

Workbook Lesson Support Notes

by Allen Watson

LESSON 346 • DECEMBER 12

**“Today the peace of God envelops me,
And I forget all things except His Love.”**

Practice instructions

A short summary:

- Read the commentary paragraph slowly and personally.
- Pray the prayer, perhaps several times.
- Morning and evening: Repeat the idea and then spend time in Open Mind Meditation.
- Hourly remembrance: Repeat the idea and then spend a quiet moment in meditation.
- Frequent reminders: Repeat the idea often within each hour.
- Response to temptation: Repeat the idea whenever upset, to restore peace.
- Read the “What Is” section slowly and thoughtfully once during the day.

Practice suggestion: This is one of the most beautiful prayers in the Workbook. It speaks of a day in which I am so caught up in the experience of God’s Love that I forget everything else. The things of time fade away and the laws of time no longer bind me. This prayer is very similar to the prayers for Lesson 232 (“Be in my mind, my Father, through the day”) and Lesson 310 (“In fearlessness and love I spend today”). All three speak of spending our day with God rather than with all our earthly tasks and happenings. I highly recommend taking some time this morning and praying this prayer over and over. Let it usher you into the joyous day of which it speaks. Fix a line in your mind, close your eyes, and say that line to God, as sincerely as you can. Then open your eyes and do the same with the next line. You may want to write the prayer down on a card so you can use it each hour. You may even want to memorize it. The beauty of memorization is that it enables you to use the prayer anytime, anywhere, and do so without opening your eyes to read each line, thus allowing you to absorb yourself in the prayer more fully.

Commentary

Before I begin to comment on the lesson, let me share a few thoughts in preparation.

Many of the lessons in the latter part of the Workbook, particularly this one, are coming to us from a state of right-mindedness. That state is the goal of the Course’s curriculum. Therefore, for most of us, probably all of us, it represents a state of mind we do not normally live in. I know there is a part of me that resonates in perfect harmony with this lesson, but there is also another part that stands off cynically and says to me, “Forget all things except His Love? Hah! More likely you will remember everything except His Love. How long will this high-falutin’ attitude last after you walk out the door?” And if this is so, why bother with the lesson at all?

Why bother? Because there is a part of my mind that sings in harmony with the lesson, and it is the only “part” that is real. Each time I seek to align myself with thoughts like these, and to let the significance of them wash over me and draw me with them, something happens. Even if after reading and quietly meditating on them I feel as though nothing has happened, something *hashappened*. And if, even for an instant, I can harmonize my mind with them so that, just for that instant, I mean the words as I say them, I may have saved as much as a thousand years in my spiritual development. Truly, truly, it is worth

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the effort. *We* worth the effort.

So as we read this lesson now, let us simply attempt to suspend our disbelief for just an instant, and let these words be true for us. Let us believe that what we say represents our true Self, for it does. Let us be in the spirit of these words.

It all seems so simple sometimes. All there is to do is to be happy. Sometimes I feel as if I could simply “be there” right now, with no more effort or struggle. All the strain and struggle comes from resistance, not from any effort to be enlightened or holy. Simply forget all things except His Love. Simply remember nothing but the peace of God.

When those thoughts come to me, I notice, still, a fear of loss. It feels as if I am giving up something valuable when I give up struggle. Yet all I am giving up is pain.

What if I simply started being happy all the time? What if I let go of all insistence that anything be different?

Father, I wake today with miracles correcting my perception of all things. And so begins the day I share with You as I will share eternity, for time has stepped aside today. (1:1–2)

I can share this day with God just as I will share eternity with Him. There is nothing to do, nothing to achieve. Salvation asks nothing of me that I cannot give *right now*.

I do not seek the things of time, and so I will not look upon them. What I seek today transcends all laws of time and things perceived in time. I would forget all things except Your Love. (1:3–5)

In all my seeking, Father, what I seek is really Your Love. The things of time will never satisfy me; in this moment I gladly forget them all. I come to You, needing only Your Smile to fill my heart to overflowing.

