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# A COURSE IN MIRACLES

The Complete Course On Miracles consists of about 900 pages of Text, 700 pages of the Workbook, and 80 pages of a Teacher's Manual. Reproduced here are the first 8 chapters of the Text and the first 90 days of exercises in the Workbook. The total Workbook contains 365 days' exercises. The Workbook section may be identified by a "W" before the corresponding page number, such as "W-10."

The entire work will be published within the next year. Until then, other sections will be reproduced as needed.

May this work bring you peace.

# TEXT

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TEXT

INTRODUCTION

This is a course in miracles. It is a required course. Only the time you take it is voluntary. Free will does not mean that you can establish the curriculum. It means only that you can elect what you want to take at a given time. The course does not aim at teaching the meaning of love, for that is beyond what can be taught. It does aim, however, at removing the blocks to the awareness of love's presence, which is your natural inheritance. The opposite of love is fear, but what is all-encompassing can have no opposite.

This course can therefore be summed up very simply in this way:

Nothing real can be threatened.  
Nothing unreal exists.

Herein lies the peace of God.

Principles of Miracles

1. There is no order of difficulty in miracles. One is not "harder" or "bigger" than another. They are all the same. All expressions of love are maximal.
2. Miracles as such do not matter. The only thing that matters is their Source, which is far beyond evaluation.
3. Miracles occur naturally as expressions of love. The real miracle is the love that inspires them. In this sense everything that comes from love is a miracle.
4. All miracles mean life, and God is the Giver of life. His Voice will direct you very specifically. You will be told all you need to know.

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5. Miracles are habits, and should be involuntary. They should not be under conscious control. Consciously selected miracles can be misguided.
6. Miracles are natural. When they do not occur something has gone wrong.
7. Miracles are everyone's right, but purification is necessary first.
8. Miracles are healing because they supply a lack; they are performed by those who temporarily have more for those who temporarily have less.
9. Miracles are a kind of exchange. Like all expressions of love, which are always miraculous in the true sense, the exchange reverses the physical laws. They bring more love both to the giver and the receiver.
10. The use of miracles as spectacles to induce belief is a misunderstanding of their purpose.
11. Prayer is the medium of miracles. It is a means of communication of the created with the Creator. Through prayer love is received, and through miracles love is expressed.
12. Miracles are thoughts. Thoughts can represent the lower or bodily level of experience, or the higher or spiritual level of experience. One makes the physical, and the other creates the spiritual.
13. Miracles are both beginnings and endings, and so they alter the temporal order. They are always affirmations of rebirth, which seem to go back but really go forward. They undo the past in the present, and thus release the future.
14. Miracles bear witness to truth. They are convincing because they arise from conviction. Without conviction they deteriorate into magic, which is mindless and therefore destructive; or rather, the uncreative use of mind.
15. Each day should be devoted to miracles. The purpose of time is to enable you to learn how to use time constructively. It is thus a teaching

- device and a means to an end. Time will cease when it is no longer useful in facilitating learning.
16. Miracles are teaching devices for demonstrating it is as blessed to give as to receive. They simultaneously increase the strength of the giver and supply strength to the receiver.
  17. Miracles transcend the body. They are sudden shifts into invisibility, away from the bodily level. That is why they heal.
  18. A miracle is a service. It is the maximal service you can render to another. It is a way of loving your neighbor as yourself. You recognize your own and your neighbor's worth simultaneously.
  19. Miracles make minds one in God. They depend on cooperation because the Sonship is the sum of all that God created. Miracles therefore reflect the laws of eternity, not of time.
  20. Miracles reawaken the awareness that the spirit, not the body, is the altar of truth. This is the recognition that leads to the healing power of the miracle.
  21. Miracles are natural signs of forgiveness. Through miracles you accept God's forgiveness by extending it to others.
  22. Miracles are associated with fear only because of the belief that darkness can hide. You believe that what your physical eyes cannot see does not exist. This leads to a denial of spiritual sight.
  23. Miracles rearrange perception and place all levels in true perspective. This is healing because sickness comes from confusing the levels.
  24. Miracles enable you to heal the sick and raise the dead because you made sickness and death yourself, and can therefore abolish both. You are a miracle, capable of creating in the likeness of your Creator. Everything else is your own nightmare, and does not exist. Only the creations of light are

real.

25. Miracles are part of an interlocking chain of forgiveness which, when completed, is the Atonement. Atonement works all the time and in all the dimensions of time.

26. Miracles represent freedom from fear. "Atoning" means "undoing." The undoing of fear is an essential part of the Atonement value of miracles.

27. A miracle is a universal blessing from God through me to all my brothers. It is the privilege of the forgiven to forgive.

28. Miracles are a way of earning release from fear. Revelation induces a state in which fear has already been abolished. Miracles are thus a means and revelation is an end.

29. Miracles praise God through you. They praise Him by honoring His creations, affirming their perfection. They heal because they deny body-identification and affirm spirit-identification.

30. By recognizing spirit, miracles adjust the levels of perception and show them in proper alignment. This places spirit at the center, where it can communicate directly.

31. Miracles should inspire gratitude, not awe. You should thank God for what you really are. The children of God are holy and the miracle honors their holiness, which can be hidden but never lost.

32. I inspire all miracles, which are really intercessions. They intercede for your holiness and make your perceptions holy. By placing you beyond the physical laws they raise you into the sphere of celestial order. In this order you are perfect.

33. Miracles honor you because you are lovable. They dispel illusions about yourself and perceive the light in you. They thus atone for your errors by freeing you from your nightmares. By releasing your mind from the imprisonment of your illusions, they restore your sanity.

34. Miracles restore the mind to its fullness. By atoning for lack they establish perfect protection. The spirit's strength leaves no room for intrusions.

35. Miracles are expressions of love, but they may not always have observable effects.

36. Miracles are examples of right thinking, aligning your perceptions with truth as God created it.

37. A miracle is a correction introduced into false thinking by me. It acts as a catalyst, breaking up erroneous perception and reorganizing it properly. This places you under the Atonement principle, where perception is healed. Until this has occurred, knowledge of the Divine Order is impossible.

38. The Holy Spirit is the mechanism of miracles. He perceives both God's creations and your illusions. He separates the true from the false by His ability to perceive totally rather than selectively.

39. The miracle dissolves error because the Holy Spirit identifies error as false or unreal. This is the same as saying that by perceiving light, darkness automatically disappears.

40. The miracle acknowledges everyone as your brother and mine. It is a way of perceiving the universal mark of God.

41. Wholeness is the perceptual content of miracles. They thus correct, or atone for, the faulty perception of lack.

42. A major contribution of miracles is their strength in releasing you from your false sense of isolation, deprivation and lack.

43. Miracles arise from a miraculous state of mind, or a state of miracle-readiness.

44. The miracle is an expression of an inner awareness of Christ and the acceptance of His Atonement.

45. A miracle is never lost. It may touch many people you have not even met, and produce undreamed of changes in situations of which you are not even aware.

46. The Holy Spirit is the highest communication medium. Miracles do not involve this type of communication, because they are temporary communication devices. When you return to your original form of communication with God by direct revelation, the need for miracles is over.

47. The miracle is a learning device that lessens the need for time. It establishes an out-of-pattern time interval not under the usual laws of time. In this sense it is timeless.

48. The miracle is the only device at your immediate disposal for controlling time. Only revelation transcends it, having nothing to do with time at all.

49. The miracle makes no distinction among degrees of misperception. It is a device for perception-correction, effective quite apart from either the degree or the direction of the error. This is its true indiscriminateness.

50. The miracle compares what you have made with creation, accepting what is in accord with it as true, and rejecting what is out of accord as false.

#### Revelation, Time and Miracles

Revelation induces complete but temporary suspension of doubt and fear. It reflects the original form of communication between God and His creations, involving the extremely personal sense of creation sometimes sought in physical relationships. Physical closeness cannot achieve it. Miracles, however, are genuinely interpersonal, and result in true closeness to others. Revelation unites you directly with God. Miracles unite you directly with your brother. Neither emanates from consciousness, but both are experienced there. Con-

sciousness is the state that induces action, though it does not inspire it. You are free to believe what you choose, and what you do attests to what you believe.

Revelation is intensely personal and cannot be meaningfully translated. That is why any attempt to describe it in words is impossible. Revelation induces only experience. Miracles, on the other hand, induce action. They are more useful now because of their interpersonal nature. In this phase of learning, working miracles is important because freedom from fear cannot be thrust upon you. Revelation is literally unspeakable because it is an experience of unspeakable love.

Awe should be reserved for revelation, to which it is perfectly and correctly applicable. It is not appropriate for miracles because a state of awe is worshipful, implying that one of a lesser order stands before his Creator. You are a perfect creation, and should experience awe only in the presence of the Creator of perfection. The miracle is therefore a sign of love among equals. Equals should not be in awe of one another because awe implies inequality. It is therefore an inappropriate reaction to me. An elder brother is entitled to respect for his greater experience, and obedience for his greater wisdom. He is also entitled to love because he is a brother, and to devotion if he is devoted. It is only my devotion that entitles me to yours. There is nothing about me that you cannot attain. I have nothing that does not come from God. The difference between us now is that I have nothing else. This leaves me in a state which is only potential in you.

"No man cometh unto the Father but by me" does not mean that I am in any way separate or different from you except in time, and time does not really exist. The statement is more meaningful in terms of a vertical rather than a horizontal axis. You stand below me and I stand below God. In the process of

"rising up," I am higher because without me the distance between God and man would be too great for you to encompass. I bridge the distance as an elder brother to you on the one hand, and as a Son of God on the other. My devotion to my brothers has placed me in charge of the Sonship, which I render complete because I share it. This may appear to contradict the statement "I and my Father are one," but there are two parts to the statement in recognition that the Father is greater.

Revelations are indirectly inspired by me because I am close to the Holy Spirit, and alert to the revelation-readiness of my brothers. I can thus bring down to them more than they can draw down to themselves. The Holy Spirit mediates higher to lower communication, keeping the direct channel from God to you open for revelation. Revelation is not reciprocal. It proceeds from God to you, but not from you to God.

The miracle minimizes the need for time. In the longitudinal or horizontal plane the recognition of the equality of the members of the Sonship appears to involve almost endless time. However, the miracle entails a sudden shift from horizontal to vertical perception. This introduces an interval from which the giver and receiver both emerge farther along in time than they would otherwise have been. The miracle thus has the unique property of abolishing time to the extent that it renders the interval of time it spans unnecessary. There is no relationship between the time a miracle takes and the time it covers. The miracle substitutes for learning that might have taken thousands of years. It does so by the underlying recognition of perfect equality of giver and receiver on which the miracle rests. The miracle shortens time by collapsing it, thus eliminating certain intervals within it. It does this, however, within the larger temporal sequence.

#### Atonement and Miracles

I am in charge of the process of Atonement, which I undertook to begin. When you offer a miracle to any of my brothers, you do it to yourself and me. The reason you come before me is that I do not need miracles for my own Atonement, but I stand at the end in case you fail temporarily. My part in the Atonement is the cancelling out of all errors that you could not otherwise correct. When you have been restored to the recognition of your original state, you naturally become part of the Atonement yourself. As you share my unwillingness to accept error in yourself and others, you must join the great crusade to correct it; listen to my voice, learn to undo error and act to correct it. The power to work miracles belongs to you. I will provide the opportunities to do them, but you must be ready and willing. Doing them will bring conviction in the ability, because conviction comes through accomplishment. The ability is the potential, the achievement is its expression, and the Atonement, which is the natural profession of the children of God, is the purpose.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away." means that they will not continue to exist as separate states. My word, which is the resurrection and the life, shall not pass away because life is eternal. You are the work of God, and His work is wholly lovable and wholly loving. This is how a man must think of himself in his heart, because this is what he is.

The forgiven are the means of the Atonement. Being filled with spirit, they forgive in return. Those who are released must join in releasing their brothers, for this is the plan of the Atonement. Miracles are the way in which minds that serve the Holy Spirit unite with me for the salvation or release of all of God's creations.

I am the only one who can perform miracles indiscriminately, because I am the Atonement. You have a role in the Atonement, which I will dictate to you.

Ask me which miracles you should perform. This spares you needless effort, because you will be acting under direct communication. The impersonal nature of the miracle is an essential ingredient, because it enables me to direct their application, and under my guidance miracles lead to the highly personal experience of revelation. A guide does not control but he does direct, leaving it up to you to follow. "Lead us not into temptation" means "Recognize your errors and choose to abandon them by following my guidance."

Error cannot really threaten truth, which can always withstand it. Only the error is actually vulnerable. You are free to establish your kingdom where you see fit, but the right choice is inevitable if you remember this:

Spirit is in a state of grace forever.  
Your reality is only spirit.  
Therefore you are in a state of grace forever.

Atonement undoes all errors in this respect, and thus uproots the source of fear. Whenever you experience God's reassurances as threat, it is always because you are defending misplaced or misdirected loyalty. When you project this to others you imprison them, but only to the extent to which you reinforce errors they have already made. This makes them vulnerable to the distortions of others, since their own perception of themselves is distorted. The miracle worker can only bless them, and this undoes their distortions and frees them from prison.

You respond to what you perceive, and as you perceive so shall you behave. The Golden Rule asks you to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. This means that the perception of both must be accurate. The Golden Rule is the rule for appropriate behavior. You cannot behave appropriately unless you perceive correctly. Since you and your neighbor are equal members of one family, as you perceive both so you will do to both. You should look out from the perception of your own holiness to the holiness of others.

Miracles arise from a mind that is ready for them. By being united this mind goes out to everyone, even without the awareness of the miracle worker himself. The impersonal nature of miracles is because the Atonement itself is one, uniting all creations with its Creator. As an expression of what you truly are, the miracle places the mind in a state of grace. The mind then naturally welcomes the Host within and the stranger without. By bringing in the stranger, he becomes your brother.

That the miracle may have effects on your brothers that you may not recognize is not your concern. The miracle will always bless you. Miracles you are not asked to perform have not lost their value. They are still expressions of your own state of grace, but the action aspect of the miracle should be controlled by me because of my complete awareness of the whole plan. The impersonal nature of miracle-mindedness ensures your grace, but only I am in a position to know where they can be bestowed.

Miracles are selective only in the sense that they are directed towards those who can use them for themselves. Since this makes it inevitable that they will extend them to others, a strong chain of Atonement is welded. However, this selectivity takes no account of the magnitude of the miracle itself, because the concept of size exists on a plane that is itself unreal. Since the miracle aims at restoring the awareness of reality, it would not be useful if it were bound by laws that govern the error it aims to correct.

#### The Escape From Darkness

The escape from darkness involves two stages: First, the recognition that darkness cannot hide. This step usually entails fear. Second, the recognition that there is nothing you want to hide even if you could. This step brings escape from fear. When you have become willing to hide nothing, you will not only be willing to enter into communion but will also understand peace and joy.



Holiness can never be really hidden in darkness, but you can deceive yourself about it. This deception makes you fearful because you realize in your heart it is a deception, and you exert enormous efforts to establish its reality. The miracle sets reality where it belongs. Reality belongs only to spirit, and the miracle acknowledges only truth. It thus dispels illusions about yourself, and puts you in communion with yourself and God. The miracle joins in the Atonement by placing the mind in the service of the Holy Spirit. This establishes the proper function of the mind and corrects its errors, which are merely lacks of love. Your mind can be possessed by illusions, but spirit is eternally free. If a mind perceives without love, it perceives an empty shell and is unaware of the spirit within. But the Atonement restores spirit to its proper place. The mind that serves spirit is invulnerable.

Darkness is lack of light as sin is lack of love. It has no unique properties of its own. It is an example of the "scarcity" belief, from which only error can proceed. Truth is always abundant. Those who perceive and acknowledge that they have everything have no needs of any kind. The purpose of the Atonement is to restore everything to you, or rather, to restore it to your awareness. You were given everything when you were created, just as everyone was.

The emptiness engendered by fear must be replaced by forgiveness. That is what the Bible means by "There is no death," and why I could demonstrate that death does not exist. I came to fulfill the law by reinterpreting it. The law itself, if properly understood, offers only protection. It is those who have not yet changed their minds who brought the "hell-fire" concept into it. I assure you that I will witness for anyone who lets me, and to whatever extent he permits it. Your witnessing demonstrates your belief, and thus strengthens it. Those who witness for me are expressing, through their miracles, that they have abandoned the belief in deprivation in favor of the abundance they have learned belongs to them.

### Wholeness and Spirit

The miracle is much like the body in that both are learning aids for facilitating a state in which they become unnecessary. When spirit's original state of direct communication is reached, neither the body nor the miracle serves any purpose. While you believe you are in a body, however, you can choose between loveless and miraculous channels of expression. You can make an empty shell, but you cannot express nothing at all. You can wait, delay, paralyze yourself, or reduce your creativity almost to nothing. But you cannot abolish it. You can destroy your medium of communication, but not your potential. You did not create yourself.

The basic decision of the miracle-minded is not to wait on time any longer than is necessary. Time can waste as well as be wasted. The miracle-worker, therefore, accepts the time-control factor gladly. He recognizes that every collapse of time brings everyone closer to the ultimate release from time, in which the Son and the Father are one. Equality does not imply equality now. When everyone recognizes that he has everything, individual contributions to the Sonship will no longer be necessary.

When the Atonement has been completed, all talents will be shared by all the Sons of God. God is not partial. All his children have His total Love, and all His gifts are freely given to everyone alike. "Except ye become as little children" means that unless you fully recognize your complete dependence on God, you cannot know the real power of the Son in his true relationship with the Father. The specialness of God's Sons does not stem from exclusion but from inclusion. All my brothers are special. If they believe they are deprived of anything, their perception becomes distorted. When this occurs the whole family of God, or the Sonship, is impaired in its relationships.

Ultimately, every member of the family of God must return. The

miracle calls him to return because it blesses and honors him, even though he may be absent in spirit. "God is not mocked" is not a warning but a reassurance. God would be mocked if any of His creations lacked holiness. The creation is whole, and the mark of wholeness is holiness. Miracles are affirmations of Sonship, which is a state of completion and abundance.

Whatever is true is eternal, and cannot change or be changed. Spirit is therefore unalterable because it is already perfect, but the mind can elect what it chooses to serve. The only limit put on its choice is that it cannot serve two masters. If it elects to do so, the mind can become the medium by which spirit creates along the line of its own creation. If it does not freely elect to do so, it retains its creative potential but places itself under tyrannous rather than Authoritative control. As a result it imprisons, because such are the dictates of tyrants. To change your mind means to place it at the disposal of true Authority.

The miracle is a sign that the mind has chosen to be led by me in Christ's service. The abundance of Christ is the natural result of choosing to follow Him. All shallow roots must be uprooted, because they are not deep enough to sustain you. The illusion that shallow roots can be deepened, and thus made to hold, is one of the distortions on which the reverse of the Golden Rule rests. As these false underpinnings are given up, the equilibrium is temporarily experienced as unstable. However, nothing is less stable than an upside-down orientation. Nor can anything that holds it upside-down be conducive to increased stability.

#### The Illusion of Needs

You who want peace can find it only by complete forgiveness. No learning is acquired by anyone unless he wants to learn it and believes in some way that he needs it. While lack does not exist in the creation of God, it is very apparent in what you have made. It is, in fact, the essential difference between them.

Lack implies that you would be better off in a state somehow different from the one you are in. Until the "separation," which is the meaning of the "fall," nothing was lacking. There were no needs at all. Needs arise only when you deprive yourself. You act according to the particular order of needs you establish. This, in turn, depends on your perception of what you are.

