

Workbook Lesson Support Notes

by Allen Watson

LESSON 212

July 31

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

“I have a function God would have me fill.”

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

PRACTICE SUMMARY

Review VI

Purpose: To carefully review the last 20 lessons, each of which contains the whole curriculum and is therefore sufficient for salvation, if understood, practiced, accepted and applied without exception.

Morning/Evening Quiet Time: 15 minutes—at least

- Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”
- Close eyes and relinquish all that clutters the mind; forget all you thought you knew. Give the time to the Holy Spirit, your Teacher. If you notice an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

Remarks: We are attempting to go beyond special forms of practice because we are attempting a quicker pace and shorter path to our goal.

Hourly Remembrance: Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Frequent Reminder: as often as possible, as often as you can. Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Response To Temptation: permit no idle thought to go unchallenged.

If you are tempted by an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

COMMENTARY

What is the function God has for me? Lesson 192, which this lesson reviews, told me that, “Forgiveness represents your function here.” I need to be reminded of that. My function is not some particular career or occupation. The content is what matters; the form will shape itself to that content, based on the circumstances of my life. Forgiveness is the content. If I am asking myself what my occupation should be, or what direction my life should take, let me ask myself this question: How does forgiveness best take form in my life right now? Or better yet, let me ask the Holy Spirit that question.

An “occupation” is what occupies most of my life. How, in form, can I occupy most of my life

Workbook Commentaries, Lessons 212 to 218

with forgiveness? How can I best serve to look upon illusions and see them disappear? How can I best serve to assist myself, and others, to let go of all guilt? How can I best reflect love in this world?

I work as a writer (you may do something quite different—fill in as you please). But that occupation is not my function; it is only one means of *expressing* my function, which is forgiveness—the same function God has given to all of us. The form may change or disappear; my function remains unchanged. A few years ago I was working as a computer consultant because, at that time, I felt that was the best means I had of fulfilling my function. Then, the form changed. But not the content.

Let me not seek any function in terms of form. Let me always seek the content. It is the content of forgiveness, of reflecting love in this world and releasing from guilt, that will set me free from illusions. No form can do that, since every form is itself part of the illusion. So all that I seek, and all that I lay claim to as mine, is the function God gave me (the content) and not any occupation, or job, or situation.

I am not a body (a form). I am free. I am formless, and I am therefore not tied to form of any kind.

LESSON 213

August 1

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

“All things are lessons God would have me learn.”

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

PRACTICE SUMMARY

Review VI

Purpose: To carefully review the last 20 lessons, each of which contains the whole curriculum and is therefore sufficient for salvation, if understood, practiced, accepted and applied without exception.

Morning/Evening Quiet Time: 15 minutes—at least

- Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”
- Close eyes and relinquish all that clutters the mind; forget all you thought you knew. Give the time to the Holy Spirit, your Teacher. If you notice an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

Remarks: We are attempting to go beyond special forms of practice because we are attempting a quicker pace and shorter path to our goal.

Hourly Remembrance: Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Frequent Reminder: as often as possible, as often as you can. Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Response To Temptation: permit no idle thought to go unchallenged.

If you are tempted by an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

COMMENTARY

Every circumstance of life offers me the choice between a miracle and my own ego thoughts, which will hurt me. Or as the Text puts it, “the choice is miracles instead of murder” (T-23.IV.5:6). That is the lesson that all things have to teach me, today and every day. Which voice, ego or Holy Spirit, will I listen to in this moment, and the next, and the next? It’s always one or the other, never neither, never both. “You will not make decisions by yourself whatever you decide. For they are made with idols or with God. And you ask help of anti-Christ or Christ, and which you choose will join with you and tell you what to do” (T-30.I.14:7–9). In each situation I face today, this is what is going on. The ego offers its interpretation, and the Holy Spirit offers His; I choose which to listen to. I can choose the miracle, or murder. My choice determines my perception and my experience of the situation. Which will I choose today? “When the temptation to attack rises to make your mind darkened and murderous, remember you *can* see the battle from above. Even in forms you do not recognize, the signs you know. There is a stab of pain, a twinge of guilt, and above all, a loss of peace. This you know well. When they

Workbook Commentaries, Lessons 212 to 218

occur leave not your place on high, but quickly choose a miracle instead of murder” (T-23.IV.6:1–5).