I would abide in You, and know no laws except Your law of love. And I would find the peace which You created for Your Son, forgetting all the foolish toys I made as I behold Your glory and my own. (1:6–7)

Only my belief that I am not worthy of Your Love keeps me from enjoying it in every moment. Your Love is not lacking. I let myself relax in It and lean back on It. I am sustained by Your Love. There is nothing else. In Your Love, I behold not only Your glory, but my own glory as well, for Love is what I am.

And when the evening comes today, we will remember nothing but the peace of God. For we will learn today what peace is ours, when we forget all things except God’s Love. (2:1–2)

What is there to prevent me from having a day like this? Nothing. I open my heart to Love. The Love of God rolls over me like a mighty ocean, and I am carried in Its current, surrounded by It, afloat in It.

WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

Part 6: W-pII.13.3:4–5

Each lily of forgiveness offers all the world the silent miracle of love. (3:4)

Love is the real miracle.

Miracles occur naturally as expressions of love. The real miracle is the love that inspires

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them. In this sense everything that comes from love is a miracle. (T-1.I.3:1-3)

The symbol of the lily represents a gift of forgiveness I give to a brother or sister. Each time I offer this gift, I am offering God's Love to the entire world. I am opening a floodgate and allowing that Love to flow into the world through me. Wherever that river of Love comes, life springs up; and that is the miracle.

And each [lily] is laid before the Word of God, upon the universal altar to Creator and creation in the light of perfect purity and endless joy. (3:5)

My gift of forgiveness given to my brother is also a gift to God. My gratitude to my brothers is my gift to God. In acknowledging His creation, I acknowledge Him. Opening to this current of Love is the source of perfect purity and endless joy. There is nothing so joyful as a loving heart.

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LESSON 347 • DECEMBER 13

**“Anger must come from judgment. Judgment is
The weapon I would use against myself,
To keep the miracle away from me.”**

Practice instructions

A short summary:

- Read the commentary paragraph slowly and personally.
- Pray the prayer, perhaps several times.
- Morning and evening: Repeat the idea and then spend time in Open Mind Meditation.
- Hourly remembrance: Repeat the idea and then spend a quiet moment in meditation.
- Frequent reminders: Repeat the idea often within each hour.
- Response to temptation: Repeat the idea whenever upset, to restore peace.
- Read the “What Is” section slowly and thoughtfully once during the day.

Practice suggestion: Today the ideas for the day go from two lines to three lines, which means they have tripled in length since just seven lessons ago. I confess that I find it harder to repeat these longer ideas throughout the day. If you’re the same, here are some suggestions that might make it easier:

- Write the idea down on a notecard and pull the card out for practice periods.
- Find a part of the idea that speaks the most to you, and focus on repeating that part.
- Spend time in the morning memorizing the idea so fully that it just rolls off your tongue the rest of the day.
- Reword the idea in a way that captures the gist of it but is shorter and speaks to you personally.

On that last point, don’t be afraid to reword the idea, as long as you stay reasonably faithful to the meaning. The Course reminds us of this more than once, saying, “You need not use these exact words” (W-pI.65.6:5) and “It is not the particular words you use that matter” (W-pI.rI.In.6:4).

Commentary

From the sublime heights of yesterday’s lesson (“I would forget all things except Your Love”), we return to the level of our split mind, in which we attack ourselves, keeping away the miracle with judgment and attack. The previous lesson was miracle-mindedness; here we see why we do not always experience that state of mind: We actively keep it away from ourselves with judgment and attack. The process of the Course involves learning complete honesty with ourselves. We learn to recognize and admit the duplicity of our own minds:

Father, I want what goes against my will, and do not want what is my will to have.
(1:1)

“My will” is my right-mindedness, forgetting everything except God’s Love. And yet we seem to want something else, and to actively resist having the Love of God flooding our minds.