A sense of separation from God is the only lack you really need correct. This sense of separation would never have arisen if you had not distorted your perception of truth, and had thus perceived yourself as lacking. The idea of order of needs arose because, having made this fundamental error, you had already fragmented yourself into levels with different needs. As you integrate you become one, and your needs become one accordingly. Unified needs lead to unified action, because this produces a lack of conflict.

The idea of orders of need, which follows from the original error that one can be separated from God, requires correction at its own level before the error of perceiving levels at all can be corrected. You cannot behave effectively while you function on different levels. However, while you do, correction must be introduced vertically from the bottom up. This is because you think you live in space, where concepts such as "up" and "down" are meaningful. Ultimately, space is as meaningless as time. Both are merely beliefs.

The real purpose of this world is to use it to correct your unbelief. You can never control the effects of fear yourself, because you made fear, and you believe in what you made. In attitude, then, though not in content, you resemble your Creator, who has perfect faith in His creations because He created them. Belief produces the acceptance of existence. That is why you can believe what no one else thinks is true. It is true for you because it was made by you.

All aspects of fear are untrue because they do not exist at the creative level, and therefore do not exist at all. To whatever extent you are willing to submit your beliefs to this test, to that extent are your perceptions corrected.

In sorting out the false from the true, the miracle proceeds along these lines:

Perfect love casts out fear.  
If fear exists,  
Then there is not perfect love.

But,

Only perfect love exists.  
If there is fear,  
It produces a state that does not exist.

Believe this and you will be free. Only God can establish this solution, and this faith is His gift.

#### Distortions of Miracle Impulses

Your distorted perceptions produce a dense cover over miracle impulses, making it hard for them to reach your own awareness. The confusion of miracle impulses with physical impulses is a major perceptual distortion. Physical impulses are misdirected miracle impulses. All real pleasure comes from doing God's Will. This is because not doing it is a denial of Self. Denial of Self results in illusions, while correction of the error brings release from it. Do not deceive yourself into believing that you can relate in peace to God or to your brothers with anything external.

Child of God, you were created to create the good, the beautiful and the holy. Do not forget this. The Love of God, for a little while, must still be expressed through one body to another, because vision is still so dim. You can use your body best to help you enlarge your perception so you can achieve real vision, of which the physical eye is incapable. Learning to do this is the body's only true usefulness.

Fantasy is a distorted form of vision. Fantasies of any kind are distortions, because they always involve twisting perception into unreality. Actions that stem from distortions are literally the reactions of those who know not what

they do. Fantasy is an attempt to control reality according to false needs.

Twist reality in any way and you are perceiving destructively. Fantasies are a means of making false associations and attempting to obtain pleasure from them. But although you can perceive false associations, you can never make them real except to yourself. You believe in what you make. If you offer miracles, you will be equally strong in your belief in them. The strength of your conviction will then sustain the belief of the miracle receiver. Reality is "lost" through usurpation, which produces tyranny. As long as a single "slave" remains to walk the earth, your release is not complete. Complete restoration of the Sonship is the only goal of the miracle-minded.

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This is a course in mind training. All learning involves attention and study at some level. Some of the later parts of the course rest too heavily on these earlier sections not to require their careful study. You will also need them for preparation. Without this, you may become much too fearful of what is to come to make constructive use of it. However, as you study these earlier sections, you will begin to see some of the implications that will be amplified later on.

A solid foundation is necessary because of the confusion between fear and awe to which I have already referred, and which is often made. I have said that awe is inappropriate in connection with the Sons of God, because you should not experience awe in the presence of your equals. However, it was also emphasized that awe is proper in the presence of your Creator. I have been careful to clarify my role in the Atonement without either over- or under-stating it. I am also trying to do the same with yours. I have stressed that awe is not an appropriate reaction to me because of our inherent equality. Some of the later steps in this course, however, involve a more direct approach to God Himself.

It would be unwise to start on these steps without careful preparation, or one will be confused with fear, and the experience will be more traumatic than beautiful. Healing is of God in the end. The means are being carefully explained to you. Revelation may occasionally reveal the end to you, but to reach it the means are needed.

Chapter 1

THE SEPARATION AND THE ATONEMENT

The Origins of Separation

To extend is a fundamental aspect of God which He gave to His Son. In the creation, God extended Himself to His creations and imbued them with the same loving will to create. You have not only been fully created, but have also been created perfect. There is no emptiness in you. Because of your likeness to your Creator you are creative. No child of God can lose this ability because it is inherent in what he is, but he can use it inappropriately by projecting. The inappropriate use of extension, or projection, occurs when you believe that some emptiness or lack exists in you, and that you can fill it with your own ideas instead of truth. This process involves the following steps:

First, you believe that what God created can be changed by your own mind.

Second, you believe that what is perfect can be rendered imperfect or lacking.

Third, you believe that you can distort the creations of God, including yourself.

Fourth, you believe that you can create yourself, and that the direction of your own creation is up to you.

These related distortions represent a picture of what actually occurred in the separation, or the "detour into fear." None of this existed before the separation, nor does it actually exist now. Everything God created is like Him. Extension, as undertaken by God, is similar to the inner radiance that the children of the Father inherit from Him. Its real source is internal. This is as true of the Son as of the Father. In this sense the creation includes both the creation of the Son by God, and the Son's creations when his mind is healed.

This requires God's endowment of the Son with free will, because all loving creation is freely given in one continuous line, in which all aspects are of the same order.

The Garden of Eden, or the pre-separation condition, was a state of mind in which nothing was needed. When Adam listened to the "lies of the serpent," all he heard was untruth. You do not have to continue to believe what is not true unless you choose to do so. All that can literally disappear in the twinkling of an eye because it is merely a misperception. What is seen in dreams seems to be very real. Yet the Bible says that a deep sleep fell upon Adam, and nowhere is there reference to his waking up. The world has not yet experienced any comprehensive reawakening or rebirth. Such a rebirth is impossible as long as you continue to project or miscreate. It still remains within you, however, to extend as God extended His Spirit to you. In reality this is your only choice, because your free will was given you for your joy in creating the perfect.

All fear is ultimately reducible to the basic misperception that you have the ability to usurp the power of God. Of course, you neither can nor have been able to do this. Here is the real basis for your escape from fear. The escape is brought about by your acceptance of the Atonement, which enables you to realize that your errors never really occurred. Only after the deep sleep fell upon Adam could he experience nightmares. If a light is suddenly turned on while someone is dreaming a fearful dream, he may initially interpret the light itself as part of his dream and be afraid of it. However, when he awakens, the light is correctly perceived as the release from the dream, which is then no longer accorded reality. This release does not depend on illusions. The knowledge that illuminates not only sets you free, but also shows you clearly that you are free.

Whatever lies you may believe are of no concern to the miracle, which can heal any of them with equal ease. It makes no distinctions among misperceptions,

Its sole concern is to distinguish between truth on the one hand, and error on the other. Some miracles may seem to be of greater magnitude than others. But remember the first principle in this course; there is no order of difficulty in miracles. In reality you are perfectly unaffected by all expressions of lack of love. These can be from yourself and others, from yourself to others, or from others to you. Peace is an attribute in you. You cannot find it outside. Illness is some form of external searching. Health is inner peace. It enables you to remain unshaken by lack of love from without and capable, through your acceptance of miracles, of correcting the conditions proceeding from lack of love in others.

#### The Atonement as Defense

You can do anything I ask. I have asked you to perform miracles, and have made it clear that miracles are natural, corrective, healing and universal. There is nothing they cannot do, but they cannot be performed in the spirit of doubt or fear. When you are afraid of anything, you are acknowledging its power to hurt you. Remember that where your heart is, there is your treasure also. You believe in what you value. If you are afraid, you will inevitably value wrongly, and by endowing all thoughts with equal power will inevitably destroy peace. That is why the Bible speaks of "the peace of God which passeth understanding." This peace is totally incapable of being shaken by errors of any kind. It denies the ability of anything not of God to affect you. This is the proper use of denial. It is not used to hide anything, but to correct error. It brings all error into the light, and since error and darkness are the same, it corrects error automatically.

True denial is a powerful protective device. You can and should deny any belief that error can hurt you. This kind of denial is not a concealment but a correction. Your right mind depends on it. Denial of error is a strong defense of truth, but denial of truth results in miscreation, the projections of the ego. In the

service of the right mind the denial of error frees the mind, and re-establishes the freedom of the will. When the will is really free it cannot miscreate, because it recognizes only truth.

You can defend truth as well as error. The means are easier to understand after the value of the goal is firmly established. It is a question of what it is for. Everyone defends his treasure, and will do so automatically. The real questions are, what do you treasure? and how much do you treasure it? Once you have learned to consider these questions and to bring them into all your actions, you will have little difficulty in clarifying the means. The means are available whenever you ask. You can, however, save time if you do not protract this step unduly. The correct focus will shorten it immeasurably.

The Atonement is the only defense that cannot be used destructively because it is not a device you made. The Atonement principle was in effect long before the Atonement began. The principle was love and the Atonement was an act of love. Acts were not necessary before the separation, because belief in space and time did not exist. It was only after the separation that the Atonement and the conditions necessary for its fulfillment were planned. Then a defense so splendid was needed that it could not be misused, although it could be refused. Refusal could not, however, turn it into a weapon of attack, which is the inherent characteristic of other defenses. The Atonement thus becomes the only defense that is not a two-edged sword. It can only heal.

The Atonement was built into the space-time belief to set a limit on the need for the belief itself, and ultimately to make learning complete. The Atonement is the final lesson. Learning itself, like the classrooms in which it occurs, is temporary. The ability to learn has no value when change is no longer necessary. The eternally creative have nothing to learn. You can learn to improve your perceptions, and can become a better and better learner. This will bring you into closer and closer accord with the Sonship; but the Sonship itself is a perfect

Creation and perfection is not a matter of degree. Only while there is a belief in differences is learning meaningful.

Evolution is a process in which you seem to proceed from one degree to the next. You correct your previous missteps by stepping forward. This process is actually incomprehensible in temporal terms, because you return as you go forward. The Atonement is the device by which you can free yourself from the past as you go ahead. It undoes your past errors, thus making it unnecessary for you to keep retracing your steps without advancing to your return. In this sense the Atonement saves time, but like the miracle it serves, does not abolish it. As long as there is need for Atonement, there is need for time. But the Atonement as a completed plan has a unique relationship to time. Until the Atonement is complete its various phases will proceed in time, but the whole Atonement stands at time's end. At that point the bridge of return has been built.

The Atonement is a total commitment. You may still think this is associated with loss, a mistake all the separated Sons of God make in one way or another. It is hard to believe a defense that cannot attack is the best defense. This is what is meant by "the meek shall inherit the earth." They will literally take it over because of their strength. A two-way defense is inherently weak precisely because it has two edges, and can be turned against you very unexpectedly. This possibility cannot be controlled except by miracles. The miracle turns the defense of Atonement to your real protection, and as you become more and more secure you assume your natural talent of protecting others, knowing yourself as both a brother and a Son.

#### The Altar of God

The Atonement can only be accepted within you by releasing the inner light. Since the separation, defenses have been used almost entirely to defend against the Atonement, and thus maintain the separation. This is generally seen

as a need to protect the body. The many body fantasies in which minds engage arise from the distorted belief that the body can be used as a means for attaining "atonement." Perceiving the body as a temple is only the first step in correcting this distortion, because it alters only part of it. It does recognize that Atonement in physical terms is impossible. The next step, however, is to realize that a temple is not a structure at all. Its true holiness lies at the inner altar around which the structure is built. The emphasis on beautiful structures is a sign of the fear of Atonement, and an unwillingness to reach the altar itself. The real beauty of the temple cannot be seen with the physical eye. Spiritual sight, on the other hand, cannot see the structure at all because it is perfect vision. It can, however, see the altar with perfect clarity.

For perfect effectiveness the Atonement belongs at the center of the inner altar, where it undoes the separation and restores the wholeness of the mind. Before the separation the mind was invulnerable to fear, because fear did not exist. Both the separation and the fear are miscreations that must be undone for the restoration of the temple, and for the opening of the altar to receive the Atonement. This heals the separation by placing within you the one effective defense against all separation thoughts and making you perfectly invulnerable.

The acceptance of the Atonement by everyone is only a matter of time. This may appear to contradict free will because of the inevitability of the final decision, but this is not so. You can temporize and you are capable of enormous procrastination, but you cannot depart entirely from your Creator, Who set the limits on your ability to miscreate. An imprisoned will engenders a situation which, in the extreme, becomes altogether intolerable. Tolerance for pain may be high, but it is not without limit. Eventually everyone begins to recognize, however dimly, that there must be a better way. As this recognition becomes more firmly established, it becomes a turning-point. This ultimately reawakens spirit-

ual vision, simultaneously weakening the investment in physical sight. The alternating investment in the two levels of perception is usually experienced as conflict, which can become very acute. But the outcome is as certain as God.

Spiritual vision literally cannot see error, and merely looks for Atonement. All solutions the physical eye seeks dissolve. Spiritual vision looks within and recognizes immediately that the altar has been defiled and needs to be repaired and protected. Perfectly aware of the right defense it passes over all others, looking past error to truth. Because of the strength of its vision, it brings the mind into its service. This re-establishes the power of the mind and makes it increasingly unable to tolerate delay, realizing that it only adds unnecessary pain. As a result, the mind becomes increasingly sensitive to what it would once have regarded as very minor intrusions of discomfort.

The children of God are entitled to the perfect comfort that comes from perfect trust. Until they achieve this, they waste themselves and their true creative powers on useless attempts to make themselves more comfortable by inappropriate means. But the real means are already provided, and do not involve any effort at all on their part. The Atonement is the only gift that is worthy of being offered at the altar of God, because of the value of the altar itself. It was created perfect and is entirely worthy of receiving perfection. God and His creations are completely dependent on each other. He depends on them because He created them perfect. He gave them His peace so they could not be shaken and could not be deceived. Whenever you are afraid you are deceived, and your mind cannot serve the Holy Spirit. This starves you by denying you your daily bread. God is lonely without His Sons, and they are lonely without Him. They must learn to look upon the world as a means of healing the separation. The Atonement is the guarantee that they will ultimately succeed.

### Healing as Release from Fear

Our emphasis is now on healing. The miracle is the means; the Atonement is the principle, and healing is the result. To speak of "a miracle of healing" is to combine two orders of reality inappropriately. Healing is not a miracle. The Atonement, or the final miracle, is a remedy and any type of healing is a result. The kind of error to which Atonement is applied is irrelevant. All healing is essentially the release from fear. To undertake this you cannot be fearful yourself. You do not understand healing because of your own fear.

A major step in the Atonement plan is to undo error at all levels. Sickness or "not-right-mindedness" is the result of level confusion, because it always entails the belief that what is amiss on one level can adversely affect another. We have referred to miracles as the means of correcting level confusion, for all mistakes must be corrected at the level on which they occur. Only the mind is capable of error. The body can act wrongly only when it is responding to mis-thought. The body cannot create, and the belief that it can, a fundamental error, produces all physical symptoms. Physical illness represents a belief in magic. The whole distortion that made magic rests on the belief that there is a creative ability in matter which the mind cannot control. This error can take two forms; it can be believed that the mind can miscreate in the body, or that the body can miscreate in the mind. When it is understood that the mind, the only level of creation, cannot create beyond itself, neither type of confusion need occur.

Only the mind can create because spirit has already been created, and the body is a learning device of the mind. Learning devices are not lessons in themselves. Their purpose is merely to facilitate learning. The worst a faulty use of a learning device can do is to fail to facilitate learning. It has no power in itself to introduce actual learning errors. The body, if properly understood, shares the invulnerability of the Atonement to two-edged application. This is

not because the body is a miracle, but because it is not inherently open to misinterpretation. The body is merely part of your experience in the physical world. Its abilities can be and frequently are overevaluated. However, it is almost impossible to deny its existence in this world. Those who do so are engaging in a particularly unworthy form of denial. The term "unworthy" here implies only that it is not necessary to protect the mind by denying the un-mindful. If one denies this unfortunate aspect of the mind's power, one is also denying the power itself.

All material means that you accept as remedies for bodily ills are re-statements of magic principles. This is the first step in believing that the body makes its own illness. It is a second misstep to heal it through non-creative agents. It does not follow, however, that the use of such agents for corrective purposes is evil. Sometimes the illness has a sufficiently strong hold over the mind to render a person temporarily inaccessible to the Atonement. In this case it may be wise to utilize a compromise approach to mind and body, in which something from the outside is temporarily given healing belief. This is because the last thing that can help the non-right-minded, or the sick, is an increase in fear. They are already in a fear-weakened state. If they are prematurely exposed to a miracle, they may be precipitated into panic. This is likely to occur when upside-down perception has induced the belief that miracles are frightening.

The value of the Atonement does not lie in the manner in which it is expressed. In fact, if it is used truly, it will inevitably be expressed in whatever way is most helpful to the receiver. This means that a miracle, to attain its full efficacy, must be expressed in a language that the recipient can understand without fear. This does not necessarily mean that this is the highest level of communication of which he is capable. It does mean, however, that it is



the highest level of communication of which he is capable now. The whole aim of the miracle is to raise the level of communication, not to lower it by increasing fear.

#### The Function of the Miracle Worker

Before miracle workers are ready to undertake their function in this world, it is essential that they fully understand the fear of release. Otherwise they may unwittingly foster the belief that release is imprisonment, a belief that is already very prevalent. This misperception arises in turn from the belief that harm can be limited to the body. That is because of the underlying fear that the mind can hurt itself. None of these errors is meaningful, because the miscreations of the mind do not really exist. This recognition is a far better protective device than any form of level confusion, because it introduces correction at the level of the error. It is essential to remember that only the mind can create, and that correction belongs at the thought level. To amplify an earlier statement, spirit is already perfect and therefore does not require correction. The body does not exist except as a learning device for the mind. This learning device is not subject to errors of its own, because it cannot create. It is obvious, then, that inducing the mind to give up its miscreations is the only application of creative ability that is truly meaningful.

Magic is the mindless or the miscreative use of mind. Physical medications are forms of "spells" but if you are afraid to use the mind to heal, you should not attempt to do so. The very fact that you are afraid makes your mind vulnerable to miscreation. You are therefore likely to misunderstand any healing that might occur, and because egocentricity and fear usually occur together, you may be unable to accept the real Source of the healing. Under these conditions, it is safer for you to rely temporarily on physical healing devices, because you cannot misperceive them as your own creations. As long as your sense of vulner-

ability persists, you should not attempt to perform miracles.

I have already said that miracles are expressions of miracle-mindedness, and miracle-mindedness means right-mindedness. The right-minded neither exalt nor depreciate the mind of the miracle worker or the miracle receiver. However, as a correction, the miracle need not await the right-mindedness of the receiver. In fact, its purpose is to restore him to his right mind. It is essential, however, that the miracle worker be in his right mind, however briefly, or he will be unable to re-establish right-mindedness in someone else.

The healer who relies on his own readiness is endangering his understanding. You are perfectly safe as long as you are completely unconcerned about your readiness, but maintain a consistent trust in mine. If your miracle working inclinations are not functioning properly, it is always because fear has intruded on your right-mindedness and has turned it upside-down. All forms of not-right-mindedness are the result of refusal to accept the Atonement for yourself. If you do accept it, you are in a position to recognize that those who need healing are simply those who have not realized that right-mindedness is healing.