This choice is what sets me free. The Holy Spirit is always with me to help me make this choice. In each instant I can choose to learn the lessons God wants me to learn, and forget what I have been teaching myself. Let me not evaluate anything without His help.

If we could grasp just this one lesson, this habit of referring everything to the Holy Spirit, rather than trying to figure it out by ourselves (which always means *with the ego's help*), everything else would simply fall into place. This alone is enough to set us free.

One thing the Holy Spirit sees differently from the ego is my body. “The Holy Spirit does not see the body as you do, because He knows the only reality of anything is the service it renders God on behalf of the function He gives it” (T-8.VII.3:6). When I choose to protect the body, to make it the center of what I am doing, mistaking the body for myself, I am choosing murder. I am not a body. I do not exist for my body's sake; its purpose is to render service to God as I carry out the function He has given me in the world, and that is all. If I listen to the Holy Spirit, I have to be willing to see the body as meaningless in itself (W-pI.96.3:7), and useful only as a communication device with which to reach my brothers. Let me remind myself that I am not a body, as in each moment I seek to hear the Voice for God.

LESSON 214

August 2

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

“I place the future in the Hands of God.”

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

PRACTICE SUMMARY

Review VI

Purpose: To carefully review the last 20 lessons, each of which contains the whole curriculum and is therefore sufficient for salvation, if understood, practiced, accepted and applied without exception.

Morning/Evening Quiet Time: 15 minutes—at least

- Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”
- Close eyes and relinquish all that clutters the mind; forget all you thought you knew. Give the time to the Holy Spirit, your Teacher. If you notice an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

Remarks: We are attempting to go beyond special forms of practice because we are attempting a quicker pace and shorter path to our goal.

Hourly Remembrance: Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Frequent Reminder: as often as possible, as often as you can. Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Response To Temptation: permit no idle thought to go unchallenged.

If you are tempted by an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

COMMENTARY

Accepting that the past is gone is simply common sense, because by definition, what is “past” is no longer here; it is gone. Only our mental attachment to things past, our insistence on regurgitating past incidents and chewing them over again, can have any effect on the present.

The effects we feel are not of the past, but of our present thinking about the past.

Accepting that the future has not yet arrived is also common sense, because again by definition, what is future is not here now. It cannot have any effect on the present moment. Only our mental imagination of what the future might hold, and our thinking about what has not yet occurred, can have present effect.

In both cases, the effects that we imagine come from past or future come, in fact, from our present thinking. Therefore, only by changing our present thinking can those effects be altered.

When I am able to mentally let go of the past and the future, placing the future in God’s Hands, I am freed from their apparent effects. I am at liberty, in the now, to open myself to accept what God is giving me *now*.

Workbook Commentaries, Lessons 212 to 218

The present circumstances in which I find myself may appear to be threatening. They may have come about, in my perception, because of past events. They may appear to lead inevitably to some unhappy future. Yet if I can open my mind to believe that, “What God gives can only be for good” (1:4), then that good will come to me. We cannot know all the factors involved in the events of our lives and their effect on everyone around us. But God knows. We can safely and confidently take our hands off, and place the future in God’s Hands. We can look upon things that seem to bring evil and refuse the evil, accepting only what *God* gives as what truly belongs to us. In everything, there is a gift of God, if we look carefully enough. To place our future in God’s Hands we must let go ourselves, and stop trying to orchestrate the events of our lives. Doing so is a constant lesson in trust. Trust is the key, an essential ingredient in placing the future into God’s Hands.