I love the next couple of lines:

Straighten my mind, my Father. It is sick. (1:2–3)

I love those lines because of their stark simplicity, and because of the contrast they offer to the frothy denial of our inner darkness that is prevalent in so many circles. The Course does not pull any punches. It does not whitewash our problems. There are times when no other assessment fits: Our minds are sick! It

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is sick to want what goes against my true will, and to actively resist my own well-being. Self-destruction is always pathological. When we look honestly at the fact that we are literally pushing away our own peace of mind, by active choices we make, it ought to be repugnant. When we see what we have been doing, our saner self will say, “This is sick!”

And so we ask the Father to “straighten my mind.” That always reminds me of a science fiction book by Zenna Henderson that I read as a young man, called *The People: No Different Flesh*.¹ In it there were certain persons who could telepathically enter into another person’s mind and “sort” their thoughts, soothing their inner turmoil and pain. The idea appealed to me so much that I used to pray, “Sort me, Father,” when I felt my thoughts in chaos and confusion. And it seemed to work! I was pleasantly surprised to see this similar phrase here, validating my early experience. “Straighten my mind.”

We enable the straightening of our minds by giving all our judgment to the Holy Spirit and asking Him to judge for us (1:5). He sees what we see, “and yet He knows the truth” (1:6). He is looking at the same evidence I am looking at, but He knows the pain is not real; the evidence means something entirely different to Him. To me, the evidence of my eyes seems to prove that separation, pain, loss, and death are real. When I bring all this to Him and ask Him to straighten my mind, He will show me that what I see does not mean what I think it means; He will use what I thought proved my guilt to reveal my innocence.

He gives the miracles my dreams would hide from my awareness. (1:8)

Listen today. Be very still, and hear the gentle Voice for God assuring you that He has judged you as the Son He loves. (2:1–2)

WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

Part 7: W-pII.13.4:1

The miracle is taken first on faith, because to ask for it implies the mind has been made ready to conceive of what it cannot see and does not understand.

Faith. Yes, *A Course in Miracles* asks for faith, at least at the beginning. “The miracle is taken *first* on faith.” This is a fairly traditional meaning for the word “faith.” The American Heritage Dictionary defines faith as “Belief that does not rest on logical proof or material evidence.” And that is what is being asked of us. We are being asked to receive the miracle (the change of perception, the vision of our brother’s innocence) without any “proof or material evidence.” We are being asked to look on devastation (such as sickness, or the harm done by someone’s unloving actions) and to believe that what we see is false—without “material evidence.”

This is not an easy thing to do, to believe in something we cannot see. And yet, if our false perception has blinded us to reality, and we are now perceiving the projections of our own minds in place of truth, then obviously the truth is now something we do not see. And since what our mind chooses to see is what we see, the mind *must* change before we can perceive truly. We have to choose to change our mind *before we see the evidence*, because, in order for the miracle to manifest, our minds must first be “made ready to conceive of what [they] cannot see and [do] not understand.” In other words, we must make a choice on faith; we must decide that we desire to see something we cannot now see and something we do not understand.

This reminds me very much of those very early lessons in the Workbook, Lessons 27 and 28: “Above all else I want to see” and “Above all else I want to see things differently.” That choice has to be made before we can see anything. We must *want* to see in order to see. That is the faith being talked about here.

¹. This is the title of one of the two original collections of stories about the People. All of Henderson’s wonderful stories have been recently republished in a single volume, titled *Ingathering: The Complete People Stories of Zenna Henderson* (Framingham, Mass.: Nesfa Press, 1995).

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It is a choice, a decision we must make. We must *want* to see our brother innocent. We must *want* only love. We must be willing to see things differently. Only then will we see miracles.

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LESSON 348 • DECEMBER 14

**“I have no cause for anger or for fear,
For You surround me. And in every need
That I perceive, Your grace suffices me.”**

Practice instructions

A short summary:

- Read the commentary paragraph slowly and personally.
- Pray the prayer, perhaps several times.
- Morning and evening: Repeat the idea and then spend time in Open Mind Meditation.
- Hourly remembrance: Repeat the idea and then spend a quiet moment in meditation.
- Frequent reminders: Repeat the idea often within each hour.
- Response to temptation: Repeat the idea whenever upset, to restore peace.
- Read the “What Is” section slowly and thoughtfully once during the day.

