why, of course, we

talk so sophisticatedly, we think, or we talk in such a sophisticated way about the weekend - or especially Christmas.

You remember how much we enjoy implying to each other in very cultured tones how we absolutely were blotted out completely -- I mean we were just knocked dead. You know and we talk about how much alcohol we have downed or how many drugs we have taken. And the aim is to blot it all out. And that, so often, is the problem today -- that happiness for many of us is just blotting out the miserable life that we have around us. And what we have been talking about is the explanation given for that by the man called Jesus, who lived in the first century, who was really a very original and individualistic human being. And of course, as you know, we believe intellectually he was the Son of the Maker of the universe.

And He explained that we were bound to come to that if we did NOT believe there was a God. If we refused to believe that there was a Maker, and if we refused to believe that He was really our Father, and that He really made you in order to be a friend to you and for you to be His friend and to enjoy a love relationship with Him and to be His son or His daughter. If you refused to believe that, then you would conclude that the universe is not only unfriendly but that it is meaningless and that eventually, you'd have to blot it out.

Because that drives you crazy, simply because deep down inside, you're still made in His image, and you still have a sense that you are unique and that there is some reason for your existence. And yet, as you look around at the universe you sense that there seems to be no meaning, and no purpose for your existence. And so, Jesus said you'll want to blot it out because the sheer contradiction of what you sense inside, will contradict so plainly what you experience on the outside,that you'll just want to blot it all out.

And He explained that the reason is because you've lived in such dependence on the world of people and that's what you have to do. You know if you are without the affection or the love or the recognition or the approval of the Maker of the universe, you have to get the approval or the affection from somebody, and usually we all try to get it from our mum or dad or our friends or our peers. And Jesus said if you try to do that, you'll find yourself continually frustrated because none of them can give you the complete love that the Maker of the universe can give you. None of them are able to.

It's the same with your security. You'll try to get your security from everybody else. Actually, God Himself made you to do a certain job in this world, and He has the economy so arranged that if you do that and take care of that, you'll have all that you need to keep you alive until you actually go into the real world (that will begin after this world is over). But of course, if you don't do that, you have a great sense of insecurity. And so you become dependent on your job and your money and your boss and your company.

And Jesus said as you do that, you will die inside. You'll lose the sense of who you are, you'll lose the sense of direction in your life. And all you'll want to do is blot the whole thing out. And He said there is another way: that His Father still loves you, and however lost you are and however unconscious of anything being alive inside you, that is really you, the Maker of the universe originally made you and He is able to remake you. He's able to make you come alive inside, even if you've absolutely blotted out your individuality.

Even if you absolutely destroyed "you" as you really are, He is able to gather the bits up again and recreate you, simply because He created the whole world and the universe out of

nothing. So, even though it seems to you that there's no "you" left -- Jesus called it your spirit -- even if you think there's no spirit left to be able to contact the Maker of the universe -- and that's what many of us find. We hear somebody saying, oh the Maker of the universe knows what you're meant to do but you say to yourself, yeah but I can't find Him. I can't contact Him.

The reason you can't is that you yourself have died. You've gone dead inside. He is able to make you alive inside. He's able to bring your spirit into life again so that you are able to communicate with Him, and to begin to sense why He put you in the world, what He wants you to do and how He wants you to do it. And if you say, well, how? How? And that's what you remember that man Nicodemus asked in, it's recorded in the New Testament part of the Bible. And it's in John and chapter three and he said, "How can you do that? Can you enter into your mother's womb a second time and be born?" And Jesus said no,no. You have to be born from above. My Father is able to make you alive inside, --invisibly -- if you believe that.

If you believe that there is a Maker of the universe, if you believe that He is your Father and that He does know you, and He has counted the hairs of your head, and He will look after you, and He has put you here for a purpose and He really does love you, and He wants you to know Him and to love Him. If you believe that, that's the first step in enabling the Maker of the universe to bring you alive inside.

Then Jesus said the second step is to change the way you're living; stop trying to blot everything out. Stop trying to please everybody and start trying to please the One that really counts: the Maker of the universe. If you say, oh how do I do that? It's not hard. Just look up at the sky as you're walking along and say, "God, I really believe that you must be there somewhere, and I want to please you. I don't know how to do it, I don't want to be

religious but I want to please you. So, will you show me what I've to do to start pleasing you? You're what I care about. I care about your approval. I don't care about the approval of all these other people, but I care about your approval."

And Jesus said start living as if He really is looking after you, as if it's the Maker of the universe that supplies the food for you, as if it's the Maker of the universe that arranges your accounts payable and accounts receivable, as if it's the Maker of the universe that actually is behind the salary that you get. And look up to Him and just say, "God, I believe that everything that I need comes from you, so I'm going to start depending on you and having that attitude of dependence on you." That's what faith is.

And as you begin to live like that, you'll find that the Maker of the universe starts bringing you alive inside, and you begin to have a real sense of being again the person that you used to be at the very beginning. And you'll begin to sense a direction in your life that comes to you from the one who, above all others, is your friend: the Creator, the Maker, the God who loves you and made you. Would you begin? You can do it today. Do. Make a start today.