In the Manual for Teachers, the fundamental stage in the process of development from “teacher of God” to “advanced teacher of God” is the development of trust. The full flowering of trust is not an overnight process. It goes through several stages, clearly set out in the Manual. Most of those stages involve some discomfort, because until we have truly acquired trust, we keep trying to second guess God. The pain comes not from the learning, but from what we have not yet learned. What we are learning will bring the removal of the pain, but pain along the way seems almost unavoidable. “Few teachers of God escape this distress entirely” (M-4.I.5:3). Yet when the lesson is learned, the peace will be like nothing we have ever known. We can only imagine what total freedom from all anxiety feels like, and yet, if we have wholly placed our future into God’s Hands, what else could be the certain result?

Each effort we make in this direction is beneficial. Each moment we place into His Hands will lessen the burden of care we carry constantly for our lives. Gradually, we are learning to cast all our cares on Him, trusting in His caring for us.

LESSON 215

August 3

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

“Love is the way I walk in gratitude.”

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

PRACTICE SUMMARY

Review VI

Purpose: To carefully review the last 20 lessons, each of which contains the whole curriculum and is therefore sufficient for salvation, if understood, practiced, accepted and applied without exception.

Morning/Evening Quiet Time: 15 minutes—at least

- Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”
- Close eyes and relinquish all that clutters the mind; forget all you thought you knew. Give the time to the Holy Spirit, your Teacher. If you notice an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

Remarks: We are attempting to go beyond special forms of practice because we are attempting a quicker pace and shorter path to our goal.

Hourly Remembrance: Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Frequent Reminder: as often as possible, as often as you can. Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Response To Temptation: permit no idle thought to go unchallenged.

If you are tempted by an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

COMMENTARY

Today’s review adds a new note to the lesson. I walk in the way of love. As I walk, the Holy Spirit walks with me (1:3–4), and shows me the way to go.

Walking in the way of love is not always simple. Often, the “loving thing” to do is not obvious. If someone breaks into my home, and is arrested, do I press charges, or do I let them off the hook? Which action is “loving?” Or make it much more simple: A friend, prone to misuse of money, asks me for a loan. Do I give them the money, or refuse? Which is the way of love? I do not know. Even if I think I know, I do not know. I cannot possibly know all the variables. I cannot evaluate the ego motivation of another. How could I possibly do that when I can’t even evaluate my own ego motivations? I cannot judge when a person is open to a merciful action, or when the most loving thing would be to let them face the consequences of their mistakes. But the Holy Spirit does know all those things. He is my only Guide. My past experiences, no matter how extensive, are never enough to grant me perfect judgment. The Holy Spirit, however, knows every detail of every situation. He knows the ramifications of every possible outcome, and can

Workbook Commentaries, Lessons 212 to 218

guide me in the loving action I should choose.

How do I discern His Voice? Again, there is no guaranteed way. Learning to discern His Voice clearly is a life-long process. All I need do is to refer the situation to Him, consciously give it into His hands, and then act in whatever way seems best to me. Each day, and in each situation, I renew my resolve to never make a decision by myself. Sometimes I will sense an inner “nudge” in a certain direction, for no reason I can detect. Perhaps circumstances will occur that seem to point me in a particular direction. Serendipitous coincidences may occur that seem to be signs, directing me. Other times I will seemingly be left on my own. The Course promises us that if we make a mistake, He will correct us, if we have given the situation to Him. We will make mistakes, but we have His promise of correction.

One of the most important aspects of hearing His Voice, I have learned, is letting go of any investment in a particular outcome. The only outcome I seek is the outcome of forgiveness, the outcome of love, the outcome of peace of mind in all concerned. I cannot pick what external circumstances are best suited to this kind of outcome; only the Holy Spirit knows. A rebellious teenager threatens to leave home, or drop out of school. As a parent or friend I may believe that the best thing is that she stay at home, or stay in school. I do not know. Perhaps the lessons she needs to learn can only be found if she distances herself for a while from family and friends. So I lay the situation in the hands of the Holy Spirit, and ask that I be guided to say and do whatever best serves the way of love. Then, I keep my hands off. I trust that I *am* being guided, even if things begin to move in a way I, in my short-sightedness, do not like. My primary responsibility is simply not to interfere with Him.