Commentary

“You surround me.” Close your eyes and be quiet, and think of the Love or Presence of God as a golden light. Imagine that light shining on the front of you. Feel its warmth, its golden glow, like the radiance of the sun on a bright, summer day.

Now, become aware of that same light behind you. The Love of God is shining on you, front and back. Let yourself feel the safety of it.

The Presence of God is also on your right, and on your left. It is all around you, above you and below you. You are surrounded by this golden light, immersed in it. You are surrounded by perfect safety (1:5), perfect benevolence. Allow yourself to feel what that is like.

In this Love there is no cause for anger or for fear. There is no cause for anything except the perfect peace and joy you share with God.

God’s grace suffices us in everything that He would have us do. And only that we choose to be our will as well as His. (2:1–2)

Whenever you can today, stop for a moment or two and visualize yourself surrounded by the Love of God.

WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

Part 8: W-pII.13.4:2–3

There must be faith before a miracle: the desire to see it, the choice to ask for what we cannot now see, and to believe that what our ego-generated perception shows us is false. But when that faith arises, when we become miracle-minded, that faith will produce its own vindication:

Yet faith will bring its witnesses to show that what it rested on is really there. (4:2)

When I place my faith in a miracle, there will be evidence—witnesses—to prove that what I put my faith in truly exists. When, for instance, I am willing to look past my brother’s ego and to see the call for God in him, something will happen that will witness to me that the call for God in him is really there. Perhaps my forgiveness will be met with gratitude. Perhaps my response of love will be met with love

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returning. Perhaps, in someone of whom I never believed it possible, I will see a spark of light. Faith *will* bring its witnesses.

And thus the miracle will justify your faith in it, and show it rested on a world more real than what you saw before; a world redeemed from what you thought was there. (4:3)

My willingness to believe in love's presence will show me love's presence. I will see what I choose to see. I will see that the world of spirit is more real than the world of mere matter. Sickness will give way to health. Sadness will be replaced with joy. Fear will be transformed to love. And where I thought I saw sin and evil, I will see holiness and good.

It is the transformation of my mind that brings about a different world. It is my readiness to invite the miracle that opens the way for it. The changes in the world I see are not the miracle; they are its results. The miracle *brings* witnesses; it reveals a world different from what I thought it was. First, though, the change of mind, the faith. Then the witness to faith, justifying it, validating it.

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LESSON 349 • DECEMBER 15

**“Today I let Christ’s vision look upon
All things for me and judge them not, but give
Each one a miracle of love instead.”**

Practice instructions

A short summary:

- Read the commentary paragraph slowly and personally.
- Pray the prayer, perhaps several times.
- Morning and evening: Repeat the idea and then spend time in Open Mind Meditation.
- Hourly remembrance: Repeat the idea and then spend a quiet moment in meditation.
- Frequent reminders: Repeat the idea often within each hour.
- Response to temptation: Repeat the idea whenever upset, to restore peace.
- Read the “What Is” section slowly and thoughtfully once during the day.

Practice suggestion:

- Think of a person you know.
- Once you have chosen someone, imagine your mind stepping back and withdrawing all judgment of this person, all evaluation of any kind.
- Then imagine Christ looking through you at this person. As He looks, He does not judge, He simply loves. He does not strain this person through your filters of suspicion. His only concern is to give him or her a miracle. Try to let Christ actually look through you, so that it’s more than just your imagination.

Commentary

“The law of love,” mentioned in the second sentence, has been referred to in lessons 344, 345, and 346. We are likely to forget how Lesson 344 defines it: “Today I learn the law of love; that what I give my brother is my gift to me.” The law of love is the law that giving and receiving are the same, that generosity and loving extension is a practical way of life because what I give, I receive. Understanding what the law of love is, the words of this lesson make perfect sense:

*So [by not judging, but giving a miracle of love instead] would I liberate all things I see,
and give to them the freedom that I seek. For thus do I obey the law of love, and give what I
would find and make my own. (1:1–2)*

Do I want others to refrain from judging me, forgive my mistakes, and offer me miracles of love? Let me give what I seek; let me give what I want to find for myself.