The sole responsibility of the miracle worker is to accept the Atonement for himself. This means you recognize that mind is the only creative level, and that its errors are healed by the Atonement. Once you accept this, your mind can only heal. By denying your mind any destructive potential and reinstating its purely constructive powers, you place yourself in a position to undo the level confusion of others. The message you then give to them is the truth that their minds are similarly constructive, and their miscreations cannot hurt them. By affirming this you release the mind from overevaluating its own learning device, and restore the mind to its true position as the learner.

It should be emphasized again that the body does not learn any more than

it creates. As a learning device it merely follows the learner, but if it is falsely endowed with self-initiative, it becomes a serious obstruction to the very learning it should facilitate. Only the mind is capable of illumination. Spirit is already illuminated and the body in itself is too dense. The mind, however, can bring its illumination to the body by recognizing that it is not the learner, and is therefore unamenable to learning. The body is, however, easily brought into alignment with a mind that has learned to look beyond it toward the light.

Corrective learning always begins with the awakening of spirit, and the turning away from the belief in physical sight. This often entails fear, because you are afraid of what your spiritual sight will show you. I said before that the Holy Spirit cannot see error, and is capable only of looking beyond it to the defense of Atonement. There is no doubt that this may produce discomfort, yet the discomfort is not the final outcome of the perception. When the Holy Spirit is permitted to look upon the defilement of the altar, He also looks immediately toward the Atonement. Nothing He perceives can induce fear. Everything that results from spiritual awareness is merely channeled toward correction. Discomfort is aroused only to bring the need for correction into awareness.

The fear of healing arises in the end from an unwillingness to accept unequivocally that healing is necessary. What the physical eye sees is not corrective, nor can error be corrected by any device that can be seen physically. As long as you believe in what your physical sight tells you, your attempts at correction will be misdirected. The real vision is obscured, because you cannot endure to see your own defiled altar. But since the altar has been defiled, your state becomes doubly dangerous unless it is perceived.

Healing is an ability that developed after the separation, before which it was unnecessary. Like all aspects of the belief in space and time, it is tempor-

ary. However, as long as time persists, healing is needed as a means of protection. This is because healing rests on charity, and charity is a way of perceiving the perfection of another even if you cannot perceive it in yourself. Most of the loftier concepts of which you are capable now are time-dependent. Charity is really a weaker reflection of a much more powerful love-encompassment that is far beyond any form of charity you can conceive of as yet. Charity is essential to right-mindedness in the limited sense in which it can now be attained.

Charity is a way of looking at another as if he had already gone far beyond his actual accomplishments in time. Since his own thinking is faulty he cannot see the Atonement for himself, or he would have no need of charity. The charity that is accorded him is both an acknowledgment that he needs help, and a recognition that he will accept it. Both of these perceptions clearly imply their dependence on time, making it apparent that charity still lies within the limitations of this world. I said before that only revelation transcends time. The miracle, as an expression of charity, can only shorten it. It must be understood, however, that whenever you offer a miracle to another, you are shortening the suffering of both of you. This corrects retroactively as well as progressively.

#### Special Principles of Miracle Workers

1. The miracle abolishes the need for lower-order concerns. Since it is an out-of-pattern time interval, the ordinary considerations of time and space do not apply. When you perform a miracle, I will arrange both time and space to adjust to it.
2. A clear distinction between what is created and what is made is essential. All forms of healing rest on this fundamental correction in level perception.
3. Never confuse right- and wrong-mindedness. Responding to any form of error

with anything except a desire to heal is an expression of this confusion.

4. The miracle is always a denial of this error and an affirmation of the truth. Only right-mindedness can correct in a way that has any real effect. Pragmatically, what has no real effect has no real existence. Its effect, then, is emptiness. Being without substantial content, it lends itself to projection.
5. The level-adjustment power of the miracle induces the right perception for healing. Until this has occurred healing cannot be understood. Forgiveness is an empty gesture unless it entails correction. Without this it is essentially judgmental, rather than healing.
6. Miracle-minded forgiveness is only correction. It has no element of judgment at all. The statement "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" in no way evaluates what they do. It is an appeal to God to heal their minds. There is no reference to the outcome of the error. That does not matter.
7. The injunction "Be of one mind" is the statement for revelation-readiness. My request "Do this in remembrance of me" is the appeal for cooperation from miracle workers. The two statements are not in the same order of reality. Only the latter involves an awareness of time, since to remember is to recall the past in the present. Time is under my direction, but timelessness belongs to God. In time we exist for and with each other. In timelessness we coexist with God.
8. You can do much on behalf of your own healing and that of others if, in a situation calling for help, you think of it this way:

I am here only to be truly helpful.  
I am here to represent Him Who sent me.  
I do not have to worry about what to say or what to do,  
because He Who sent me will direct me.  
I am content to be wherever He wishes, knowing He goes  
there with me.  
I will be healed as I let Him teach me to heal.

### Fear and Conflict

Being afraid seems to be involuntary; something beyond your own control. Yet I have said already that only constructive acts should be involuntary. My control can take over everything that does not matter, while my guidance can direct everything that does, if you so choose. Fear cannot be controlled by me, but it can be self-controlled. Fear prevents me from giving you my control. The presence of fear shows that you have raised body thoughts to the level of the mind. This removes them from my control, and makes you feel personally responsible for them. This is an obvious confusion of levels.

I do not foster level confusion, but you must choose to correct it. You would not excuse insane behavior on your part by saying you could not help it. Why should you condone insane thinking? There is a confusion here that you would do well to look at clearly. You may believe that you are responsible for what you do, but not for what you think. The truth is that you are responsible for what you think, because it is only at this level that you can exercise choice. What you do comes from what you think. You cannot separate yourself from the truth by "giving" autonomy to behavior. This is controlled by me automatically as soon as you place what you think under my guidance. Whenever you are afraid, it is a sure sign that you have allowed your mind to miscreate and have not allowed me to guide it.

It is pointless to believe that controlling the outcome of mis-thought can result in healing. When you are fearful, you have chosen wrongly. That is why you feel responsible for it. You must change your mind, not your behavior, and this is a matter of willingness. You do not need guidance except at the mind level. Correction belongs only at the level where change is possible. Change does not mean anything at the symptom level, where it cannot work.

The correction of fear is your responsibility. When you ask for release from fear, you are implying that it is not. You should ask, instead, for help

in the conditions that have brought the fear about. These conditions always entail a willingness to be separate. At that level you can help it. You are much too tolerant of mind wandering, and are passively condoning your mind's miscreations. The particular result does not matter, but the fundamental error does. The correction is always the same. Before you choose to do anything, ask me if your choice is in accord with mine. If you are sure that it is, there will be no fear.

Fear is always a sign of strain, arising whenever what you want conflicts with what you do. This situation arises in two ways: First, you can choose to do conflicting things, either simultaneously or successively. This produces conflicted behavior, which is intolerable to you because the part of the mind that wants to do something else is outraged. Second, you can behave as you think you should, but without entirely wanting to do so. This produces consistent behavior, but entails great strain. In both cases, the mind and the behavior are out of accord, resulting in a situation in which you are doing what you do not wholly want to do. This arouses a sense of coercion that usually produces rage, and projection is likely to follow. Whenever there is fear, it is because you have not made up your mind. Your mind is therefore split, and your behavior inevitably becomes erratic. Correcting at the behavioral level can shift the error from the first to the second type, but will not obliterate the fear.

It is possible to reach a state in which you bring your mind under my guidance without conscious effort, but this implies a willingness that you have not developed as yet. The Holy Spirit cannot ask more than you are willing to do. The strength to do comes from your undivided decision. There is no strain in doing God's Will as soon as you recognize that it is also your own. The lesson here is quite simple, but particularly apt to be overlooked. I will

therefore repeat it, urging you to listen. Only your mind can produce fear. It does so whenever it is conflicted in what it wants, producing inevitable strain because wanting and doing are discordant. This can be corrected only by accepting a unified goal.

The first corrective step in undoing the error is to know first that the conflict is an expression of fear. Say to yourself that you must somehow have chosen not to love, or the fear could not have arisen. Then the whole process of correction becomes nothing more than a series of pragmatic steps in the larger process of accepting the Atonement as the remedy. These steps may be summarized in this way:

1. Know first that this is fear.
2. Fear arises from lack of love.
3. The only remedy for lack of love is perfect love.
4. Perfect love is the Atonement.

I have emphasized that the miracle, or the expression of Atonement, is always a sign of respect from the worthy to the worthy. The recognition of this worth is re-established by the Atonement. It is obvious, then, that when you are afraid, you have placed yourself in a position where you need Atonement. You have done something loveless, having chosen without love. This is precisely the situation for which the Atonement was offered. The need for the remedy inspired its establishment. As long as you recognize only the need for the remedy, you will remain fearful. However, as soon as you accept the remedy, you have abolished the fear. This is how true healing occurs.

Everyone experiences fear. Yet it would take very little right-thinking to realize why fear occurs. Few appreciate the real power of the mind, and no one remains fully aware of it all the time. However, if you hope to spare yourself from fear there are some things you must realize, and realize fully. The mind is very powerful, and never loses its creative force. It never sleeps.

Every instant it is creating. It is hard to recognize that thought and belief combine into a power surge that can literally move mountains. It appears at first glance that to believe such power about yourself is arrogant, but that is not the real reason you do not believe it. You prefer to believe that your thoughts cannot exert real influence because you are actually afraid of them. This may allay awareness of the guilt, but at the cost of perceiving the mind as impotent. If you believe that what you think is ineffectual you may cease to be afraid of it, but you are hardly likely to respect it. There are no idle thoughts. All thinking produces form at some level.

#### Cause and Effect

You may still complain about fear, but you nevertheless persist in making yourself fearful. I have already indicated that you cannot ask me to release you from fear. I know it does not exist, but you do not. If I intervened between your thoughts and their results, I would be tampering with a basic law of cause and effect; the most fundamental law there is. I would hardly help you if I depreciated the power of your own thinking. This would be in direct opposition to the purpose of this course. It is much more helpful to remind you that you do not guard your thoughts carefully enough. You may feel that at this point it would take a miracle to enable you to do this, which is perfectly true. You are not used to miracle-minded thinking, but you can be trained to think that way. All miracle workers need that kind of training.

I cannot let you leave your mind unguarded, or you will not be able to help me. Miracle working entails a full realization of the power of thought in order to avoid miscreation. Otherwise a miracle will be necessary to set the mind itself straight, a circular process that would not foster the time collapse for which the miracle was intended. The miracle worker must have genuine respect for true cause and effect as a necessary condition for the miracle to occur.

Both miracles and fear come from thoughts. If you are not free to choose one, you would also not be free to choose the other. By choosing the miracle you have rejected fear, if only temporarily. You have been fearful of everyone and everything. You are afraid of God, of me and of yourself. You have misperceived or miscreated us, and believe in what you have made. You would not have done this if you were not afraid of your own thoughts. The fearful must miscreate, because they misperceive creation. When you miscreate you are in pain. The cause and effect principle now becomes a real expediter, though only temporarily. Actually, "Cause" is a term properly belonging to God, and His "Effect" is His Son. This entails a set of Cause and Effect relationships totally different from those you introduce into miscreation. The fundamental conflict in this world, then, is between creation and miscreation. All fear is implicit in the second, and all love in the first. The conflict is therefore one between love and fear.

It has already been said that you believe you cannot control fear because you yourself made it, and your belief in it seems to render it out of your control. Yet any attempt to resolve the error through attempting the mastery of fear is useless. In fact, it asserts the power of fear by the very assumption that it need be mastered. The true resolution rests entirely on mastery through love. In the interim, however, the sense of conflict is inevitable, since you have placed yourself in a position where you believe in the power of what does not exist.

Nothing and everything cannot coexist. To believe in one is to deny the other. Fear is really nothing and love is everything. Whenever light enters darkness, the darkness is abolished. What you believe is true for you. In this sense the separation has occurred, and to deny it is merely to use denial inappropriately. However, to concentrate on error is only a further error. The initial corrective procedure is to recognize temporarily that there is a problem,

but only as an indication that immediate correction is needed. This establishes a state of mind in which the Atonement can be accepted without delay. It should be emphasized, however, that ultimately no compromise is possible between everything and nothing. Time is essentially a device by which all compromise in this respect can be given up. It only seems to be abolished by degrees, because time itself involves intervals that do not exist. Miscreation made this necessary as a corrective device. The statement "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" needs only one slight correction to be meaningful in this context; "He gave it to His only begotten Son."

It should especially be noted that God has only one Son. If all His creations are His Sons, every one must be an integral part of the whole Sonship. The Sonship in its oneness transcends the sum of its parts. However, this is obscured as long as any of its parts is missing. That is why the conflict cannot ultimately be resolved until all the parts of the Sonship have returned. Only then can the meaning of wholeness in the true sense be understood. Any part of the Sonship can believe in error or incompleteness if he so chooses. However, if he does so, he is believing in the existence of nothingness. The correction of this error is the Atonement.

I have already briefly spoken about readiness, but some additional points might be helpful here. Readiness is only the prerequisite for accomplishment. The two should not be confused. As soon as a state of readiness occurs, there is usually some degree of desire to accomplish, but it is by no means necessarily undivided. The state does not imply more than a potential for a change of mind. Confidence cannot develop fully until mastery has been accomplished. We have already attempted to correct the fundamental error that fear can be mastered, and have emphasized that the only real mastery is through love. Readiness is

only the beginning of confidence. You may think this implies that an enormous amount of time is necessary between readiness and mastery, but let me remind you that time and space are under my control.

#### The Meaning of the Last Judgment

One of the ways in which you can correct the magic-miracle confusion is to remember that you did not create yourself. You are apt to forget this when you become egocentric, and this puts you in a position where a belief in magic is virtually inevitable. Your will to create was given you by your Creator, who was expressing the same Will in His creation. Since creative ability rests in the mind, everything you create is necessarily a matter of will. It also follows that whatever you alone make is real in your own sight, though not in the Mind of God. This basic distinction leads directly into the real meaning of the Last Judgment.

The Last Judgment is one of the most threatening ideas in your thinking. This is because you do not understand it. Judgment is not an attribute of God. It was brought into being only after the separation, when it became one of the many learning devices to be built into the overall plan. Just as the separation occurred over millions of years, the Last Judgment will extend over a similarly long period, and perhaps an even longer one. Its length, however, can be greatly shortened by miracles, the device for shortening but not abolishing time. If a sufficient number become truly miracle-minded, this shortening process can be virtually immeasurable. It is essential, however, that you free yourself quickly, because you must emerge from the conflict if you are to bring peace to other minds.

The Last Judgment is generally thought of as a procedure undertaken by God. Actually it will be undertaken by my brothers with my help. It is a final healing rather than a meting out of punishment, however much you may think that punishment is deserved. Punishment is a concept totally opposed to right-mindedness,

and the aim of the Last Judgment is to restore right-mindedness to you. The Last Judgment might be called a process of right evaluation. It simply means that everyone will finally come to understand what is worthy and what is not. After this, the ability to choose can be directed rationally. Until this distinction is made, however, the vacillations between free and imprisoned will cannot but continue.

The first step toward freedom involves a sorting out of the false from the true. This is a process of separation in the constructive sense, and reflects the true meaning of the Apocalypse. Everyone will ultimately look upon his own creations and choose to preserve only what is good, just as God Himself looked upon what He had created and knew that it was good. At this point, the mind can begin to look with love on its own creations because of their worthiness. At the same time the mind will inevitably disown its miscreations which, without belief, will no longer exist.

The term "Last Judgment" is frightening not only because it has been projected onto God, but also because of the association of "last" with death. This is an outstanding example of upside-down perception. If the meaning of the Last Judgment is objectively examined, it is quite apparent that it is really the doorway to life. No one who lives in fear is really alive. Your own last judgment cannot be directed toward yourself, because you are not your own creation. You can, however, apply it meaningfully and at any time to everything you have made, and retain in your memory only what is creative and good. This is what your right-mindedness cannot but dictate. The purpose of time is solely to "give you time" to achieve this judgment. It is your own perfect judgment of your own perfect creations. When everything you retain is lovable, there is no reason for fear to remain with you. This is your part in the Atonement.

## Chapter 2

### THE INNOCENT PERCEPTION

#### Atonement without Sacrifice

A further point must be perfectly clear before any residual fear still associated with miracles can disappear. The crucifixion did not establish the Atonement; the resurrection did. Many sincere Christians have misunderstood this. No one who is free of the belief in scarcity could possibly make this mistake. If the crucifixion is seen from an upside-down point of view, it does appear as if God permitted and even encouraged one of His Sons to suffer because he was good. This particularly unfortunate interpretation, which arose out of projection, has led many people to be bitterly afraid of God. Such anti-religious concepts enter into many religions. Yet the real Christian should pause and ask, "How could this be?" Is it likely that God Himself would be capable of the kind of thinking which His Own words have clearly stated is unworthy of His Son?

The best defense, as always, is not to attack another's position, but rather to protect the truth. It is unwise to accept any concept if you have to invert a whole frame of reference in order to justify it. This procedure is painful in its minor applications and genuinely tragic on a wider scale. Persecution frequently results in an attempt to "justify" the terrible misperception that God Himself persecuted His Own Son on behalf of salvation. The very words are meaningless. It has been particularly difficult to overcome this because, although the error itself is no harder to correct than any other, many have been unwilling to give it up in view of its prominent value as a defense. In milder forms a parent says, "This hurts me more than it hurts you," and

feels exonerated in beating a child. Can you believe our Father really thinks this way? It is so essential that all such thinking be dispelled that we must be sure that nothing of this kind remains in your mind. I was not "punished" because you were bad. The wholly benign lesson the Atonement teaches is lost if it is tainted with this kind of distortion in any form.

The statement "Vengeance is Mine, sayeth the Lord" is a misperception by which one assigns his own "evil" past to God. The "evil" past has nothing to do with God. He did not create it and He does not maintain it. God does not believe in retribution. His Mind does not create that way. He does not hold your "evil" deeds against you. Is it likely that He would hold them against me? Be very sure that you recognize how utterly impossible this assumption is, and how entirely it arises from projection. This kind of error is responsible for a host of related errors, including the belief that God rejected Adam and forced him out of the Garden of Eden. It is also why you may believe from time to time that I am misdirecting you. I have made every effort to use words that are almost impossible to distort, but it is always possible to twist symbols around if you wish.

Sacrifice is a notion totally unknown to God. It arises solely from fear, and frightened people can be vicious. Sacrificing in any way is a violation of my injunction that you should be merciful even as your Father in Heaven is merciful. It has been hard for many Christians to realize that this applies to themselves. Good teachers never terrorize their students. To terrorize is to attack, and this results in rejection of what the teacher offers. The result is learning failure.

I have been correctly referred to as "the lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world," but those who represent the lamb as blood-stained do not understand the meaning of the symbol. Correctly understood, it is a very simple symbol that speaks of my innocence. The lion and the lamb lying down

together symbolize that strength and innocence are not in conflict, but naturally live in peace. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" is another way of saying the same thing. A pure mind knows the truth and this is its strength. It does not confuse destruction with innocence because it associates innocence with strength, not with weakness.

Innocence is incapable of sacrificing anything, because the innocent mind has everything and strives only to protect its wholeness. It cannot project. It can only honor other minds, because honor is the natural greeting of the truly loved to others who are like them. The lamb "taketh away the sins of the world" in the sense that the state of innocence, or grace, is one in which the meaning of the Atonement is perfectly apparent. The Atonement is entirely unambiguous. It is perfectly clear because it exists in light. Only the attempts to shroud it in darkness have made it inaccessible to those who do not choose to see.