Today, let me walk the way of love in gratitude, trusting the Holy Spirit to guide my every word and action. Let me remind myself that I am here only to be truly helpful, to represent Him Who sent me, knowing that I do not have to worry about what I will say or do, for He will direct me. (T-2.V(A).18:2-6)

LESSON 216

August 4

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

“It can be but myself I crucify.”

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

PRACTICE SUMMARY

Review VI

Purpose: To carefully review the last 20 lessons, each of which contains the whole curriculum and is therefore sufficient for salvation, if understood, practiced, accepted and applied without exception.

Morning/Evening Quiet Time: 15 minutes—at least

- Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”
- Close eyes and relinquish all that clutters the mind; forget all you thought you knew. Give the time to the Holy Spirit, your Teacher. If you notice an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

Remarks: We are attempting to go beyond special forms of practice because we are attempting a quicker pace and shorter path to our goal.

Hourly Remembrance: Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Frequent Reminder: As often as possible, as often as you can. Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Response To Temptation: Permit no idle thought to go unchallenged.

If you are tempted by an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

COMMENTARY

The heart of the little summary today is the first sentence: “All that I do I do unto myself.” If we applied that one idea consistently, what a transformation there would be in our part of the world!

My own little personal list (you can make your own):

How do I greet people on the telephone?

How do I respond to interruptions?

How do I regard people serving me in stores and restaurants?

How do I react to snippets of talk I hear on the evening news?

How do I treat poor or homeless people I encounter?

How do I think about the very rich?

How do I think about other drivers?

What do I say to others about my friends when they are not present?

“All that I do I do unto myself.” Is it any wonder I feel mistreated and misunderstood? All of

Workbook Commentaries, Lessons 212 to 218

these “little” examples are expressions of the ego’s desire to crucify the Son of God. Each of them betrays the way I am treating myself, when I listen to my ego. This explains that wonderful saying in the Manual, “The teacher of God is generous out of Self interest” (M-4.VII.2:1).

LESSON 217

August 5

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

“It can be but my gratitude I earn.”

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

PRACTICE SUMMARY

Review VI

Purpose: To carefully review the last 20 lessons, each of which contains the whole curriculum and is therefore sufficient for salvation, if understood, practiced, accepted and applied without exception.

Morning/Evening Quiet Time: 15 minutes—at least

- Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”
- Close eyes and relinquish all that clutters the mind; forget all you thought you knew. Give the time to the Holy Spirit, your Teacher. If you notice an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

Remarks: We are attempting to go beyond special forms of practice because we are attempting a quicker pace and shorter path to our goal.

Hourly Remembrance: Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Frequent Reminder: As often as possible, as often as you can. Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Response To Temptation: Permit no idle thought to go unchallenged. If you are tempted by an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

COMMENTARY

The salvation described by the Course is unique in the way it combines total responsibility for our own salvation with total dependence on God. My Self is what “saves” me, yet that Self is discovered only by recognizing that what I am is not any result of my own action, but the gift of God in creation.

There is a line in the Text that says, “Give thanks to every part of you that you have taught how to remember you” (T-13.VII.17:8). The gratitude we feel as we begin to awaken to what we are is due to the Self that we are discovering. I am the one who gives thanks; I am also the One to Whom thanks are being given.

It is very hard to understand all this until you begin to experience it. I vividly recall one particular time in which it seemed to come to crystal clarity for me, for a few moments at least. I became aware of a loving part of myself that was continually moving me and motivating me in the direction of inner peace and Self acceptance. It was something that had always been there, more than a part of me, the reality of myself. I was simultaneously aware of another part of my

Workbook Commentaries, Lessons 212 to 218

mind that had begun to open up to that love, and in that moment, I felt a deep and unexpressible gratitude to myself for being willing to receive that love. I was aware both of being the giver of the love and the receiver of it, and in that moment the little self I had always thought was me felt swallowed up in this much larger, constantly moving, tide of love.

This peculiar gratitude to my Self can find expression in many little ways. Sometimes when I have taken the time for a quiet meditation, one in which I feel strongly renewed, I find the gratitude welling up, and I say, "Thank you." And I am not sure whether I am thanking God or myself. I am grateful to myself for having readied myself to receive this Course. I am thankful to myself for reading it, and continuing to study it and to apply it. When a line from the Course pops into my head at just the right moment, I can thank my Self for it.