Each time I accept a gift of God, I have added to my repertoire of miracles I can give (1:4–5). Each time I give that miracle to another, I have solidified my learning that the miracle belongs to me (1:6). And thus I remember God.

Let me not judge today, but offer miracles of love instead. Let me give what I want to receive.

WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

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Part 9: W-pII.13.5:1-3

In stark imagery, this section refers to our world as “a dry and dusty world, where starved and thirsty creatures come to die” (5:1). The Course says, more than once, that we came to this world in order to die; we sought death by coming to a place where everything dies. For instance, “You came to die, and what would you expect but to perceive the signs of death you seek?” (T-29.VII.5:2). “It is not will for life but wish for death that is the motivation for this world” (T-27.I.6:3). We came out of guilt, believing in our own sin and seeking our own punishment. We came because somehow, in the twisted logic of the ego, death is the ultimate proof of our success at separating from God. We made this world as a place to die in, and then we came to die in it.

But “miracles fall like drops of healing rain from Heaven” on this parched land we have made, and the miracles turn it into a paradise.

Now they [the starved and thirsty creatures, which are ourselves] have water. Now the world is green. (5:2-3)

Miracles, then, transform the world of death we made into a place of life. Chapter 26 of the Text, in Section IX (“For They Have Come”) extends the same images:

The blood of hatred fades to let the grass grow green again, and let the flowers be all white and sparkling in the summer sun. What was a place of death has now become a living temple in a world of light. Because of Them. It is Their Presence which has lifted holiness again to take its ancient place upon an ancient throne. Because of Them have miracles sprung up as grass and flowers on the barren ground that hate had scorched and rendered desolate. What hate has wrought have They undone. And now you stand on ground so holy Heaven leans to join with it, and make it like itself. The shadow of an ancient hate has gone, and all the blight and withering have passed forever from the land where They have come. (T-26.IX.3:1-8)

We open to miracles when we open to forgiveness and love, when we open to God. “They” and “Them” in this Text section refer to the face of Christ (the sight of our brothers’ innocence) and the memory of God. When we allow ourselves to see the face of Christ in our brothers, the memory of God returns to us. When that happens, the “scorched and...desolate” ground of this world becomes a garden, a reflection of Heaven.

LESSON 350 • DECEMBER 16

**“Miracles mirror God’s eternal Love.
To offer them is to remember Him,
And through His memory to save the world.”**

Practice instructions

A short summary:

- Read the commentary paragraph slowly and personally.
- Pray the prayer, perhaps several times.
- Morning and evening: Repeat the idea and then spend time in Open Mind Meditation.
- Hourly remembrance: Repeat the idea and then spend a quiet moment in meditation.
- Frequent reminders: Repeat the idea often within each hour.
- Response to temptation: Repeat the idea whenever upset, to restore peace.
- Read the “What Is” section slowly and thoughtfully once during the day.

Commentary

To offer a miracle is to remember God, and through offering miracles we literally save the world. We reincorporate the Son of God as God created him (1:2). The theme of miracles has run through these last ten lessons, and the page of teaching that preceded them.

A miracle is a correction. It does not create, nor really change at all. It merely looks on devastation, and reminds the mind that what it sees is false. It undoes error, but does not attempt to go beyond perception, nor exceed the function of forgiveness. (W-pII.13.1:1–4)

In other words, a miracle and forgiveness are alike; both simply remind “the mind that what it sees is false.” To offer a miracle is to look beyond the illusions and to see the truth. It is a refusal to share the littleness in which others see themselves. I offer a miracle when I refuse to believe that my brother is identified with and limited to his body and his ego. I refuse to believe that anyone is defined by their behavior, and offer everyone the opportunity to see themselves as more than they think they are, more loveable and more loving than they think they are. That is a miracle, and that also is forgiveness.