The Atonement itself radiates nothing but truth. It therefore epitomizes harmlessness and sheds only blessing. It could not do this if it arose from anything but perfect innocence. Innocence is wisdom because it is unaware of evil, and evil does not exist. It is, however, perfectly aware of everything that is true. The resurrection demonstrated that nothing can destroy truth. Good can withstand any form of evil, as light abolishes forms of darkness. The Atonement is therefore the perfect lesson. It is the final demonstration that all the other lessons I taught are true. If you can accept this one generalization now, there will be no need to learn from many smaller lessons. You are released from all errors if you believe this.

The innocence of God is the true state of the mind of His Son. In this state your mind knows God, for God is not symbolic; He is Fact. Knowing His Son as he is, you realize that the Atonement, not sacrifice, is the only ap-



appropriate gift for God's altar, where nothing except perfection belongs. The understanding of the innocent is truth. That is why their altars are truly radiant.

#### Miracles as True Perception

I have stated that the basic concepts referred to in this course are not matters of degree. Certain fundamental concepts cannot be understood in terms of opposites. It is impossible to conceive of light and darkness or everything and nothing as joint possibilities. They are all true or all false. It is essential that you realize your thinking will be erratic until a firm commitment to one or the other is made. A firm commitment to darkness or nothingness, however, is impossible. No one has ever lived who has not experienced some light and some thing. No one, therefore, is able to deny truth totally, even if he thinks he can.

Innocence is not a partial attribute. It is not real until it is total. The partly innocent are apt to be quite foolish at times. It is not until their innocence becomes a viewpoint with universal application that it becomes wisdom. Innocent or true perception means that you never misperceive and always see truly. More simply, it means that you never see what does not exist, and always see what does.

When you lack confidence in what someone will do, you are attesting to your belief that he is not in his right mind. This is hardly a miracle-based frame of reference. It also has the disastrous effect of denying the power of the miracle. The miracle perceives everything as it is. If nothing but the truth exists, right-minded seeing cannot see anything but perfection. I have said that only what God creates or what you create with the same will has any real existence. This, then, is all the innocent can see. They do not suffer from distorted perception.

You are afraid of God's Will because you have used your own mind, which He created in the likeness of His Own, to miscreate. The mind can miscreate only when it believes it is not free. An "imprisoned" mind is not free because it is possessed, or held back, by itself. It is therefore limited, and the will is not free to assert itself. To be one is to be of one mind or will. When the Will of the Sonship and the Father are one, their perfect accord is Heaven.

Nothing can prevail against a Son of God who commends his Spirit into the Hands of his Father. By doing this the mind awakens from its sleep and remembers its Creator. All sense of separation disappears. The Son of God is part of the Holy Trinity, but the Trinity Itself is one. There is no confusion within Its Levels, because They are of one Mind and one Will. This single purpose creates perfect integration and establishes the peace of God. Yet this vision can be perceived only by the truly innocent. Because their hearts are pure, the innocent defend true perception instead of defending themselves against it. Understanding the lesson of the Atonement they are without the wish to attack, and therefore they see truly. This is what the Bible means when it says, "When He shall appear (or be perceived) we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

The way to correct distortions is to withdraw your faith in them and invest it only in what is true. You cannot make untruth true. If you are willing to accept what is true in everything you perceive, you let it be true for you. Truth overcomes all error, and those who live in error and emptiness can never find lasting solace. If you perceive truly you are cancelling out misperceptions in yourself and in others simultaneously. Because you see them as they are, you offer them your acceptance of their truth so they can accept it for themselves. This is the healing that the miracle induces.

### Perception versus Knowledge

We have been emphasizing perception, and have said very little about knowledge as yet. This is because perception must be straightened out before you can know anything. To know is to be certain, and certainty is strength. Perception is temporary. As an attribute of the belief in space and time, it is subject either to fear or love. Misperceptions produce fear and true perceptions foster love, but neither brings certainty because all perception varies. That is why it is not knowledge. True perception is the basis for knowledge, but knowing is the affirmation of truth and beyond all perceptions.

All your difficulties stem from the fact that you do not recognize yourself, your brother or God. To recognize means to "know again," implying that you knew before. You can see in many ways because perception involves interpretation, and this means that it is not whole or consistent. The miracle, being a way of perceiving, is not knowledge. It is the right answer to a question, but you do not question when you know. Questioning illusions is the first step in undoing them. The miracle, or the right answer, corrects them. Since perceptions change, their dependence on time is obvious. How you perceive at any given time determines what you do, and actions must occur in time. Knowledge is timeless, because certainty is not questionable. You know when you have ceased to ask questions.

The questioning mind perceives itself in time, and therefore looks for future answers. The closed mind believes the future and the present will be the same. This establishes a seemingly stable state that is usually an attempt to counteract an underlying fear that the future will be worse than the present. This fear inhibits the tendency to question at all.

True vision is the natural perception of spiritual sight, but it is still a correction rather than a fact. Spiritual sight is symbolic, and therefore not

a device for knowing. It is, however, a means of right perception, which brings it into the proper domain of the miracle. A "vision of God" would be a miracle rather than a revelation. The fact that perception is involved at all removes the experience from the realm of knowledge. That is why visions, however holy, do not last.

The Bible tells you to "Know thyself," or to be certain. Certainty is always of God. When you love someone you perceive him as he is, and this makes it possible for you to know him. Until you first perceive him as he is you cannot know him. While you ask questions about him you are clearly implying that you do not know God. Certainty does not require action. When you say you are acting on the basis of knowledge, you are really confusing knowledge with perception. Knowledge provides the strength for creative thinking, but not for right doing. Perception, miracles and doing are closely related. Knowledge is the result of revelation and induces only thought. Even in its most spiritualized form perception involves the body. Knowledge comes from the altar within and is timeless because it is certain. To perceive the truth is not the same as to know it.

Right perception is necessary before God can communicate directly to His altars, which He established in His Sons. There He can communicate His certainty, and His knowledge will bring peace without question. God is not a stranger to His Sons, and His Sons are not strangers to each other. Knowledge preceded both perception and time, and will ultimately replace them. That is the real meaning of "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end," and "Before Abraham was I am." Perception can and must be stabilized, but knowledge is stable. "Fear God and keep His commandments" becomes "Know God and accept His certainty."

If you attack error in another, you will hurt yourself. You cannot know

your brother when you attack him. Attack is always made upon a stranger. You are making him a stranger by misperceiving him, and so you cannot know him. It is because you have made him a stranger that you are afraid of him. Perceive him correctly so that you can know him. There are no strangers in God's creation. To create as He created you can create only what you know, and therefore accept as yours. God knows His children with perfect certainty. He created them by knowing them. He recognizes them perfectly. When they do not recognize each other, they do not recognize Him.

#### Error and the Ego

The abilities you now possess are only shadows of your real strength. All of your present functions are divided and open to question and doubt. This is because you are not certain how you will use them, and are therefore incapable of knowledge. You are also incapable of knowledge because you can still perceive lovelessly. Perception did not exist until the separation introduced degrees, aspects and intervals. Spirit has no levels, and all conflict arises from the concept of levels. Only the Levels of the Trinity are capable of Unity. The levels created by the separation cannot but conflict. This is because they are meaningless to each other.

Consciousness, the level of perception, was the first split introduced into the mind after the separation, making the mind a perceiver rather than a creator. Consciousness is correctly identified as the domain of the ego. The ego is a wrong-minded attempt to perceive yourself as you wish to be, rather than as you are. Yet you can know yourself only as you are, because that is all you can be sure of. Everything else is open to question.

The ego is the questioning aspect of the post-separation self, which was made rather than created. It is capable of asking questions but not of perceiving meaningful answers, because these would involve knowledge and cannot

be perceived. The mind is therefore confused, because only one-mindedness can be without confusion. A separated or divided mind must be confused. It is necessarily uncertain about what it is. It has to be in conflict because it is out of accord with itself. This makes its aspects strangers to each other, and this is the essence of the fear-prone condition, in which attack is always possible. You have every reason to feel afraid as you perceive yourself. This is why you cannot escape from fear until you realize that you did not and could not create yourself. You can never make your misperceptions true, and your creation is beyond your own error. That is why you must eventually choose to heal the separation.

Right-mindedness is not to be confused with the knowing mind, because it is applicable only to right perception. You can be right-minded or wrong-minded, and even this is subject to degrees, clearly demonstrating that knowledge is not involved. The term "right-mindedness" is properly used as the correction for "wrong-mindedness," and applies to the state of mind that induces accurate perception. It is miracle-minded because it heals misperception, and this is indeed a miracle in view of how you perceive yourself.

Perception always involves some misuse of mind, because it brings the mind into areas of uncertainty. The mind is very active. When it chooses to be separated it chooses to perceive. Until then it wills only to know. Afterwards it can only choose ambiguously, and the only way out of ambiguity is clear perception. The mind returns to its proper function only when it wills to know. This places it in the service of spirit, because it is from spirit that it derives its whole power to make or create. Even in miscreation the mind is affirming its Source, or it would merely cease to be. This is impossible, because the mind belongs to spirit which God created and which is therefore eternal.

The ability to perceive made the body possible, because you must perceive

something and with something. That is why perception involves an exchange or translation, which knowledge does not need. The interpretative function of perception, a distorted form of creation, then permits you to interpret the body as yourself in an attempt to escape from the conflict you have induced. Spirit, which knows, could not be reconciled with this loss of power, because it is incapable of darkness. This makes spirit almost inaccessible to the mind and entirely inaccessible to the body. Thereafter, spirit is perceived as a threat, because light abolishes darkness merely by showing you it is not there. Truth will always overcome error in this way. This cannot be an active process of correction because, as I have already emphasized, knowledge does not do anything. It can be perceived as an attacker, but it cannot attack. What you perceive as its attack is your own vague recognition that knowledge can always be remembered, never having been destroyed.

God and His creations remain in surety, and therefore know that no mis-creation exists. Truth cannot deal with errors that you want. I was a man who remembered spirit and its knowledge. As a man I did not attempt to counter-act error with knowledge, but to correct error from the bottom up. I demonstrated both the powerlessness of the body and the power of the mind. By uniting my will with that of my Creator, I naturally remembered spirit and its real purpose. I cannot unite your will with God's for you, but I can erase all misperceptions from your mind if you will bring it under my guidance. Only your misperceptions stand in your way. Without them your choice is certain. Sane perception induces sane choosing. I cannot choose for you, but I can help you make your own right choice. "Many are called but few are chosen" should be, "All are called but few choose to listen." Therefore, they do not choose right. The "chosen ones" are merely those who choose right sooner. Right minds can do this now, and they will find rest unto their souls. God knows you only in peace, and this is your reality.

### Beyond Perception

I have said that the abilities you possess are only shadows of your real strength, and that perception, which is inherently judgmental, was introduced only after the separation. No one has been sure of anything since. I have also made it clear that the resurrection was the means for the return to knowledge, which was accomplished by the union of my will with the Father's. We can now establish a distinction that will clarify some of our subsequent statements.

Since the separation, the words "create" and "make" have become confused. When you make something, you do so out of a specific sense of lack or need. Anything made for a specific purpose has no true generalizability. When you make something to fill a perceived lack, you are tacitly implying that you believe in separation. The ego has invented many ingenious thought systems for this purpose. None of them is creative. Inventiveness is wasted effort even in its most ingenious form. The highly specific nature of invention is not worthy of the abstract creativity of God's creations.

Knowing, as we have already observed, does not lead to doing. The confusion between your real creation and what you have made of yourself is so profound that it has become literally impossible for you to know anything. Knowledge is always stable, and it is quite evident that you are not. Nevertheless, you are perfectly stable as God created you. In this sense, when your behavior is unstable, you are disagreeing with God's Idea of your creation. You can do this if you choose, but you would hardly want to do it if you were in your right mind.

The fundamental question you continually ask yourself cannot properly be directed to yourself at all. You keep asking what it is you are. This implies that the answer is not only one you know, but is also one that is up to you to

supply. Yet you cannot perceive yourself correctly. You have no image to be perceived. The word "image" is always perception-related, and not a part of knowledge. Images are symbolic and stand for something else. The idea of "changing your image" recognizes the power of perception, but also implies that there is nothing stable to know.

Knowing is not open to interpretation. You may try to "interpret" meaning, but this is always open to error because it refers to the perception of meaning. Such incongruities are the result of attempts to regard yourself as separated and un-separated at the same time. It is impossible to make so fundamental a confusion without increasing your overall confusion still further. Your mind may have become very ingenious, but as always happens when method and content are separated, it is utilized in a futile attempt to escape from an inescapable impasse. Ingenuity is totally divorced from knowledge, because knowledge does not require ingenuity. Ingenious thinking is not the truth that shall set you free, but you are free of the need to engage in it when you are willing to let it go.

Prayer is a way of asking for something. It is the medium of miracles. But the only meaningful prayer is for forgiveness, because those who have been forgiven have everything. Once forgiveness has been accepted, prayer in the usual sense becomes utterly meaningless. The prayer for forgiveness is nothing more than a request that you may be able to recognize what you already have. In electing perception instead of knowledge, you placed yourself in a position where you could resemble your Father only by perceiving miraculously. You have lost the knowledge that you yourself are a miracle of God. Creation is your Source and your only real function.

The statement "God created man in his own image and likeness" needs re-interpretation. "Image" can be understood as "thought" and "likeness" as "of a like quality." God did create spirit in His Own Thought and of a quality

like to His Own. There is nothing else. Perception, on the other hand, is impossible without a belief in "more" and "less." At every level it involves selectivity. Perception is a continual process of accepting and rejecting, organizing and reorganizing, shifting and changing. Evaluation is an essential part of perception, because judgments are necessary in order to select.

What happens to perceptions if there are no judgments and nothing but perfect equality? Perception becomes impossible. Truth can only be known. All of it is equally true, and knowing any part of it is to know all of it. Only perception involves partial awareness. Knowledge transcends the laws governing perception, because partial knowledge is impossible. It is all one and has no separate parts. You who are really one with it need but know yourself and your knowledge is complete. To know God's miracle is to know Him.

Forgiveness is the healing of the perception of separation. Correct perception of your brother is necessary, because minds have chosen to see themselves as separate. Spirit knows God completely. That is its miraculous power. The fact that each one has this power completely is a condition entirely alien to the world's thinking. The world believes that if anyone has everything, there is nothing left. But God's miracles are as total as His Thoughts because they are His Thoughts.

As long as perception lasts prayer has a place. Since perception rests on lack, those who perceive have not totally accepted the Atonement and given themselves over to truth. Perception is based on a separated state, so that anyone who perceives at all needs healing. Communion, not prayer, is the natural state of those who know. God and His miracle are inseparable. How beautiful indeed are the Thoughts of God who live in His Light! Your worth is beyond perception because it is beyond doubt. Do not perceive yourself in different lights. Know yourself in the One Light where the miracle that is you is

perfectly clear.

#### Judgment and the Authority Problem

We have already discussed the Last Judgment, but in insufficient detail.

After the Last Judgment there will be no more. Judgment is symbolic because beyond perception there is no judgment. When the Bible says "Judge not that ye be not judged," it means that if you judge the reality of others you will be unable to avoid judging your own.

The choice to judge rather than to know is the cause of the loss of peace.

Judgment is the process on which perception but not knowledge rests. I have discussed this before in terms of the selectivity of perception, pointing out that evaluation is its obvious prerequisite. Judgment always involves rejection. It never emphasizes only the positive aspects of what is judged, whether in you or in others. What has been perceived and rejected, or judged and found wanting, remains in your mind because it has been perceived. One of the illusions from which you suffer is the belief that what you judged against has no effect. This cannot be true unless you also believe that what you judged against does not exist. You evidently do not believe this, or you would not have judged against it. In the end it does not matter whether your judgment is right or wrong. Either way you are placing your belief in the unreal. This cannot be avoided in any type of judgment, because it implies the belief that reality is yours to select from.

You have no idea of the tremendous release and deep peace that comes from meeting yourself and your brothers totally without judgment. When you recognize what you are and what your brothers are, you will realize that judging them in any way is without meaning. In fact, their meaning is lost to you precisely because you are judging them. All uncertainty comes from the belief that you are under the coercion of judgment. You do not need judgment to organize your life, and you certainly do not need it to organize yourself. In the presence of

knowledge all judgment is automatically suspended, and this is the process that enables recognition to replace perception.

You are very fearful of everything you have perceived but have refused to accept. You believe that, because you have refused to accept it, you have lost control over it. This is why you see it in nightmares, or in pleasant disguises in what seem to be your happier dreams. Nothing that you have refused to accept can be brought into awareness. It is not dangerous in itself, but you have made it seem dangerous to you.

When you feel tired, it is because you have judged yourself as capable of being tired. When you laugh at someone, it is because you have judged him as unworthy. When you laugh at yourself you must laugh at others, if only because you cannot tolerate the idea of being more unworthy than they are. All this makes you feel tired because it is essentially disheartening. You are not really capable of being tired, but you are very capable of wearying yourself. The strain of constant judgment is virtually intolerable. It is curious that an ability so debilitating would be so deeply cherished. Yet if you wish to be the author of reality, you will insist on holding on to judgment. You will also regard judgment with fear, believing that it will someday be used against you. This belief can exist only to the extent that you believe in the efficacy of judgment as a weapon of defense for your own authority.

God offers only mercy. Your words should reflect only mercy, because that is what you have received and that is what you should give. Justice is a temporary expedient, or an attempt to teach you the meaning of mercy. It is judgmental only because you are capable of injustice.

I have spoken of different symptoms, and at that level there is almost endless variation. There is, however, only one cause for all of them: the authority problem. This is "the root of all evil." Every symptom the ego

makes involves a contradiction in terms, because the mind is split between the ego and the Holy Spirit, so that whatever the ego makes is incomplete and contradictory. This untenable position is the result of the authority problem which, because it accepts the one inconceivable thought as its premise, can produce only ideas that are inconceivable.

The issue of authority is really a question of authorship. When you have an authority problem, it is always because you believe you are the author of yourself and project your delusion onto others. You then perceive the situation as one in which others are literally fighting you for your authorship. This is the fundamental error of all those who believe they have usurped the power of God. This belief is very frightening to them, but hardly troubles God. He is, however, eager to undo it, not to punish His children, but only because He knows that it makes them unhappy. God's creations are given their true Authorship, but you prefer to be anonymous when you choose to separate yourself from your Author. Being uncertain of your true Authorship, you believe that your creation was anonymous. This leaves you in a position where it sounds meaningful to believe that you created yourself. The dispute over authorship has left such uncertainty in your mind that it may even doubt whether you really exist at all.

Only those who give over all desire to reject can know that their own rejection is impossible. You have not usurped the power of God, but you have lost it. Fortunately, to lose something does not mean that it has gone. It merely means that you do not remember where it is. Its existence does not depend on your ability to identify it, or even to place it. It is possible to look on reality without judgment and merely know that it is there.

Peace is a natural heritage of spirit. Everyone is free to refuse to accept his inheritance, but he is not free to establish what his inheritance is. The problem everyone must decide is the fundamental question of author-

ship. All fear comes ultimately, and sometimes by way of very devious routes, from the denial of Authorship. The offense is never to God, but only to those who deny Him. To deny His Authorship is to deny yourself the reason for your peace, so that you see yourself only in segments. This strange perception is the authority problem.

