WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?
Program 225
Why We Struggle to Trust God
by Ernest O'Neill

What is the meaning of life? That's the question we're discussing on this program each day at this time. One of the explanations that has been most obvious to us is that the meaning of life is related to the person who started the whole universe in the first place. And therefore it is very important to know who or what that person is. And so we've been talking about how all of us feel that there is a supreme being somewhere behind the universe.

We all differ in our interpretations of who He is or what He is. Or I suppose some people will say, what she is. But we are convinced that there is a supreme being behind the universe. That's the only explanation we can find for the order and design that is evident everywhere in the seasons and in the beauty of the flowers and in the circulation of our own blood and the beating of our own heart. And the chart of the elements -- the way the chemical entities in the universe are arranged in such order.

And we have gone a little further you remember, in our discussion on this program because we have said that though there are many people who have claimed to know the Creator of the universe and there have been many prophets who have claimed to tell us about them, yet there is one that stands out above all others. Because He claimed not only to be a prophet of God but to be the very Son of the Creator of the universe.

And He is of course that man known as Jesus, who lived in Galilee in the first century of our era and who differs from all other religious leaders and prophets in that He died and rose from the dead. They all died and were buried like the rest of us

and were never seen again. But this man Jesus died and then on the third day rose from the dead and walked among friends and enemies alike for the next month, eating breakfast and taking meals with them. And showing them that He was not just a ghost but was in fact a real person.

And this man Jesus of Nazareth told us about His Father and about the kind of person He was. And one of the things He said was, therefore in the light of the kind of person that my Father is, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life -- what you shall eat or what you shall drink. Nor about your body -- what you shall put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air. They neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns. And yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

And which of you, by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. Yet I tell you even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, oh men of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious saying what shall we eat? Or what shall we drink? Or what shall we wear? For the Gentiles seek all these things and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness all these things shall be yours as well. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day.

And many of us have said, that is truth. That is reality. That has to be the way things are. And therefore I am going to stop worrying and I am going to stop being anxious about tomorrow. And I am going to stop being uptight about where my clothing is

coming from or where my food is coming from or where my next meal is coming from. Or where my job is coming from.

And I'm going to start trusting God who created me and put me here -- who looks after the birds and the flowers -- that He will also look after me. And will guide me to the right job. Will guide me to the right work to do. And will enable me to get enough food to live.

And we have tried to do that. And we have fallen flat on our faces because we have found within us an attitude that has been bred into our human race for centuries. An attitude that is independent of God, that wants to depend upon ourselves. That wants to say to ourselves, oh God helps those who help themselves. I'll make my own money. I'll get my own job. I'll make my own way in life without Him. And then I can do whatever I want.

I'm not beholding to Him. I don't owe Him anything, least of all my obedience. And we find that that attitude inside us --that attitude of willfulness or of egotism or of selfishness or of independence -- that attitude that wants its own way and stands up for its own rights and insists on its own rights and its own abilities. That attitude rises up inside us and prevents us resting in this God. And prevents us trusting Him and putting our faith in Him. And what we have been sharing is that Jesus of Nazareth explained to us that His Father knew we would be like that.

He knew that over the centuries we would develop such an independent attitude towards Him that gradually our children would find it impossible to trust Him. And would find it very difficult to rest in faith in Him. And Jesus of Nazareth explained His Father knew this. Our Creator foresaw that you would have trouble trusting Him. You would have trouble resting in Him when someone took advantage of you. You'd have trouble resting in God and you'd want to take vengeance yourself. And He knew

you would be like that. And therefore He made you over again. He recreated you. That's what Jesus says.

Jesus said my death in Jerusalem in the first century is only an expression in time and space of my death that took place before I ever came to the universe. Before I ever came to the world, I died. He put it this way through one of His followers called John: "The lamb was slain from before the foundation of the world." He said, I was killed before the world was created. My Father saw all this and He foresaw what would happen. And He put all of you in me before the foundation of the world and He destroyed you there and He has remade you completely new.

And that new creation can be you today. There is a new creation that can trust My Father. That can depend upon Him. That can relax in Him. That can be free from anxiety and worry. That can be free from irritability and ill temper. That can be free from anger and from resentment. And that new creation has been made in me and is available for you to receive now. You can receive it now. You simply need to believe what I've told you because this is reality. This is truth. This is the final reality. And if you believe it, it becomes real for you. But you do have to believe it. You have to choose to believe it. My Father, your Creator will not make you become new by force. He makes that new Creation available to you but you do have to receive it by faith.

And so that's what we have been sharing. That it is possible for you to be changed. It's possible for that independent streak in you to be destroyed and for you to be remade. And to be given the very attitude that the Son of God Himself had toward His Father. In other words, it's possible for the very Spirit of Jesus, the Son of the Maker of the Universe, to come into you and to beget in you the same attitude towards his Father that He himself had.

But this is the only way you can ever come to trust God. And to be able to depend upon Him. And to rest in Him. And until you believe that you will always be struggling to try to trust God against this attitude inside you that rebels against the whole idea of trusting God. But the moment you believe the reality -- that you were crucified with Christ, that you were destroyed with Him and that you were remade in Him a new creation -- the moment you believe that, the Spirit of His Son comes into you.

The whole attitude of His Son begins to take hold in your life and you find that it's possible to trust God. It's possible to depend upon Him. It's possible to sleep at night. It's possible to be free from resentment. And free from irritability and bad temper. It's possible to depend deeply upon God as your loving Father. Let's talk further about this tomorrow.