What we forgive becomes a part of us, as we perceive ourselves. The Son of God incorporates all things within himself as You created him. (1:1–2)

That is an amazing statement! When we forgive something or someone, it or she “becomes a part of us.” It is almost as if by forgiving things and people, we are regathering the fragmented parts of the Sonship back into our Self. We are acknowledging that they are not separate, as they appear to be, but actually part of our being. Each miracle we offer helps reconstitute the Son of God.

In reality of course, the Son is eternally one; there is no need to reconstitute what is already whole. What we are is not affected by our thoughts. The reality of our being remains inviolate (1:4). But what we “look upon,” what we perceive, is the direct result of our thoughts (1:5).

Therefore, my Father, I would turn to You. Only Your memory will set me free. (1:6–7)

Today, Father, heal my thoughts. “Straighten my mind” (W-pII.347.1:2). I want the memory of God to return to my mind, and “only my forgiveness teaches me to let Your memory return to me, and give it to the world in thankfulness” (1:8). To have the memory of God return, I must forgive. I must offer miracles to everyone and everything.

As I remember God (through my forgiveness), “His Son will be restored to us in the reality of

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Love” (2:2). There is the thought again that forgiveness “restores” the Son, rejoining the separated fragments by an acknowledgment of love and unity.

May we watch today for opportunities to offer miracles.

WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

Part 10: W-pII.13.5:4

As we open our lives to miracles, the world is transformed.

And everywhere the signs of life spring up, to show that what is born can never die, for what has life has immortality. (5:4)

Miracles demonstrate immortality. Not immortality of the body, but immortality of love, which is what we are (“Teach only love, for that is what you are” [T-6.I.13:2]; “Only the eternal can be loved, for love does not die” [T-10.V.9:1]). It is the immortality of thought, and the Course also teaches that we are the eternal Thought of God, unchangeable. The Course asserts boldly that there is no death, that life and immortality are synonymous (“what has life has immortality”). By that logic, then, the body must not have life, because it is not immortal, and so the Course teaches: “It [the body] is not born and does not die” (T-28.VI.2:4). “The body neither lives nor dies, because it cannot contain you who are life” (T-6.V(A)1:4).

Miracles show us that we are not bodies, that mind is stronger than or primary to the body:

If the mind can heal the body, but the body cannot heal the mind, then the mind must be stronger than the body. Every miracle demonstrates this. (T-6.V(A).2:6–7)

It shows us that what we are—mind, thought, idea, love—has life and is immortal.

LESSON 351 • DECEMBER 17

**“My sinless brother is my guide to peace.
My sinful brother is my guide to pain.
And which I choose to see I will behold.”**

Practice instructions

A short summary:

- Read the commentary paragraph slowly and personally.
- Pray the prayer, perhaps several times.
- Morning and evening: Repeat the idea and then spend time in Open Mind Meditation.
- Hourly remembrance: Repeat the idea and then spend a quiet moment in meditation.
- Frequent reminders: Repeat the idea often within each hour.
- Response to temptation: Repeat the idea whenever upset, to restore peace.
- Read the “What Is” section slowly and thoughtfully once during the day.

Practice suggestion: Here is a longer, more specific form of today’s idea. Choose someone to focus on and then repeat:

*My sinless brother [name] is my guide to peace,
He shows me that I am sinless,
that my Comforter and Friend walks beside me,
that I walk home along a way that is secure and clear.
My sinful brother [name] is my guide to pain.
He proclaims that I am a sinner,
that I am alone and friendless,
that I wander in danger in a fearful world.
Which I choose to see determines my whole journey.
Father, choose for me which I will see.*

Commentary

I once read an article by Jon Mundy in *On Course* magazine about Bill Thetford (the man who transcribed the Course from Helen’s Schucman’s shorthand notes). Bill once said that the entire Course could be summed up in a single sentence: Are you willing to see your brother sinless? Jon relates the following story:

Judy Skutch Whitson tells an interesting story about Bill. There was one occasion on which Judy experienced a monumental ego attack which was focused on her friend, Dr. Gerry Jampolsky. In an effort to find some peace of mind she called Bill Thetford and proceeded to describe for him all of what she perceived to be Gerry’s faults. Bill listened till Judy ran out of breath and then he said quietly, “You know, Judy, the Course can be summed up in just eight words. Are you willing to see your brother sinless?”