There is no one who does not feel that he is imprisoned in some way. If this is the result of his own free will he must regard his will as not free, or the circular reasoning in this position would be quite apparent. Free will must lead to freedom. Judgment always imprisons because it separates segments of reality by the unstable scales of desire. Wishes are not facts. To wish is to imply that willing is not sufficient. Yet no one in his right mind believes that what is wished is as real as what is willed. Instead of "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven" say, "Will ye first the Kingdom of Heaven," and you have said, "I know what I am and I accept my own inheritance."

#### Creating Versus the Self-Image

Every system of thought must have a starting point. It begins with either a making or a creating, a difference we have already discussed. Their resemblance lies in their power as foundations. Their difference lies in what rests upon them. Both are cornerstones for systems of belief by which one lives. It is a mistake to believe that a thought system based on lies is weak. Nothing made by a child of God is without power. It is essential to realize this, because otherwise you will be unable to escape from the prison you have made.

You cannot resolve the authority problem by depreciating the power of your mind. To do so is to deceive yourself, and this will hurt you because you really understand the strength of the mind. You also realize that you cannot weaken it, any more than you can weaken God. The "devil" is a frightening concept because he seems to be extremely powerful and extremely active. He is

perceived as a force in combat with God, battling Him for possession of His creations. The devil deceives by lies, and builds kingdoms in which everything is in direct opposition to God. Yet he attracts men rather than repels them, and they are willing to "sell" him their souls in return for gifts of no real worth. This makes absolutely no sense.

We have discussed the fall or separation before, but its meaning must be clearly understood. The separation is a system of thought real enough in time, though not in eternity. All beliefs are real to the believer. The fruit of only one tree was "forbidden" in the symbolic garden. But God could not have forbidden it, or it could not have been eaten. If God knows His children, and I assure you that He does, would He have put them in a position where their own destruction was possible? The "forbidden tree" was named the "tree of knowledge." Yet God created knowledge and gave it freely to His creations. The symbolism here has been given many interpretations, but you may be sure that any interpretation that sees either God or His creations as capable of destroying Their Own purpose is in error.

Eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge is a symbolic expression for usurping the ability for self-creating. This is the only sense in which God and His creations are not co-creators. The belief that they are is implicit in the "self concept," or the tendency of the self to make an image of itself. Images are perceived, not known. Knowledge cannot deceive, but perception can. You can perceive yourself as self-creating, but you cannot do more than believe it. You cannot make it true. And, as I said before, when you finally perceive correctly you can only be glad that you cannot. Until then, however, the belief that you can is the foundation stone in your thought system, and all your defenses are used to attack ideas that might bring it to light. You still believe you are an image of your own making. Your mind is split with the Holy

Spirit on this point, and there is no resolution while you believe the one thing that is literally inconceivable. That is why you cannot create and are filled with fear about what you make.

The mind can make the belief in separation very real and very fearful, and this belief is the "devil." It is powerful, active, destructive and clearly in opposition to God, because it literally denies His Fatherhood. Look at your life and see what the devil has made. But realize that this making will surely dissolve in the light of truth, because its foundation is a lie. Your creation by God is the only foundation that cannot be shaken, because the light is in it. Your starting point is truth, and you must return to your Beginning. Much has been seen since then, but nothing has really happened. Your Self is still in peace, even though your mind is in conflict. You have not yet gone back far enough, and that is why you become so fearful. As you approach the Beginning, you feel the fear of the destruction of your thought system upon you as if it were the fear of death. There is no death, but there is a belief in death.

The branch that bears no fruit will be cut off and will wither away. Be glad! The light will shine from the true Foundation of life, and your own thought system will stand corrected. It cannot stand otherwise. You who fear salvation are choosing death. Life and death, light and darkness, knowledge and perception, are irreconcilable. To believe that they can be reconciled is to believe that God and His Son can not. Only the oneness of knowledge is free of conflict. Your kingdom is not of this world because it was given you from beyond this world. Only in this world is the idea of an authority problem meaningful. The world is not left by death but by truth, and truth can be known by all those for whom the Kingdom was created, and for whom it waits.



Chapter 3

THE ILLUSIONS OF THE EGO

The Bible says that you should go with a brother twice as far as he asks. It certainly does not suggest that you set him back on his journey. Devotion to a brother cannot set you back either. It can lead only to mutual progress. The result of genuine devotion is inspiration, a word which properly understood is the opposite of fatigue. To be fatigued is to be dis-spirited, but to be inspired is to be in the spirit. To be egocentric is to be dis-spirited, but to be self-centered in the right sense is to be inspired or in spirit. The truly inspired are enlightened and cannot abide in darkness.

You can speak from the spirit or from the ego, as you choose. If you speak from spirit you have chosen to "Be still and know that I am God." These words are inspired because they reflect knowledge. If you speak from the ego you are disclaiming knowledge instead of affirming it, and are thus dis-spiriting yourself. Do not embark on useless journeys, because they are indeed in vain. The ego may desire them, but spirit cannot embark on them because it is forever unwilling to depart from its Foundation.

The journey to the cross should be the last "useless journey." Do not dwell upon it, but dismiss it as accomplished. If you can accept it as your own last useless journey, you are also free to join my resurrection. Until you do so your life is indeed wasted. It merely re-enacts the separation, the loss of power, the futile attempts of the ego at reparation, and finally the crucifixion of the body, or death. Such repetitions are endless until they are voluntarily given up. Do not make the pathetic error of "clinging to the old rugged cross." The only message of the crucifixion is that you can overcome the cross. Until then you are free to crucify yourself as often as you choose.

This is not the Gospel I intended to offer you. We have another journey to undertake, and if you will read these lessons carefully they will help prepare you to undertake it.

Right Teaching and Right Learning

A good teacher clarifies his own ideas and strengthens them by teaching them. Teacher and pupil are alike in the learning process. They are in the same order of learning, and unless they share their lessons conviction will be lacking. A good teacher must believe in the ideas he teaches, but he must meet another condition; he must believe in the students to whom he offers the ideas.

Many stand guard over their ideas because they want to protect their thought systems as they are, and learning means change. Change is always fearful to the separated, because they cannot conceive of it as a move towards healing the separation. They always perceive it as a move toward further separation, because the separation was their first experience of change. You believe that if you allow no change to enter into your ego you will find peace. This profound confusion is possible only if you maintain that the same thought system can stand on two foundations. Nothing can reach spirit from the ego, and nothing can reach the ego from spirit. Spirit can neither strengthen the ego nor reduce the conflict within it. The ego is a contradiction. Your self and God's Self are in opposition. They are opposed in source, in direction and in outcome. They are fundamentally irreconcilable, because spirit cannot perceive and the ego cannot know. They are therefore not in communication and can never be in communication. Nevertheless, the ego can learn, even though its maker can be misguided. He cannot, however, make the totally lifeless out of the life-given.

Spirit need not be taught, but the ego must be. Learning is ultimately

perceived as frightening because it leads to the relinquishment, not the destruction, of the ego to the light of spirit. This is the change the ego must fear, because it does not share my charity. My lesson was like yours, and because I learned it I can teach it. I will never attack your ego, but I am trying to teach you how its thought system arose. When I remind you of your true creation, your ego cannot but respond with fear.

Teaching and learning are your greatest strengths now, because they enable you to change your mind and help others to change theirs. Refusing to change your mind will not prove that the separation has not occurred. The dreamer who doubts the reality of his dream while he is still dreaming is not really healing his split mind. You dream of a separated ego and believe in a world that rests upon it. This is very real to you. You cannot undo it by not changing your mind about it. If you are willing to renounce the role of guardian of your thought system and open it to me, I will correct it very gently and lead you back to God.

Every good teacher hopes to give his students so much of his own learning that they will one day no longer need him. This is the one true goal of the teacher. It is impossible to convince the ego of this, because it goes against all of its own laws. But remember that laws are set up to protect the continuity of the system in which the lawmaker believes. It is natural for the ego to try to protect itself once you have made it, but it is not natural for you to want to obey its laws unless you believe them. The ego cannot make this choice because of the nature of its origin. You can, because of the nature of yours.

Egos can clash in any situation, but spirit cannot clash at all. If you perceive a teacher as merely "a larger ego" you will be afraid, because to enlarge an ego would be to increase anxiety about separation. I will teach with you and live with you if you will think with me, but my goal will always be to absolve you finally from the need for a teacher. This is the opposite of the

ego-oriented teacher's goal. He is concerned with the effect of his ego on other egos, and therefore interprets their interaction as a means of ego preservation. I would not be able to devote myself to teaching if I believed this, and you will not be a devoted teacher as long as you believe it. I am constantly being perceived as a teacher either to be exalted or rejected, but I do not accept either perception for myself.

Your worth is not established by teaching or learning. Your worth is established by God. As long as you dispute this everything you do will be fearful, particularly any situation that lends itself to the belief in superiority and inferiority. Teachers must be patient and repeat their lessons until they are learned. I am willing to do this, because I have no right to set your learning limits for you. Again, — nothing you do or think or wish or make is necessary to establish your worth. This point is not debatable except in delusions. Your ego is never at stake because God did not create it. Your spirit is never at stake because He did. Any confusion on this point is delusional, and no form of devotion is possible as long as this delusion lasts.

The ego tries to exploit all situations into forms of praise for itself in order to overcome its doubts. It will remain doubtful as long as you believe in its existence. You who made it cannot trust it, because in your right mind you realize it is not real. The only sane solution is not to try to change reality, which is indeed a fearful attempt, but to accept it as it is. You are part of reality, which stands unchanged beyond the reach of your ego but within easy reach of spirit. When you are afraid, be still and know that God is real, and you are His beloved Son in whom He is well pleased. Do not let your ego dispute this, because the ego cannot know what is as far beyond its reach as you are.

God is not the author of fear. You are. You have chosen to create unlike Him, and have therefore made fear for yourself. You are not at peace

because you are not fulfilling your function. God gave you a very lofty function that you are not meeting. Your ego has chosen to be afraid instead of meeting it. When you awaken you will not be able to understand this, because it is literally incredible. Do not believe the incredible now. Any attempt to increase its believableness is merely to postpone the inevitable. The word "inevitable" is fearful to the ego, but joyous to the spirit. God is inevitable, and you cannot avoid Him any more than He can avoid you.

The ego is afraid of the spirit's joy, because once you have experienced it you will withdraw all protection from the ego, and become totally without investment in fear. Your investment is great now because fear is a witness to the separation, and your ego rejoices when you witness to it. Leave it behind! Do not listen to it and do not preserve it. Listen only to God, Who is as incapable of deception as is the spirit He created. Release yourself and release others. Do not present a false and unworthy picture of yourself to others, and do not accept such a picture of them yourself.

The ego has built a shabby and unsheltering home for you, because it cannot build otherwise. Do not try to make this impoverished house stand. Its weakness is your strength. Only God could make a home that is worthy of His creations, who have chosen to leave it empty by their own dispossession. Yet His home will stand forever, and is ready for you when you choose to enter it. Of this you can be wholly certain. God is as incapable of creating the perishable as the ego is of making the eternal.

Of your ego you can do nothing to save yourself or others, but of your spirit you can do everything for the salvation of both. Humility is a lesson for the ego, not for the spirit. Spirit is beyond humility, because it recognizes its radiance and gladly sheds its light everywhere. The meek shall inherit the earth because their egos are humble, and this gives them truer perception. The Kingdom of Heaven is the spirit's right, whose beauty and

dignity are far beyond doubt, beyond perception, and stand forever as the mark of the Love of God for His creations, who are wholly worthy of Him and only of Him. Nothing else is sufficiently worthy to be a gift for a creation of God Himself.

I will substitute for your ego if you wish, but never for your spirit. A father can safely leave a child with an elder brother who has shown himself responsible, but this involves no confusion about the child's origin. The brother can protect the child's body and his ego, but he does not confuse himself with the father because he does this. I can be entrusted with your body and your ego only because this enables you not to be concerned with them, and lets me teach you their unimportance. I could not understand their importance to you if I had not once been tempted to believe in them myself. Let us undertake to learn this lesson together so we can be free of them together. I need devoted teachers who share my aim of healing the mind. Spirit is far beyond the need of your protection or mind. Remember this:

In this world you need not have tribulation because I have overcome the world. That is why you should be of good cheer.

#### The Ego and False Autonomy

It is reasonable to ask how the mind could ever have made the ego. In fact, it is the best question you could ask. There is, however, no point in giving an answer in terms of the past because the past does not matter, and history would not exist if the same errors were not being repeated in the present. Abstract thought applies to knowledge because knowledge is completely impersonal, and examples are irrelevant to its understanding. Perception, however, is always specific, and therefore quite concrete.

Everyone makes an ego or a self for himself, which is subject to enormous variation because of its instability. He also makes an ego for everyone else he perceives, which is equally variable. Their interaction is a process

that alters both, because they were not made by or with the Unalterable. It is important to realize that this alteration can and does occur as readily when the interaction takes place in the mind as when it involves physical interaction. There could be no better example that the ego is only an idea and not a fact.

Your own state of mind is a good example of how the ego was made. When you threw knowledge away it is as if you never had it. This is so apparent that one need only recognize it to see that it does happen. If this occurs in the present, why is it surprising that it occurred in the past? Surprise is a reasonable response to the unfamiliar, though hardly to something that occurs with such persistence. But do not forget that the mind need not work that way, even though it does work that way now.

Think of the love of animals for their offspring, and the need they feel to protect them. That is because they regard them as part of themselves. No one dismisses something he considers part of himself. You react to your ego much as God does to His creations -- with love, protection and charity. Your reactions to the self you made are not surprising. In fact, they resemble in many ways how you will one day react to your real creations, which are as timeless as you are. The question is not how you respond to the ego, but what you believe you are. Belief is an ego function, and as long as your origin is open to belief you are regarding it from an ego viewpoint. When teaching is no longer necessary you will merely know God. Belief that there is another way of perceiving is the loftiest idea of which ego thinking is capable. That is because it contains a hint of recognition that the ego is not the Self.

Undermining the ego's thought system must be perceived as painful, even though this is anything but true. Babies scream in rage if you take away a knife or scissors, although they may well harm themselves if you do not. In this sense you are still a baby. You have no sense of real self-preserva-

tion, and are likely to decide that you need precisely what would hurt you most. Yet whether or not you recognize it now, you have agreed to cooperate in the effort to become both harmless and helpful, attributes that go together. Your attitudes even toward this are necessarily conflicted, because all attitudes are ego-based. This will not last. Be patient a while and remember that the outcome is as certain as God.

Only those who have a real and lasting sense of abundance can be truly charitable. This is obvious when you consider what is involved. To the ego, to give anything implies that you will have to do without it. When you associate giving with sacrifice, you give only because you believe that you are somehow getting something better, and can therefore do without the thing you give. "Giving to get" is an inescapable law of the ego, which always evaluates itself in relation to other egos. It is therefore continually preoccupied with the belief in scarcity that gave rise to it. Its whole perception of other egos as real is only an attempt to convince itself that it is real. "Self-esteem" is always vulnerable to stress, a term which refers to any perceived threat to the ego's existence.

The ego literally lives by comparisons. Equality is beyond its grasp, and charity becomes impossible. The ego never gives out of abundance, because it was made as a substitute for it. That is why the concept of "getting" arose in the ego's thought system. Appetites are "getting" mechanisms, representing the ego's need to confirm itself. This is as true of body appetites as it is of the so-called "higher ego needs." Body appetites are not physical in origin. The ego regards the body as its home, and tries to satisfy itself through the body. But the idea that this is possible is a decision of the mind, which has become completely confused about what is really possible.

The ego believes it is completely on its own, which is merely another way of describing how it thinks it originated. This is such a fearful state that it can only turn to other egos and try to unite with them in a feeble attempt at

identification, or attack them in an equally feeble show of strength. It is not free, however, to open the premise to question, because the premise is its foundation. The ego is the mind's belief that it is completely on its own. The ego's ceaseless attempts to gain the spirit's acknowledgment and thus establish its own existence are useless. Spirit in its knowledge is unaware of the ego. It does not attack it; it merely cannot conceive of it at all. While the ego is equally unaware of spirit, it does perceive itself as being rejected by something greater than itself. This is why self-esteem in ego terms must be delusional. The creations of God do not create myths, although creative effort can be turned to mythology. It can do so, however, only under one condition; what it makes is then no longer creative. Myths are entirely perceptual, and so ambiguous in form and characteristically good-and-evil in nature that the most benevolent of them is not without fearful connotations.

Myths and magic are closely associated, since myths are usually related to ego origins, and magic to the powers the ego ascribes to itself. Mythological systems generally include some account of "the creation," and associate this with its particular form of magic. The so-called "battle for survival" is only the ego's struggle to preserve itself, and its interpretation of its own beginning. This beginning is usually associated with physical birth, because it is hard to maintain that the ego existed before that point in time. The more "religiously" ego-oriented may believe that the soul existed before, and will continue to exist after a temporary lapse into ego life. Some even believe that the soul will be punished for this lapse. However, salvation does not apply to spirit, which is not in danger and does not need to be salvaged.

Salvation is nothing more than "right-mindedness," which is not the one-mindedness of the Holy Spirit, but which must be achieved before one-mindedness is restored. Right-mindedness leads to the next step automatically, because right perception is uniformly without attack, and therefore wrong-mindedness is oblit-

erated. The ego cannot survive without judgment, and is laid aside accordingly. The mind then has only one direction in which it can move. Its direction is always automatic, because the mind cannot but be dictated by the thought system to which it adheres.

It cannot be emphasized too often that correcting perception is merely a temporary expedient. It is necessary only because misperception is a block to knowledge, while accurate perception is a stepping-stone towards it. The whole value of right perception lies in the inevitable realization that all perception is unnecessary. This removes the block entirely. You may ask how this is possible as long as you appear to be living in this world. That is a reasonable question. You must be careful, however, that you really understand it. Who is the "you" who are living in this world? Spirit is immortal, and immortality is a constant state. It is as true now as it ever was or ever will be, because it implies no change at all. It is not a continuum, nor is it understood by being compared to an opposite. Knowledge never involves comparisons. That is its main difference from everything else the mind can grasp.

#### Love without Conflict

It is hard to understand what "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you" really means. This is because it is not understandable to the ego, which interprets it as if something outside is inside, and this does not mean anything. The word "within" is unnecessary. The Kingdom of Heaven is you. What else but you did the Creator create, and what else but you is His Kingdom? This is the whole message which in its totality transcends the sum of its parts. You, too, have a kingdom that your spirit created. It has not ceased to create because of the ego's illusions. Your creations are no more fatherless than you are. Your ego and your spirit will never be co-creators, but your spirit and your Creator will always be. Be confident that your creations are as safe as you are.

The Kingdom is perfectly united and perfectly protected, and the ego will not prevail against it. Amen.

This is written in the form of a prayer because it is useful in moments of temptation. It is a declaration of independence. You will find it very helpful if you understand it fully. The reason you need my help is because you have denied your own Guide and therefore need guidance. My role is to separate the true from the false, so truth can break through the barriers the ego has set up and can shine into your mind. Against our united strength the ego cannot prevail.

It is surely apparent by now why the ego regards spirit as its "enemy." The ego arose from the separation, and its continued existence depends on your continuing belief in the separation. The ego must offer you some sort of reward for maintaining this belief. All it can offer is a sense of temporary existence, which begins with its own beginning and ends with its own ending. It tells you this life is your existence because it is its own. Against this sense of temporary existence spirit offers you the knowledge of permanence and unshakable being. No one who has experienced the revelation of this can ever fully believe in the ego again. How can its meager offering to you prevail against the glorious gift of God?