The Course teaches that we all are already awake; the truth lives untarnished in our right mind. And it is this right mind, this Self that is the only part of us that has reality in truth, which is teaching us and calling us home. This right mind is the home of the Holy Spirit; He is part of us as well as part of God. His Voice is the Voice for God, yet it is also the Voice of my Self. It is my Self that brought the Course into the world. It is my Self that drew me to it. It is my Self that is bringing me to awareness. Everything that nudges me in the right direction is a gift from my Self.

Let me be grateful to my Self today. Let me recognize that I am deserving of my own gratitude. Instead of being annoyed with myself, impatient with myself, harsh on myself, discouraged with myself, or untrusting of myself, let me offer myself my own gratitude. And let me realize that my own gratitude is all I need and want. Let me understand that when I have learned fully to be completely grateful to my Self for what I am, I will have completed the journey, and will have learned, at the same time, to be fully appreciative and grateful to God for the gift He has given me: my Self.

Lesson 218

August 6

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

“Only my condemnation injures me.”

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

PRACTICE SUMMARY

Review VI

Purpose: To carefully review the last 20 lessons, each of which contains the whole curriculum and is therefore sufficient for salvation, if understood, practiced, accepted and applied without exception.

Morning/Evening Quiet Time: 15 minutes—at least

- Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”
- Close eyes and relinquish all that clutters the mind; forget all you thought you knew. Give the time to the Holy Spirit, your Teacher. If you notice an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

Remarks: We are attempting to go beyond special forms of practice because we are attempting a quicker pace and shorter path to our goal.

Hourly Remembrance: Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Frequent Reminder: As often as possible, as often as you can.

Repeat: “I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Response To Temptation: Permit no idle thought to go unchallenged

If you are tempted by an idle thought, immediately deny its hold, assuring your mind that you do not want it. Then let it be given up and replaced with today’s idea. Say: “This thought I do not want. I choose instead (today’s idea).”

COMMENTARY

Condemnation does not injure the body. It reminds me of the old childhood chant, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names can never hurt me.” I am not a body; what I am cannot be hurt by “sticks and stones.” Only my own condemnation, my acceptance of those “names,” can hurt me.

Haven’t you called yourself names? I know I have. “You idiot!” “You are so stupid, Watson!”

These self-mocking name-callings still, after all these years, pop into my head and out of my own mouth. They are only surface symptoms of a much deeper self-condemnation and mistrust of myself that is at the root of all my problems. Marianne Williamson hits near the bullseye when she says, “The ego is my self-loathing.”

And when I realize that every other form of outward-directed condemnation—anger, prejudice, hatred, resentment, common dislike, even feelings of uncomfortableness around someone—are all, every one, projections of my own self-attack, then I begin to realize just how deep and how far-reaching this self-condemnation really is. This condemnation injures *me*. I hurl my spears of

Workbook Commentaries, Lessons 212 to 218

attack out at the world, and every one returns to stab me in the back. “It can be but myself I crucify” (Lesson 216).

As long as I keep this war against myself going, my eyes are sightless to see my own glory. I cannot see the Christ in myself because of the dust storm of self-condemnation, whether it is directed inward or projected outward on illusions of myself I think are outside of me. It is the constant stream of judgment that blinds me.

Today, if I only choose to do so, I can see my own glory. All that I need to do is to accept Atonement for myself. Tune out the Judgment Channel. Tune in the Forgiveness Channel. Let me be quiet now, for as long as I can, and sense the Love within: the love of God for me, His child; my love for Him; my Self’s own love for me, and mine for my Self. And often, today, let me stop and remind myself that the only thing that *can* injure me is my own condemnation. And it is entirely within my power to choose to let that go, assisted by the Holy Spirit, my inner Self, and all the angels of Heaven.

Whenever I feel a rush of judgment within, wherever it is directed, let me bring my case to Heaven’s Higher Court, and hear the Holy Spirit dismiss the case against me (T-5.VI, paragraphs 4 and 10).