“No!” Judy screamed. “Well, dear,” he replied, “when you are, you will feel much better.” And he hung up.

The perception of my brother as sinful is a choice I am making. It is not based on fact. It is not caused by something in my brother; it is purely my chosen perception. Choosing to see my brother as sinful will always lead to inner pain. And truly, when we are willing to see our brother, or sister, as sinless, we really will feel much better. The power of the question Bill asked (and which the Course asks us all) lies in the fact that it reveals the often hidden fact that we are choosing this perception, and that we are not willing to

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let it go. Until we are, there is nothing the Holy Spirit can do for us. He will not oppose our will. Love does not oppose. We can stay in the pain of unforgiveness as long as we wish.

But when we are willing, when we have recognized that we are choosing how to see our brother, when we have realized that we do not like how we feel when we are choosing to see his sin, and we are willing, at least, to change that perception, then we can pray:

Choose, then, for me, my Father, through Your Voice. For He alone gives judgment in Your Name. (1:6-7)

WHAT AM I?

Part 1: W-pII.14.1:1-3

This section is one of the most powerful statements in the Course of its vision of our true nature, of how it can be realized within this world of time and space, and of the function that follows naturally from the fact of what we are. The opening paragraph is an extremely potent declaration, in the first person, of our real Identity. Often I find that reading something like this aloud, by myself, helps me to focus on it and to *feel* what it is saying. An interesting side effect is that making these statements firmly, saying them as if I truly believed them (even if I do not yet), arouses opposing thoughts in my mind. Noting those opposing thoughts and writing them down can be a very useful exercise in uncovering the hidden beliefs of the ego that have lodged in my mind, so that I can recognize their presence and decide that I do not want them.

For instance, in the first sentence we read, “I am...complete and healed and whole.” I find opposing thoughts that arise, such as: “I am far from complete; I have a long way to go.” “I am fragmented, not whole.” “I wish I were healed but I’m not.” These are lessons the ego has taught me, and they are not true. I can recognize that these thoughts are blocking my acceptance of the Course’s message, and I can choose against them. For example, I might say, “I feel incomplete and I believe in my incompleteness, but in reality I am already complete. I want to know my own completion.”

I am God’s Son...shining in the reflection of His Love. (1:1)

The light in me is the reflection of God’s Light and God’s Love. I shine, but my glory is a reflected glory, as the moon’s light is completely dependent on that of the sun. It is something that emanates from God and radiates *through* me but not *from* me, and unless I acknowledge my connection with my Creator, I mask that shining.

In me is His creation sanctified and guaranteed eternal life. (1:2)

This sounds like something that, in traditional Christianity, Jesus might say, similar to “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” And indeed, Jesus might say this. But so can we! We are all what he was and is; that is what he is telling us in this Course. Creation is “sanctified” (made holy) in me. What I am, my very being, is what makes creation holy. I do not need to be made holy or to become holy; I am the source (a reflected source, but still a source) of holiness. And what I am guarantees eternal life for all creation, because all creation is what I am. I am *God’s Son*, the radiance of His Love which has shined out and become me; that is also what all creation is, the extension of His Love. The fact that I am God’s Son, an emanation of His Being, like a sunbeam to the sun, guarantees eternal life because what God is, is eternal, and if I am simply an effect of God, Who is eternal, then I, too, must be eternal, “forever and forever” His effect.

In me is love perfected, fear impossible, and joy established without opposite. (1:3)

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We find it very difficult to believe that perfect love is in us. “You have so little faith in yourself because you are unwilling to accept the fact that perfect love is in you” (T-15.VI.2:1). So it isn’t really that believing this is *difficult*; it is that we are unwilling to accept it! Our ego identity depends on its not being true. If perfect love from God is in us, then what we derive from God and not from ourselves alone, which is what the ego wants to believe. We would rather be fear than be love, because we made fear. The truth is still the truth; perfect love *is* in us, whether or not we believe it, whether or not we think we want it. What we believe cannot change God’s creation.