You who identify with your ego cannot believe God loves you. You do not love what you made, and what you made does not love you. Being made out of the denial of the Father, the ego has no allegiance to its maker. You cannot conceive of the real relationship that exists between God and His creations because of your hatred for the self you made. You project onto the ego the decision to separate, and this conflicts with the love you feel for the ego because you made it. No love in this world is without this ambivalence, and since no ego has experienced love without ambivalence the concept is beyond its understanding. Love will enter immediately into any mind that truly wants it, but it must want it truly. This means that it wants it without ambivalence, and this kind of wanting is wholly

without the ego's "drive to get."

There is a kind of experience so different from anything the ego can offer that you will never want to cover or hide it again. It is necessary to repeat that your belief in darkness and hiding is why the light cannot enter. The Bible gives many references to the immeasurable gifts which are for you, but for which you must ask. This is not a condition as the ego sets conditions. It is the glorious condition of what you are.

No force except your own will is strong enough or worthy enough to guide you. In this you are as free as God, and must remain so forever. Let us ask the Father in my name to keep you mindful of His Love for you and yours for Him. He has never failed to answer this request, because it asks only for what He has already willed. Those who call truly are always answered. Thou shalt have no other gods before Him because there are none.

It has never really entered your mind to give up every idea you ever had that opposes knowledge. You retain thousands of little scraps of fear that prevent the Holy One from entering. Light cannot penetrate through the walls you make to block it, and it is forever unwilling to destroy what you have made. No one can see through a wall, but I can step around it. Watch your mind for the scraps of fear, or you will be unable to ask me to do so. I can help you only as our Father created us. I will love you and honor you and maintain complete respect for what you have made, but I will not uphold it unless it is true. I will come in response to a single unequivocal call.

Watch carefully and see what it is you are really asking for. Be very honest with yourself in this, for we must hide nothing from each other. If you will really try to do this, you have taken the first step toward preparing your mind for the Holy One to enter. We will prepare for this together, for once He has come you will be ready to help me make other minds ready for Him. How long will you

deny Him His Kingdom?

In your own mind, though denied by the ego, is the declaration of your release. God has given you everything. This one fact means the ego does not exist, and this makes it profoundly afraid. In the ego's language, "to have" and "to be" are different, but they are identical to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit knows that you both have everything and are everything. Any distinction in this respect is meaningful only when the idea of "getting," which implies a lack, has already been accepted. That is why we make no distinction between having the Kingdom of God and being the Kingdom of God.

The calm being of God's Kingdom, which in your sane mind is perfectly conscious, is ruthlessly banished from the part of the mind the ego rules. The ego is desperate because it opposes literally invincible odds, whether you are asleep or awake. Consider how much vigilance you have been willing to exert to protect your ego, and how little to protect your right mind. Who but the insane would undertake to believe what is not true, and then protect this belief at the cost of truth?

#### This Need Not Be

If you cannot hear the Voice for God, it is because you do not choose to listen. That you do listen to the voice of your ego is demonstrated by your attitudes, your feelings and your behavior. Yet this is what you want. This is what you are fighting to keep, and what you are vigilant to save. Your mind is filled with schemes to save the face of your ego, and you do not seek the face of Christ. The glass in which the ego seeks to see its face is dark indeed. How can it maintain the trick of its existence except with mirrors? But where you look to find yourself is up to you.

I have said that you cannot change your mind by changing your behavior, but I have also said, and many times, that you can change your mind. When your mood

tells you that you have chosen wrongly, and this is so whenever you are not joyous, then know this need not be. In every case you have thought wrongly about some brother God created, and are perceiving images your ego makes in a darkened glass. Think honestly what you have thought that God would not have thought, and what you have not thought that God would have you think. Search sincerely for what you have done and left undone accordingly, and then change your mind to think with God's. This may seem hard to do, but it is much easier than trying to think against it. Your mind is one with God's. Denying this and thinking otherwise has held your ego together, but has literally split your mind. As a loving brother I am deeply concerned with your mind, and urge you to follow my example as you look at yourself and at your brother, and see in both the glorious creations of a glorious Father.

When you are sad, know this need not be. Depression comes from a sense of being deprived of something you want and do not have. Remember that you are deprived of nothing except by your own decisions, and then decide otherwise.

When you are anxious, realize that anxiety comes from the capriciousness of the ego, and know this need not be. You can be as vigilant against the ego's dictates as for them.

When you feel guilty, remember that the ego has indeed violated the laws of God, but you have not. Leave the "sins" of the ego to me. That is what Atonement is for. But until you change your mind about those whom your ego has hurt, the Atonement cannot release you. While you feel guilty your ego is in command, because only the ego can experience guilt. This need not be.

Watch your mind for the temptations of the ego, and do not be deceived by it. It offers you nothing. When you have given up this voluntary dis-spiriting, you will see how your mind can focus and rise above fatigue and heal. Yet you are not sufficiently vigilant against the demands of the ego to disengage yourself. This need not be.

The habit of engaging with God and His creations is easily made if you actively refuse to let your mind slip away. The problem is not one of concentration; it is the belief that no one, including yourself, is worth consistent effort. Side with me consistently against this deception, and do not permit this shabby belief to pull you back. The disheartened are useless to themselves and to me, but only the ego can be disheartened.

Have you really considered how many opportunities you have had to gladden yourself, and how many of them you have refused? There is no limit to the power of a Son of God, but he can limit the expression of his power as much as he chooses. Your mind and mine can unite in shining your ego away, releasing the strength of God into everything you think and do. Do not settle for anything less than this, and refuse to accept anything but this as your goal. Watch your mind carefully for any beliefs that hinder its accomplishment, and step away from them. Judge how well you have done this by your own feelings, for this is the one right use of judgment. Judgment, like any other defense, can be used to attack or protect; to hurt or to heal. The ego should be brought to judgment and found wanting there. Without your own allegiance, protection and love, the ego cannot exist. Let it be judged truly and you must withdraw allegiance, protection and love from it.

You are a mirror of truth, in which God Himself shines in perfect light. To the ego's dark glass you need but say, "I will not look there because I know these images are not true." Then let the Holy One shine on you in peace, knowing that this and only this must be. His Mind shone on you in your creation and brought your mind into being. His Mind still shines on you and must shine through you. Your ego cannot prevent Him from shining on you, but it can prevent you from letting Him shine through you.

The First Coming of Christ is merely another name for the creation, for Christ is the Son of God. The Second Coming of Christ means nothing more than the

end of the ego's rule and the healing of the mind. I was created like you in the first, and I have called you to join me in the second. I am in charge of the Second Coming, and my judgment, which is used only for protection, cannot be wrong because it never attacks. Yours may be so distorted that you believe I was mistaken in choosing you. I assure you this is a mistake of your ego. Do not mistake it for humility. Your ego is trying to convince you that it is real and I am not, because if I am real, I am no more real than you are. That knowledge, and I assure you that it is knowledge, means that Christ has come into your mind and healed it.

I do not attack your ego. I do work with your higher mind, the home of the Holy Spirit, whether you are asleep or awake, just as your ego does with your lower mind, which is its home. I am your vigilance in this, because you are too confused to recognize your own hope. I am not mistaken. Your mind will elect to join with mine, and together we are invincible. You and your brother will yet come together in my name, and your sanity will be restored. I raised the dead by knowing that life is an eternal attribute of everything that the living God created. Why do you believe it is harder for me to inspire the dis-spirited or to stabilize the unstable? I do not believe that there is an order of difficulty in miracles; you do. I have called and you will answer. I understand that miracles are natural, because they are expressions of love. My calling you is as natural as your answer, and as inevitable.

#### The Ego-Body Illusion

All things work together for good. There are no exceptions except in the ego's judgment. The ego exerts maximal vigilance about what it permits into awareness, and this is not the way a balanced mind holds together. The ego is thrown further off balance because it keeps its primary motivation from your awareness, and raises control rather than sanity to predominance. The ego has every reason



to do this, according to the thought system which gave rise to it and which it serves. Sane judgment would inevitably judge against the ego, and must be obliterated by the ego in the interest of its self-preservation.

A major source of the ego's off-balanced state is its lack of discrimination between the body and the Thoughts of God. Thoughts of God are unacceptable to the ego, because they clearly point to the non-existence of the ego itself. The ego therefore either distorts them or refuses to accept them. It cannot, however, make them cease to be. It therefore tries to conceal not only "unacceptable" body impulses, but also the Thoughts of God, because both are threatening to it. Being concerned primarily with its own preservation in the face of threat, the ego perceives them as the same. By perceiving them as the same, the ego attempts to save itself from being swept away, as it would surely be in the presence of knowledge.

Any thought system that confuses God and the body must be insane. Yet this confusion is essential to the ego, which judges only in terms of threat or non-threat to itself. In one sense the ego's fear of God is at least logical, since the idea of Him does dispel the ego. But fear of the body, with which the ego identifies so closely, makes no sense at all.

The body is the ego's home by its own election. It is the only identification with which the ego feels safe, since the body's invulnerability is its own best argument that you cannot be of God. This is the belief that the ego sponsors eagerly. Yet the ego hates the body, because it cannot accept it as good enough to be its home. Here is where the mind becomes actually dazed. Being told by the ego that it is really part of the body and that the body is its protector, the mind is also told that the body cannot protect it. Therefore, the mind asks, "Where can I go for protection?" to which the ego replies, "Turn to me." The mind, and not without cause, reminds the ego that it has itself insisted that it is identified with the body, so there is no point in turning to it for

protection. The ego has no real answer to this because there is none, but it does have a typical solution. It obliterates the question from the mind's awareness. Once out of awareness the question can and does produce uneasiness, but it cannot be answered because it cannot be asked.

This is the question that must be asked: "Where can I go for protection?" "Seek and ye shall find" does not mean that you should seek blindly and desperately for something you would not recognize. Meaningful seeking is consciously undertaken, consciously organized and consciously directed. The goal must be formulated clearly and kept in mind. Learning and wanting to learn are inseparable. You learn best when you believe what you are trying to learn is of value to you. However, not everything you may want to learn has lasting value. Indeed, many of the things you want to learn may be chosen because their value will not last.

The ego thinks it is an advantage not to commit itself to anything that is eternal, because the eternal must come from God. Eternalness is the one function the ego has tried to develop, but has systematically failed to achieve. The ego compromises with the issue of the eternal, just as it does with all issues touching on the real question in any way. By becoming involved with tangential issues, it hopes to hide the real question and keep it out of mind. The ego's characteristic busy-ness with nonessentials is for precisely that purpose. Pre-occupations with problems set up to be incapable of solution are favorite ego devices for impeding learning progress. In all these diversionary tactics, however, the one question that is never asked by those who pursue them is, "What for?" This is the question that you must learn to ask in connection with everything. What is the purpose? Whatever it is, it will direct your efforts automatically. When you make a decision of purpose, then, you have made a decision about your future effort; a decision that will remain in effect unless you change your mind.

The Rewards of God

The ego does not recognize the real source of "threat," and if you associate yourself with the ego, you do not understand the situation as it is. Only your allegiance to it gives the ego any power over you. I have spoken of the ego as if it were a separate thing, acting on its own. This was necessary to persuade you that you cannot dismiss it lightly, and must realize how much of your thinking is ego-directed. We cannot safely let it go at that, however, or you will regard yourself as necessarily conflicted as long as you are here, or as long as you believe that you are here. The ego is nothing more than a part of your belief about yourself. Your other life has continued without interruption, and has been and always will be totally unaffected by your attempts to dissociate it.

In learning to escape from illusions, your debt to your brother is something you must never forget. It is the same debt that you owe to me. Whenever you act egotistically towards another, you are throwing away the graciousness of your indebtedness and the holy perception it would produce. The term "holy" can be used here because, as you learn how much you are indebted to the whole Sonship, which includes me, you come as close to knowledge as perception can. The gap is then so small that knowledge can easily flow across it and obliterate it forever.

You have very little trust in me as yet, but it will increase as you turn more and more often to me instead of to your ego for guidance. The results will convince you increasingly that this choice is the only sane one you can make. No one who learns from experience that one choice brings peace and joy while another brings chaos and disaster needs additional convincing. Learning through rewards is more effective than learning through pain, because pain is an ego illusion, and can never induce more than a temporary effect. The rewards of God, however,

are immediately recognized as eternal. Since this recognition is made by you and not the ego, the recognition itself establishes that you and your ego cannot be identical. You may believe that you have already accepted this difference, but you are by no means convinced as yet. The fact that you believe you must escape from the ego shows this; but you cannot escape from the ego by humbling it or controlling it or punishing it.

The ego and the spirit do not know each other. The separated mind cannot maintain the separation except by dissociating. Having done this, it denies all truly natural impulses, not because the ego is a separate thing, but because you want to believe that you are. The ego is a device for maintaining this belief, but it is still only your decision to use the device that enables it to endure.

How can you teach someone the value of something he has deliberately thrown away? He must have thrown it away because he did not value it. You can only show him how miserable he is without it, and slowly bring it nearer so he can learn how his misery lessens as he approaches it. This teaches him to associate his misery with its absence, and the opposite of misery with its presence. It gradually becomes desirable as he changes his mind about its worth. I am teaching you to associate misery with the ego and joy with the spirit. You have taught yourself the opposite. You are still free to choose, but can you really want the rewards of the ego in the presence of the rewards of God?

My trust in you is greater than yours in me at the moment, but it will not always be that way. Your mission is very simple. You are asked to live so as to demonstrate that you are not an ego, and I do not choose God's channels wrongly. The Holy One shares my trust, and accepts my Atonement decisions because my will is never out of accord with His. I have said before that I am in charge of the Atonement. This is only because I completed my part

in it as a man, and can now complete it through others. My chosen channels cannot fail, because I will lend them my strength as long as theirs is wanting.

I will go with you to the Holy One, and through my perception He can bridge the little gap. Your gratitude to your brother is the only gift I want. I will bring it to God for you, knowing that to know your brother is to know God. If you are grateful to your brother, you are grateful to God for what He created. Through your gratitude you come to know your brother, and one moment of real recognition makes everyone your brother because each of them is of your Father. Love does not conquer all things, but it does set all things right. Because you are the Kingdom of God I can lead you back to your own creations. You do not recognize them now, but what has been dissociated is still there.

As you come closer to a brother you approach me, and as you withdraw from him I become distant to you. Salvation is a collaborative venture. It cannot be undertaken successfully by those who disengage themselves from the Sonship, because they are disengaging themselves from me. God will come to you only as you will give Him to your brothers. Learn first of them and you will be ready to hear God. That is because the function of love is one.

#### Creation and Communication

It is clear that while the content of any particular ego-illusion does not matter, its correction is more helpful in a specific context. Ego-illusions are quite specific, although the mind is naturally abstract. Part of the mind becomes concrete, however, when it splits. The concrete part believes in the ego, because the ego depends on the concrete. The ego is the part of the mind that believes your existence is defined by separation.

Everything the ego perceives is a separate whole, without the relationships that imply being. The ego is thus against communication, except insofar as it is utilized to establish separateness rather than to abolish it. The com-

munication system of the ego is based on its own thought system, as is everything else it dictates. Its communication is controlled by its need to protect itself, and it will disrupt communication when it experiences threat. This disruption is a reaction to a specific person or persons. The specificity of the ego's thinking, then, results in a spurious generalization which is really not abstract at all. It merely responds in certain specific ways to everything it perceives as related.

In contrast, spirit reacts in the same way to everything it knows is true, and does not respond at all to anything else. Nor does it make any attempt to establish what is true. It knows that what is true is everything that God created. It is in complete and direct communication with every aspect of creation, because it is in complete and direct communication with its Creator. This communication is the Will of God. Creation and communication are synonymous. God created every mind by communicating His Mind to it, thus establishing it forever as a channel for the reception of His Mind and Will. Since only beings of a like order can truly communicate, His creations naturally communicate with Him and like Him. This communication is perfectly abstract, since its quality is universal in application and not subject to any judgment, any exception or any alteration. God created you by this and for this. The mind can distort its function, but it cannot endow itself with functions it was not given. That is why the mind cannot totally lose the ability to communicate, even though it may refuse to utilize it on behalf of being.

Existence as well as being rest on communication. Existence, however, is specific in how, what and with whom communication is judged to be worth undertaking. Being is completely without these distinctions. It is a state in which the mind is in communication with everything that is real. To whatever extent you permit this state to be curtailed you are limiting your sense of your own reality, which becomes total only by recognizing all reality in the glorious

context of its real relationship to you. This is your reality. Do not desecrate it or recoil from it. It is your real home, your real temple and your real Self.

God, Who encompasses all being, created beings who have everything individually, but who want to share it to increase their joy. Nothing real can be increased except by sharing. That is why God created you. Divine Abstraction takes joy in sharing. That is what creation means. "How" "what" and "to whom" are irrelevant, because real creation gives everything, since it can create only like itself. Remember that in the Kingdom there is no difference between having and being, as there is in existence. In the state of being the mind gives everything always.

The Bible repeatedly states that you should praise God. This hardly means that you should tell Him how wonderful He is. He has no ego with which to accept such praise, and no perception with which to judge it. But unless you take part in the creation, His joy is not complete because yours is incomplete. And this He does know. He knows it in His Own Being and its experience of His Son's experience. The constant going out of His Love is blocked when His channels are closed, and He is lonely when the minds He created do not communicate fully with Him.

God has kept your kingdom for you, but He cannot share His joy with you until you know it with your whole mind. Revelation is not enough, because it is only communication from God. God does not need revelation returned to Him, which would clearly be impossible, but He does want it brought to others. This cannot be done with the actual revelation; its content cannot be expressed, because it is intensely personal to the mind that receives it. It can, however, be returned by that mind to other minds, through the attitudes the knowledge from the revelation brings.

God is praised whenever any mind learns to be wholly helpful. This is impossible without being wholly harmless, because the two beliefs must co-exist. The truly helpful are invulnerable, because they are not protecting their egos and so nothing can hurt them. Their helpfulness is their praise of God, and He will return their praise of Him because they are like Him, and they can rejoice together. God goes out to them and through them, and there is great joy throughout the Kingdom. Every mind that is changed adds to this joy with its individual willingness to share in it. The truly helpful are God's miracle workers, whom I direct until we are all united in the joy of the Kingdom. I will direct you to wherever you can be truly helpful, and to whoever can follow my guidance through you.

Chapter 4

HEALING AND WHOLENESS

To heal is to make happy. I have told you to think how many opportunities you have had to gladden yourself, and how many you have refused. This is the same as telling you that you have refused to heal yourself. The light that belongs to you is the light of joy. Radiance is not associated with sorrow. Joy calls forth an integrated willingness to share it, and promotes the mind's natural impulse to respond as one. Those who attempt to heal without being wholly joyous themselves call forth different kinds of responses at the same time, and thus deprive others of the joy of responding whole-heartedly.

To be whole-hearted you must be happy. If fear and love cannot coexist, and if it is impossible to be wholly fearful and remain alive, the only possible whole state is that of love. There is no difference between love and joy. Therefore, the only possible whole state is the wholly joyous. To heal or to make joyous is therefore the same as to integrate and to make one. That is why it makes no difference to what part or by what part of the Sonship the healing is offered. Every part benefits, and benefits equally.

You are being blessed by every beneficent thought of any of your brothers anywhere. You should want to bless them in return, out of gratitude. You need not know them individually, or they you. The light is so strong that it radiates throughout the Sonship and returns thanks to the Father for radiating His joy upon it. Only God's holy children are worthy channels of His beautiful joy, because only they are beautiful enough to hold it by sharing it. It is impossible for a child of God to love his neighbor except as himself. That is why the healer's prayer is:

"Let me know this brother as I know myself."

The Invitation to the Holy Spirit

Healing is a thought by which two minds perceive their oneness and become glad. This gladness calls to every part of the Sonship to rejoice with them, and lets God go out into them and through them. Only the healed mind can experience revelation with lasting effect, because revelation is an experience of pure joy. If you do not choose to be wholly joyous, your mind cannot have what it does not choose to be. Remember that spirit knows no difference between having and being. The higher mind thinks according to the laws spirit obeys, and therefore honors only the laws of God. To spirit getting is meaningless and giving is all. Having everything, spirit holds everything by giving it, and thus creates as the Father created. While this kind of thinking is totally alien to having things, even to the lower mind it is quite comprehensible in connection with ideas. If you share a physical possession, you do divide its ownership. If you share an idea, however, you do not lessen it. All of it is still yours although all of it has been given away. Further, if the one to whom you give it accepts it as his, he reinforces it in your mind and thus increases it. If you can accept the concept that the world is one of ideas, the whole belief in the false association the ego makes between giving and losing is gone.

Let us start our process of reawakening with just a few simple concepts:

Thoughts increase by being given away.  
The more who believe in them the stronger they become.  
Everything is an idea.  
How, then, can giving and losing be associated?

This is the invitation to the Holy Spirit. I have said already that I can reach up and bring the Holy Spirit down to you, but I can bring Him to you only at your own invitation. The Holy Spirit is in your right mind, as He was in mine. The Bible says, "May the mind be in you that was also in Christ

Jesus," and uses this as a blessing. It is the blessing of miracle-mindedness. It asks that you may think as I thought, joining with me in Christ-thinking.

The Holy Spirit is the only part of the Holy Trinity that has a symbolic function. He is referred to as the Healer, the Comforter and the Guide. He is also described as something "separate," apart from the Father and from the Son. I myself said, "If I go I will send you another comforter and He will abide with you." His symbolic function makes the Holy Spirit difficult to understand, because symbolism is open to different interpretations. As a man and also one of God's creations, my right thinking, which came from the Holy Spirit or the Universal Inspiration, taught me first and foremost that this Inspiration is for all. I could not have It myself without knowing this. The word "know" is proper in this context, because the Holy Spirit is so close to knowledge that He calls it forth; or better, allows it to come. I have spoken before of the higher or "true" perception, which is so near to truth that God Himself can flow across the little gap. Knowledge is always ready to flow everywhere, but it cannot oppose. Therefore you can obstruct it, although you can never lose it.

The Holy Spirit is the Christ Mind which is aware of the knowledge that lies beyond perception. He came into being with the separation as a protection, inspiring the Atonement principle at the same time. Before that there was no need for healing, for no one was comfortless. The Voice of the Holy Spirit is the Call to Atonement, or the restoration of the integrity of the mind. When the Atonement is complete and the whole Sonship is healed there will be no call to return. But what God creates is eternal. The Holy Spirit will remain with the Sons of God, to bless their creations and keep them in the light of joy.

God honored even the miscreations of His children because they had made them. But He also blessed His children with a way of thinking that could raise

their perceptions so high they could reach almost back to Him. The Holy Spirit is the Mind of the Atonement. He represents a state of mind close enough to one-mindedness that transfer to it is at last possible. Perception is not knowledge, but it can be transferred to knowledge, or cross over into it. It might even be more helpful here to use the literal meaning of transferred or "carried over," since the last step is taken by God.

The Holy Spirit, the shared Inspiration of all the Sonship, induces a kind of perception in which many elements are like those in the Kingdom of Heaven itself:

First, its universality is perfectly clear, and no one who attains it could believe for one instant that sharing it involves anything but gain.

Second, it is incapable of attack and is therefore truly open. This means that although it does not engender knowledge, it does not obstruct it in any way.

Finally, it points the way beyond the healing that it brings, and leads the mind beyond its own integration toward the paths of creation. It is at this point that sufficient quantitative change occurs to produce a real qualitative shift.

#### The Voice for God

Healing is not creating; it is reparation. The Holy Spirit promotes healing by looking beyond it to what the children of God were before healing was needed, and will be when they have been healed. This alteration of the time sequence should be quite familiar, because it is very similar to the shift in the perception of time that the miracle introduces. The Holy Spirit is the motivation for miracle-mindedness; the decision to heal the separation by letting it go. Your will is still in you because God placed it in your mind, and although you can keep it asleep you cannot obliterate it. God Himself keeps

your will alive by transmitting it from His Mind to yours as long as there is time. The miracle itself is a reflection of this union of will between Father and Son.

The Holy Spirit is the spirit of joy. He is the Call to return with which God blessed the minds of His separated Sons. This is the vocation of the mind. The mind had no calling until the separation, because before that it had only being, and would not have understood the call to right thinking. The Holy Spirit is God's Answer to the separation; the means by which the Atonement heals until the whole mind returns to creating.

The principle of Atonement and the separation began at the same time. When the ego was made, God placed in the mind the call to joy. This call is so strong that the ego always dissolves at its sound. That is why you must choose to hear one of two voices within you. One you made yourself, and that one is not of God. But the other is given you by God, Who asks you only to listen to it. The Holy Spirit is in you in a very literal sense. His is the Voice that calls you back to where you were before and will be again. It is possible even in this world to hear only that Voice and no other. It takes effort and great willingness to learn. It is the final lesson that I learned, and God's Sons are as equal as learners as they are as sons.

You are the Kingdom of Heaven, but you have let the belief in darkness enter your mind and so you need a new light. The Holy Spirit is the radiance that you must let banish the idea of darkness. His is the glory before which dissociation falls away, and the Kingdom of Heaven breaks through into its own. Before the separation you did not need guidance. You knew as you will know again, but as you do not know now.

God does not guide, because He can share only perfect knowledge. Guidance is evaluative, because it implies there is a right way and also a wrong way, one to be chosen and the other to be avoided. By choosing one you give up the

other. The choice for the Holy Spirit is the choice for God. God is not in you in a literal sense; you are part of Him. When you chose to leave Him He gave you a Voice to speak for Him, because He could no longer share His knowledge with you without hindrance. Direct communication was broken because you had made another voice.

The Holy Spirit calls you both to remember and to forget. You have chosen to be in a state of opposition in which opposites are possible. As a result, there are choices you must make. In the holy state the will is free, so that its creative power is unlimited and choice is meaningless. Freedom to choose is the same power as freedom to create, but its application is different. Choosing depends on a split mind. The Holy Spirit is one way of choosing. God did not leave His children comfortless, even though they chose to leave Him. The voice they put in their minds was not the Voice for His Will, for which the Holy Spirit speaks.

The Voice of the Holy Spirit does not command, because it is incapable of arrogance. It does not demand, because it does not seek control. It does not overcome, because it does not attack. It merely reminds. It is compelling only because of what it reminds you of. It brings to your mind the other way, remaining quiet even in the midst of the turmoil you may make. The Voice for God is always quiet, because it speaks of peace. Peace is stronger than war because it heals. War is division, not increase. No one gains from strife. What profiteth it a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? If you listen to the wrong voice you have lost sight of your soul. You cannot lose it, but you can not know it. It is therefore "lost" to you until you choose right.

The Holy Spirit is your Guide in choosing. He is in the part of your mind that always speaks for the right choice, because He speaks for God. He is your remaining communication with God, which you can interrupt but cannot destroy. The Holy Spirit is the way in which God's Will is done on earth as it is in

Heaven. Both Heaven and earth are in you, because the call of both is in your mind. The Voice for God comes from your own altars to Him. These altars are not things; they are devotions. Yet you have other devotions now. Your divided devotion has given you the two voices, and you must choose at which altar you want to serve. The call you answer now is an evaluation because it is a decision. The decision is very simple. It is made on the basis of which call is worth more to you.

My mind will always be like yours, because we were created as equals. It was only my decision that gave me all power in Heaven and earth. My only gift to you is to help you make the same decision. This decision is the choice to share it, because the decision itself is the decision to share. It is made by giving, and is therefore the one choice that resembles true creation. I am your model for decision. By deciding for God I showed you that this decision can be made, and that you can make it.

I have assured you that the Mind that decided for me is also in you, and that you can let it change you just as it changed me. This Mind is unequivocal, because it hears only one voice and answers in only one way. You are the light of the world with me. Rest does not come from sleeping but from waking. The Holy Spirit is the call to awaken and be glad. The world is very tired, because it is the idea of weariness. Our task is the joyous one of waking it to the Call for God. Everyone will answer the Call of the Holy Spirit, or the Sonship cannot be as one. What better vocation could there be for any part of the Kingdom than to restore it to the perfect integration that can make it whole? Hear only this through the Holy Spirit within you, and teach your brothers to listen as I am teaching you.

When you are tempted by the wrong voice, call on me to remind you how to heal by sharing my decision and making it stronger. As we share this goal, we increase its power to attract the whole Sonship, and to bring it back into the

Oneness in which it was created. Remember that "yoke" means "join together," and "burden" means "message." Let us restate "My yoke is easy and my burden light" in this way; "Let us join together, for my message is Light."

I have enjoined you to behave as I behaved, but we must respond to the same Mind to do this. This Mind is the Holy Spirit, Whose Will is for God always. He teaches you how to keep me as the model for your thought, and to behave like me as a result. The power of our joint motivation is beyond belief, but not beyond accomplishment. What we can accomplish together has no limits, because the Call for God is the call to the unlimited. Child of God, my message is for you, to hear and give away as you answer the Holy Spirit within you.

#### The Guide to Salvation

The way to recognize your brother is by recognizing the Holy Spirit in him. I have already said that the Holy Spirit is the bridge for the transfer of perception to knowledge, so we can use the terms as if they were related, because in His Mind they are. This relationship must be in His Mind because, unless it were, the separation between the two ways of thinking would not be open to healing. He is part of the Holy Trinity, because His Mind is partly yours and also partly God's. This needs clarification, not in statement but in experience.

The Holy Spirit is the idea of healing. Being thought, the idea gains as it is shared. Being the Call for God, it is also the idea of God. Since you are part of God it is also the idea of yourself, as well as of all His creations. The idea of the Holy Spirit shares the property of other ideas because it follows the laws of the Universe of which it is a part. It is strengthened by being given away. It increases in you as you give it to your brother. Your brother does not have to be aware of the Holy Spirit in himself or in you for this miracle to occur. He may have dissociated the Call for God,



just as you have. The dissociation is healed in both of you as you become aware of the Call for God in him, and thus acknowledge its being.

There are two diametrically opposed ways of seeing your brother. They must both be in your mind, because you are the perceiver. They must also be in his, because you are perceiving him. See him through the Holy Spirit in his mind, and you will recognize Him in yours. What you acknowledge in your brother you are acknowledging in yourself, and what you share you strengthen.

The Voice of the Holy Spirit is weak in you. That is why you must share It. It must be increased in strength before you can hear It. It is impossible to hear It in yourself while It is so weak in your mind. It is not weak in Itself, but It is limited by your unwillingness to hear It. If you make the mistake of looking for the Holy Spirit in yourself alone your thoughts will frighten you because, by adopting the ego's viewpoint, you are undertaking an ego-alien journey with the ego as guide. This is bound to produce fear.

Delay is of the ego, because time is its concept. Both time and delay are meaningless in eternity. I have said before that the Holy Spirit is God's Answer to the ego. Everything of which the Holy Spirit reminds you is in direct opposition to the ego's notions, because true and false perceptions are themselves opposed. The Holy Spirit has the task of undoing what the ego has made. He undoes it at the same level on which the ego operates, or the mind would be unable to understand the change.

I have repeatedly emphasized that one level of the mind is not understandable to another. So it is with the ego and the Holy Spirit; with time and eternity. Eternity is an idea of God, so the Holy Spirit understands it perfectly. Time is a belief of the ego, so the lower mind, which is the ego's domain, accepts it without question. The only aspect of time that is eternal is now.

The Holy Spirit is the mediator between the interpretations of the ego

and the knowledge of the spirit. His ability to deal with symbols enables Him to work with the ego's beliefs in its own language. His ability to look beyond symbols into eternity enables Him to understand the laws of God, for which He speaks. He can therefore perform the function of reinterpreting what the ego makes, not by destruction but by understanding. Understanding is light, but you yourself do not know this. It is therefore the task of the Holy Spirit to reinterpret you on behalf of God.

You cannot understand yourself alone. This is because you have no meaning apart from your rightful place in the Sonship, and the rightful place of the Sonship is God. This is your life, your eternity and your Self. It is of this that the Holy Spirit reminds you. It is this that the Holy Spirit sees. This vision frightens the ego because it is so calm. Peace is the ego's greatest enemy because, according to its interpretation of reality, war is the guarantee of its survival. The ego becomes strong in strife. If you believe there is strife you will react viciously, because the idea of danger has entered your mind. The idea itself is an appeal to the ego. The Holy Spirit is as vigilant as the ego to the call of danger, opposing it with His strength just as the ego welcomes it. The Holy Spirit counters this welcome by welcoming peace. Eternity and peace are as closely related as are time and war.

Perception derives meaning from relationships. Those you accept are the foundations of your beliefs. The separation is merely another term for a split mind. The ego is the symbol of separation, just as the Holy Spirit is the symbol of peace. What you perceive in others you are strengthening in yourself. You may let your mind misperceive, but the Holy Spirit lets your mind reinterpret its own misperceptions.

The Holy Spirit is the perfect teacher. He uses only what your mind already understands to teach you that you do not understand it. The Holy Spirit

can deal with a reluctant learner without going counter to his mind, because part of it is still for God. Despite the ego's attempts to conceal this part, it is still much stronger than the ego, although the ego does not recognize it. The Holy Spirit recognizes it perfectly because it is His Own dwelling place; the place in the mind where He is at home. You are at home there, too, because it is a place of peace, and peace is of God. You who are part of God are not at home except in His peace. If peace is eternal, you are at home only in eternity.

The ego made the world as it perceives it, but the Holy Spirit, the re-interpretor of what the ego made, sees the world as a teaching device for bringing you home. The Holy Spirit must perceive time, and reinterpret it into the timeless. He must work through opposites, because He must work with and for a mind that is in opposition. Correct and learn, and be open to learning. You have not made truth, but truth can still set you free. Look as the Holy Spirit looks, and understand as He understands. His understanding looks back to God in remembrance of me. He is in communion with God always, and He is part of you. He is your guide to salvation, because He holds the remembrance of things past and to come, and brings them to the present. He holds this gladness gently in your mind, asking only that you increase it in His Name by sharing it to increase His joy in you.

#### Teaching and Healing

What fear has hidden still is part of you. Joining the Atonement is the way out of fear. The Holy Spirit will help you reinterpret everything that you perceive as fearful, and teach you that only what is loving is true. Truth is beyond your ability to destroy, but entirely within your ability to accept. It belongs to you because, as an extension of God, you created it with Him. It is yours because it is part of you, just as you are part of God because He

created you. Nothing that is good can be lost because it comes from the Holy Spirit, the Voice for creation. Nothing that is not good was ever created, and therefore cannot be protected. The Atonement is the guarantee of the safety of the Kingdom, and the union of the Sonship is its protection. The ego cannot prevail against the Kingdom because the Sonship is united. In the presence of those who hear the Holy Spirit's call to be as one, the ego fades away and is undone.

What the ego makes it keeps to itself, and so it is without strength. Its existence is unshared. It does not die; it was merely never born. Physical birth is not a beginning; it is a continuing. Everything that continues has already been born. It will increase as you are willing to return the unhealed part of your mind to the higher part, returning it undivided to creation. I have come to give you the foundation, so your own thoughts can make you really free. You have carried the burden of unshared ideas that are too weak to increase, but having made them you did not realize how to undo them. You cannot cancel out your past errors alone. They will not disappear from your mind without the Atonement, a remedy not of your making. The Atonement must be understood as a pure act of sharing. That is what I meant when I said it is possible even in this world to listen to one voice. If you are part of God and the Sonship is one, you cannot be limited to the self the ego sees.

Every loving thought held in any part of the Sonship belongs to every part. It is shared because it is loving. Sharing is God's way of creating, and also yours. The ego can keep you in exile from the Kingdom, but in the Kingdom itself it has no power. Ideas of the spirit do not leave the mind that thinks them, nor can they conflict with each other. However, ideas of the ego can conflict because they occur at different levels and also include opposite thoughts at the same level. It is impossible to share opposing thoughts. You

can share only the thoughts that are of God and that He keeps for you. And of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. The rest remains with you until the Holy Spirit has reinterpreted them in the Light of the Kingdom, making them, too, worthy of being shared. When they have been sufficiently purified He lets you give them away. The decision to share them is their purification.

I heard one Voice because I understood that I could not atone for myself alone. Listening to one Voice implies the decision to share It in order to hear It yourself. The Mind that was in me is still irresistably drawn to every mind created by God, because God's Wholeness is the wholeness of His Son. You cannot be hurt, and do not want to show your brother anything except your wholeness. Show him that he cannot hurt you and hold nothing against him, or you hold it against yourself. This is the meaning of "turning the other cheek."

Teaching is done in many ways, above all by example. Teaching should be healing, because it is the sharing of ideas and the recognition that to share ideas is to strengthen them. I cannot forget my need to teach what I have learned, which arose in me because I learned it. I call upon you to teach what you have learned, because by so doing you can depend on it. Make it dependable in my name because my name is the Name of God's Son. What I learned I give you freely, and the Mind that was in me rejoices as you choose to hear it.

The Holy Spirit atones in all of us by undoing, and thus lifts the burden you have placed in your mind. By following Him you are led back to God where you belong, and how can you find the way except by taking your brother with you? My part in the Atonement is not complete until you join it and give it away. As you teach so shall you learn. I will never leave you or forsake you, because to forsake you would be to forsake myself and God Who created me. You forsake yourself and God if you forsake any of your brothers. You must learn to see them as they are, and understand they belong to God as you do. How could you treat your brother better than by rendering unto God the things that are

God's?

The Atonement gives you the power of a healed mind, but the power to create is of God. Therefore, those who have been forgiven must devote themselves first to healing because, having received the idea of healing, they must give it to hold it. The full power of creation cannot be expressed as long as any of God's ideas are withheld from the Kingdom. The Joint will of the Sonship is the only creator that can create like the Father, because only the complete can think completely, and the thinking of God lacks nothing. Everything you think that is not through the Holy Spirit is lacking.

How can you who are so holy suffer? All your past except its beauty is gone, and nothing is left but a blessing. I have saved all your kindnesses and every loving thought you ever had. I have purified them of the errors that hid their light, and kept them for you in their own perfect radiance. They are beyond destruction and beyond guilt. They came from the Holy Spirit within you, and we know what God creates is eternal. You can indeed depart in peace because I have loved you as I loved myself. You go with my blessing and for my blessing. Hold it and share it, that it may always be ours. I place the peace of God in your heart and in your hands, to hold and share. The heart is pure to hold it, and the hands are strong to give it. We cannot lose. My judgment is as strong as the wisdom of God, in Whose Heart and Hands we have our being. His quiet children are His blessed Sons. The Thoughts of God are with you.

#### The Ego's Use of Guilt

Perhaps some of our concepts will become clearer and more personally meaningful if the ego's use of guilt is clarified. The ego has a purpose, just as the Holy Spirit has. The ego's purpose is fear, because only the fearful can be egotistic. The ego's logic is as impeccable as that of the Holy Spirit, because your mind has the means at its disposal to side with Heaven or earth, as it elects. But again, remember that both are in you.

In Heaven there is no guilt, because the Kingdom is attained through the Atonement, which releases you to create. The word "create" is appropriate here because, once what you have made is undone by the Holy Spirit, the blessed residue is restored and therefore continues in creation. What is truly blessed is incapable of giving rise to guilt, and must give rise to joy. This makes it invulnerable to the ego because its peace is unassailable. It is invulnerable to disruption because it is whole. Guilt is always disruptive. Anything that engenders fear is divisive because it obeys the law of division. If the ego is the symbol of the separation, it is also the symbol of guilt. Guilt is more than merely not of God. It is the symbol of attack on God. This is a totally meaningless concept except to the ego, but do not underestimate the power of the ego's belief in it. This is the belief from which all guilt really stems.

The ego is the part of the mind that believes in division. How could part of God detach itself without believing it is attacking Him? We spoke before of the authority problem as based on the concept of usurping God's power. The ego believes that this is what you did because it believes that it is you. If you identify with the ego, you must perceive yourself as guilty. Whenever you respond to your ego you will experience guilt, and you will fear punishment. The ego is quite literally a fearful thought. However ridiculous the idea of attacking God may be to the sane mind, never forget that the ego is not sane. It represents a delusional system, and speaks for it. Listening to the ego's voice means that you believe it is possible to attack God, and that a part of Him has been torn away by you. Fear of retaliation from without follows, because the severity of the guilt is so acute that it must be projected.

Whatever you accept into your mind has reality for you. It is your acceptance of it that makes it real. If you enthrone the ego in your mind, your allowing it to enter makes it your reality. This is because the mind is capable

of creating reality or making illusions. I said before that you must learn to think with God. To think with Him is to think like Him. This engenders joy, not guilt, because it is natural. Guilt is a sure sign that your thinking is unnatural. Unnatural thinking will always be attended with guilt, because it is the belief in sin. The ego does not perceive sin as a lack of love, but as a positive act of assault. This is necessary to the ego's survival because, as soon as you regard sin as a lack, you will automatically attempt to remedy the situation. And you will succeed. The ego regards this as doom, but you must learn to regard it as freedom.

The guiltless mind cannot suffer. Being sane, the mind heals the body because it has been healed. The sane mind cannot conceive of illness because it cannot conceive of attacking anyone or anything. I said before that illness is a form of magic. It might be better to say that it is a form of magical solution. The ego believes that by punishing itself it will mitigate the punishment of God. Yet even in this it is arrogant. It attributes to God a punishing intent, and then takes this intent as its own prerogative. It tries to usurp all the functions of God as it perceives them, because it recognizes that only total allegiance can be trusted.

The ego cannot oppose the laws of God any more than you can, but it can interpret them according to what it wants, just as you can. That is why the question, "What do you want?" must be answered. You are answering it every minute and every second, and each moment of decision is a judgment that is anything but ineffectual. Its effects will follow automatically until the decision is changed. Remember, though, that the alternatives themselves are unalterable. The Holy Spirit, like the ego, is a decision. Together they constitute all the alternatives the mind can accept and obey. The Holy Spirit and the ego are the only choices open to you. God created one, and so you cannot eradicate it.

You made the other, and so you can. Only what God creates is irreversible and unchangeable. What you made can always be changed because, when you do not think like God, you are not really thinking at all. Delusional ideas are not real thoughts, although you can believe in them. But you are wrong. The function of thought comes from God and is in God. As part of His Thought, you cannot think apart from Him.

Irrational thought is disordered thought. God Himself orders your thought because your thought was created by Him. Guilt feelings are always a sign that you do not know this. They also show that you believe you can think apart from God, and want to. Every disordered thought is attended by guilt at its inception, and maintained by guilt in its continuance. Guilt is inescapable by those who believe they order their own thoughts, and must therefore obey their dictates. This makes them feel responsible for their errors without recognizing that, by accepting this responsibility, they are reacting irresponsibly. If the sole responsibility of the miracle worker is to accept the Atonement for himself, and I assure you that it is, then the responsibility for what is atoned for cannot be yours. The dilemma cannot be resolved except by accepting the solution of undoing. You would be responsible for the effects of all your wrong thinking if it could not be undone. The purpose of the Atonement is to save the past in purified form only. If you accept the remedy for disordered thought, a remedy whose efficacy is beyond doubt, how can its symptoms remain?

The continuing decision to remain separated is the only possible reason for continuing guilt feelings. We have said this before, but did not emphasize the destructive results of the decision. Any decision of the mind will affect both behavior and experience. What you want you expect. This is not delusional. Your mind does make your future, and it will turn it back to full creation at any minute if it accepts the Atonement first. It will also return to full creation the instant it has done so. Having given up its disordered

thought, the proper ordering of thought becomes quite apparent.

#### Time and Eternity

God in His knowledge is not waiting, but His Kingdom is bereft while you wait. All the Sons of God are waiting for your return, just as you are waiting for theirs. Delay does not matter in eternity, but it is tragic in time. You have elected to be in time rather than eternity, and therefore believe you are in time. Yet your election is both free and alterable. You do not belong in time. Your place is only in eternity, where God Himself placed you forever.

Guilt feelings are the preservers of time. They induce fears of retaliation or abandonment, and thus ensure that the future will be like the past. This is the ego's continuity. It gives the ego a false sense of security by believing that you cannot escape from it. But you can and must. God offers you the continuity of eternity in exchange. When you choose to make this exchange, you will simultaneously exchange guilt for joy, viciousness for love, and pain for peace. My role is only to unchain your will and set it free. Your ego cannot accept this freedom, and will oppose it at every possible moment and in every possible way. And as its maker, you recognize what it can do because you gave it the power to do it.

Remember the Kingdom always, and remember that you who are part of the Kingdom cannot be lost. The Mind that was in me is in you, for God creates with perfect fairness. Let the Holy Spirit remind you always of His fairness, and let me teach you how to share it with your brothers. How else can the chance to claim it for yourself be given you? The two voices speak for different interpretations of the same thing simultaneously; or almost simultaneously, for the ego always speaks first. Alternate interpretations were unnecessary until the first one was made.

The ego speaks in judgment, and the Holy Spirit reverses its decision, much as a higher court has the power to reverse a lower court's decisions in this world. The ego's decisions are always wrong, because they are based on the error they were made to uphold. Nothing the ego perceives is interpreted correctly. Not only does the ego cite Scripture for its purpose, but it even interprets Scripture as a witness for itself. The Bible is a fearful thing in the ego's judgment. Perceiving it as frightening, it interprets it fearfully. Having made you afraid you do not appeal to the Higher Court, because you believe its judgment would also be against you.

There are many examples of how the ego's interpretations are misleading, but a few will suffice to show how the Holy Spirit can reinterpret them in His Own Light.

"As ye sow, so shall ye reap " He interprets to mean what you consider worth cultivating you will cultivate in yourself. Your judgment of what is worthy makes it worthy for you.

"Vengeance is mine, sayeth the Lord" is easily reinterpreted if you remember that ideas increase only by being shared. The statement emphasizes that vengeance cannot be shared. Give it therefore to the Holy Spirit, Who will undo it in you because it does not belong in your mind, which is part of God.

"I will visit the sins of the fathers unto the third and fourth generation," as interpreted by the ego, is particularly vicious. It becomes merely an attempt to guarantee the ego's own survival. To the Holy Spirit, the statement means that in later generations He can still reinterpret what former generations had misunderstood, and thus release the thoughts from the ability to produce fear.

"The wicked shall perish " becomes a statement of Atonement, if the word "perish" is understood as "be undone." Every loveless thought must be undone, a word the ego cannot even understand. To the ego, to be undone means to be de-

stroyed. The ego will not be destroyed because it is part of your thought, but because it is uncreative and therefore unsharing, it will be reinterpreted to release you from fear. The part of your mind that you have given to the ego will merely return to the Kingdom, where your whole mind belongs. You can delay the completion of the Kingdom, but you cannot introduce the concept of fear into it.

You need not fear the Higher Court will condemn you. It will merely dismiss the case against you. There can be no case against a child of God, and every witness to guilt in God's creations is bearing false witness to God Himself. Appeal everything you believe gladly to God's Own Higher Court, because it speaks for Him and therefore speaks truly. It will dismiss the case against you, however carefully you have built it up. The case may be fool-proof, but it is not God-proof. The Holy Spirit will not hear it, because He can only witness truly. His verdict will always be "Thine is the Kingdom," because He was given to you to remind you of what you are.

When I said "I am come as a light into the world," I meant that I came to share the light with you. Remember my reference to the ego's dark glass, and remember also that I said, "Do not look there." It is still true that where you look to find yourself is up to you. Your patience with your brother is your patience with yourself. Is not a child of God worth patience? I have shown you infinite patience because my will is that of our Father, from Whom I learned of infinite patience. His Voice was in me as It is in you, speaking for patience towards the Sonship in the Name of its Creator.

Now you must learn that only infinite patience produces immediate effects. This is the way in which time is exchanged for eternity. Infinite patience calls upon infinite love, and by producing results now it renders time unnecessary. We have repeatedly said that time is a learning device to be abolished when it is no longer useful. The Holy Spirit, Who speaks for God in time, also knows that time

is meaningless. He reminds you of this in every passing moment of time, because it is His special function to return to eternity and remain to bless your creations there. He is the only blessing you can truly give, because He is truly blessed. Because He has been given you freely by God, you must give Him as you received Him.

#### The Decision for God

Do you really believe you can make a voice that can drown out God's? Do you really believe you can devise a thought system that can separate you from Him? Do you really believe you can plan for your safety and joy better than He can? You need be neither careful nor careless; you need merely cast your cares upon Him because He careth for you. You are His care because He loves you. His Voice reminds you always that all hope is yours because of His care. You cannot choose to escape His care because that is not His Will, but you can choose to accept His care and use the infinite power of His care for all those He created by it.

There have been many healers who did not heal themselves. They have not moved mountains by their faith because their faith was not whole. Some of them have healed the sick at times, but they have not raised the dead. Unless the healer heals himself, he cannot believe that there is no order of difficulty in miracles. He has not learned that every mind God created is equally worthy of being healed because God created it whole. You are merely asked to return to God the mind as He created it. He asks you only for what He gave, knowing that this giving will heal you. Sanity is wholeness, and the sanity of your brothers is yours.

Why should you listen to the endless insane calls you think are made upon you, when you can know the Voice for God is in you? God commended His Spirit to you, and asks that you commend yours to Him. He wills to keep it in

perfect peace, because you are of one mind and spirit with Him. Excluding yourself from the Atonement is the ego's last-ditch defense of its own existence. It reflects both the ego's need to separate, and your willingness to side with its separateness. This willingness means that you do not want to be healed.

But the time is now. You have not been asked to work out the plan of salvation yourself because, as I told you before, the remedy could not be of your making. God Himself gave you the perfect Correction for everything you made that is not in accord with His holy Will. I am making His plan perfectly explicit to you, and will also tell you of your part in it, and how urgent it is to fulfill it. God weeps at the "sacrifice" of His children who believe they are lost to Him.

Whenever you are not wholly joyous, it is because you have reacted with a lack of love to one of God's creations. Perceiving this as "sin" you become defensive because you expect attack. The decision to react in this way is yours, and can therefore be undone. It cannot be undone by repentance in the usual sense, because this implies guilt. If you allow yourself to feel guilty, you will reinforce the error rather than allow it to be undone for you.

Decision cannot be difficult. This is obvious, if you realize that you must already have decided not to be wholly joyous if that is how you feel. Therefore, the first step in the undoing is to recognize that you actively decided wrongly, but can as actively decide otherwise. Be very firm with yourself in this, and keep yourself fully aware that the undoing process, which does not come from you, is nevertheless within you because God placed it there. Your part is merely to return your thinking to the point at which the error was made, and give it over to the Atonement in peace. Say this to yourself as sincerely as you can, remembering that the Holy Spirit will re-

spond fully to your slightest invitation:

I must have decided wrongly, because I am not at peace.  
I made the decision myself, but I can also decide otherwise.  
I want to decide otherwise, because I want to be at peace.  
I do not feel guilty, because the Holy Spirit will undo all  
the consequences of my wrong decision if I will let Him.  
I choose to let Him, by allowing Him to decide for God for me.

## Chapter 5

### THE LESSONS OF LOVE

The relationship of anger to attack is obvious, but the relationship of anger to fear is not always so apparent. Anger always involves projection of separation, which must ultimately be accepted as one's own responsibility, rather than being blamed on others. Anger cannot occur unless you believe that you have been attacked, that your attack is justified in return, and that you are in no way responsible for it. Given these three wholly irrational premises, the equally irrational conclusion that a brother is worthy of attack rather than of love must follow. What can be expected from insane premises except an insane conclusion? The way to undo an insane conclusion is to consider the sanity of the premises on which it rests. You cannot be attacked, attack has no justification, and you are responsible for what you believe.

You have been asked to take me as your model for learning, since an extreme example is a particularly helpful learning device. Everyone teaches, and teaches all the time. This is a responsibility you inevitably assume the moment you accept any premise at all, and no one can organize his life without some thought system. Once you have developed a thought system of any kind, you live by it and teach it. Your capacity for allegiance to a thought system may be misplaced, but it is still a form of faith and can be redirected.

### The Message of the Crucifixion

For learning purposes, let us consider the crucifixion again. I did not dwell on it before because of the fearful connotations you may associate with it. The only emphasis laid upon it so far has been that it was not a form of punishment. Nothing, however, can be explained in negative terms only. There



is a positive interpretation of the crucifixion that is wholly devoid of fear, and therefore wholly benign in what it teaches, if it is properly understood.

The crucifixion is nothing more than an extreme example. Its value, like the value of any teaching device, lies solely in the kind of learning it facilitates. It can be, and has been, misunderstood. This is only because the fearful are apt to perceive fearfully. I have already told you that you can always call on me to share my decision, and thus make it stronger. I have also told you that the crucifixion was the last useless journey the Sonship need take, and that it represents release from fear to anyone who understands it. While I emphasized only the resurrection before, the purpose of the crucifixion and how it actually led to the resurrection was not clarified then. Nevertheless, it has a definite contribution to make to your own life, and if you will consider it without fear, it will help you understand your own role as a teacher.

You have probably reacted for years as if you were being crucified. This is a marked tendency of the separated, who always refuse to consider what they have done to themselves. Projection means anger, anger fosters assault, and assault promotes fear. The real meaning of the crucifixion lies in the apparent intensity of the assault of some of the Sons of God upon another. This, of course, is impossible, and must be fully understood as impossible. Otherwise, I cannot serve as a model for learning.

Assault can ultimately be made only on the body. There is little doubt that one body can assault another, and can even destroy it. Yet if destruction itself is impossible, anything that is destructible cannot be real. Its destruction, therefore, does not justify anger. To the extent to which you believe that it does, you are accepting false premises and teaching them to others. The message the crucifixion was intended to teach was that it is not

necessary to perceive any form of assault in persecution, because you cannot be persecuted. If you respond with anger, you must be equating yourself with the destructible, and are therefore regarding yourself insanely.

I have made it perfectly clear that I am like you and you are like me, but our fundamental equality can be demonstrated only through joint decision. You are free to perceive yourself as persecuted if you choose. When you do choose to react that way, however, you might remember that I was persecuted as the world judges, and did not share this evaluation for myself. And because I did not share it, I did not strengthen it. I therefore offered a different interpretation of attack, and one which I want to share with you. If you will believe it, you will help me teach it.

As I have said before, "As you teach so shall you learn." If you react as if you are persecuted, you are teaching persecution. This is not a lesson a Son of God should want to teach if he is to realize his own salvation. Rather, teach your own perfect immunity, which is the truth in you, and realize that it cannot be assailed. Do not try to protect it yourself, or you are believing that it is assailable. You are not asked to be crucified, which was part of my own teaching contribution. You are merely asked to follow my example in the face of much less extreme temptations to misperceive, and not to accept them as false justifications for anger. There can be no justification for the unjustifiable. Do not believe there is, and do not teach that there is. Remember always that what you believe you will teach. Believe with me, and we will become equal as teachers.

Your resurrection is your reawakening. I am the model for rebirth, but rebirth itself is merely the dawning on your mind of what is already in it. God placed it there Himself, and so it is true forever. I believed in it, and therefore accepted it as true for me. Help me to teach it to our brothers in the name of the Kingdom of God, but first believe that it is true for

you, or you will teach amiss. My brothers slept during the "agony in the garden," but I could not be angry with them because I knew I could not be abandoned.

I am sorry when my brothers do not share my decision to hear only one Voice, because it weakens them as teachers and as learners. Yet I know they cannot really betray themselves or me, and that it is still on them that I must build my church. There is no choice in this, because only you can be the foundation of God's church. A church is where an altar is, and the presence of the altar is what makes the church holy. A church that does not inspire love has a hidden altar that is not serving the purpose for which God intended it. I must found His church on you, because those who accept me as a model are literally my disciples. Disciples are followers, and if the model they follow has chosen to save them pain in all respects, they are unwise not to follow him.

I elected, for your sake and mine, to demonstrate that the most outrageous assault, as judged by the ego, does not matter. As the world judges these things, but not as God knows them, I was betrayed, abandoned, beaten, torn, and finally killed. It was clear that this was only because of the projection of others onto me, since I had not harmed anyone and had healed many.

We are still equal as learners, although we do not need to have equal experiences. The Holy Spirit is glad when you can learn from mine, and be re-awakened by them. That is their only purpose, and that is the only way in which I can be perceived as the way, the truth and the life. When you hear only one Voice you are never called on to sacrifice. On the contrary, by being able to hear the Holy Spirit in others you can learn from their experiences, and can gain from them without experiencing them directly yourself. That is because the Holy Spirit is one, and anyone who listens is inevitably led to demonstrate His way for all.

You are not persecuted, nor was I. You are not asked to repeat my ex-

periences because the Holy Spirit, Whom we share, makes this unnecessary. To use my experiences constructively, however, you must still follow my example in how to perceive them. My brothers and yours are constantly engaged in justifying the unjustifiable. My one lesson, which I must teach as I learned it, is that no perception that is out of accord with the judgment of the Holy Spirit can be justified. I undertook to show this was true in an extreme case, merely because it would serve as a good teaching aid to those whose temptation to give in to anger and assault would not be so extreme. I will with God that none of His Sons should suffer.

The crucifixion cannot be shared because it is the symbol of projection, but the resurrection is the symbol of sharing because the reawakening of every Son of God is necessary to enable the Sonship to know its wholeness. Only this is knowledge.

The message of the crucifixion is perfectly clear:

"Teach only love, for that is what you are."

If you interpret the crucifixion in any other way, you are using it as a weapon for assault rather than as the call for peace for which it was intended. The Apostles often misunderstood it, and for the same reason that anyone misunderstands it. Their own imperfect love made them vulnerable to projection, and out of their own fear they spoke of the "wrath of God" as His retaliatory weapon. Nor could they speak of the crucifixion entirely without anger, because their sense of guilt had made them angry.

These are some of the examples of upside-down thinking in the New Testament, although its gospel is really only the message of love: If the Apostles had not felt guilty, they never could have quoted me as saying, "I come not to bring peace but a sword." This is clearly the opposite of everything I taught. Nor could they have described my reactions to Judas as they did, if they had really understood me. I could not have said, "Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" unless I believed in betrayal. The whole message of the