Fear is impossible in me. Now that generates a lot of negative feedback, doesn’t it? “If fear is impossible, then what the hell is this thing I am feeling?” What is it? The Course would reply that what we feel is an illusion, a nonexistent nothing, a figment of our imagination. What it is is meaningless. What if, when I felt afraid, I told myself, “I think I am feeling fear, but fear in me is impossible”? What if I realized that what I think I am feeling *is not in me*, but in a delusional concept of myself I have mistaken for myself?

“And joy established without opposite.” That is my reality. I don’t experience it that way now, probably. Even when I do feel joy, there is always an opposite lurking in the shadows. But that opposite, that fear, that dark presence, is unreal. It is nothing to be afraid of and does not, in reality, exist.

LESSON 352 • DECEMBER 18

**“Judgment and love are opposites. From one
Come all the sorrows of the world. But from
The other comes the peace of God Himself.”**

Practice instructions

A short summary:

- Read the commentary paragraph slowly and personally.
- Pray the prayer, perhaps several times.
- Morning and evening: Repeat the idea and then spend time in Open Mind Meditation.
- Hourly remembrance: Repeat the idea and then spend a quiet moment in meditation.
- Frequent reminders: Repeat the idea often within each hour.
- Response to temptation: Repeat the idea whenever upset, to restore peace.
- Read the “What Is” section slowly and thoughtfully once during the day.

Commentary

In the introduction to the Text, Jesus says, “The opposite of love is fear, but what is all-encompassing can have no opposite” (T-In.1:8). Here, he says that love’s opposite is judgment. If you relax your mind and let your thinking go loosely associative, it is fairly easy to see that judgment and fear are the same thing. If I judge something as bad, dangerous, or evil, I will fear it. If I fear something I will judge it as bad. In “The Two Emotions” (T-13.V), it is clear that both love and fear are “a way of seeing,” and that “different worlds arise from their different sights” (T-13.V.10:2). The same thought is expressed here about judgment and love. And in the surrounding sections of Chapter 13 it is very clear that in giving up the past, we are being asked to give up judgment. The same network of thoughts is there that is found here.

I think in this lesson, the Holy Spirit is viewing two *attitudes* or two *activities* rather than two *emotions*. It is the attitude I have towards others that is in focus, and how I extend myself towards them. Do I love, or do I judge? Rather than how the other person impacts on me, which is the focus in the “Two Emotions” section, the focus here is on how I impact on the other person. The difference is in the direction of the flow of energy; here, the flow being considered is from me to the other person.

All the sorrows of the world come from judgment; no wonder the Course asks us to relinquish it. To love is not to judge; to judge is not to love. Loving brings us peace; judging only sorrow. How to find peace? Give love.

Forgiveness looks on sinlessness alone, and judges not. Through this I come to You.
(1:1–2)

Forgiveness means not judging; how can you judge and forgive at the same time? Forgiveness sees only sinlessness, because only sinlessness is what we are (see W-pII.14.1:6). And through such forgiveness we approach God.

*Judgment will bind my eyes and make me blind. Yet love, reflected in forgiveness here,
reminds me You have given me a way to find Your peace again.* (1:3–4)

The Course makes a point, several times, of what is implied here by the phrase “love, reflected in forgiveness here.” Love in purity is impossible in this world. “No love in this world is without... ambivalence” (T-4.III.4:6). The closest reflection of love in this world is forgiveness. So the contrast here is really between judgment and forgiveness. By choosing to forgive my brothers rather than to judge

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them, I find my own peace again, the peace of God.

Peace is lost to us through judgment; it blindfolds us to the truth. Love, which is perfect only in Heaven, is still reflected perfectly here in forgiveness. There is a way to find our way out of blindness, and the way is forgiveness. It is affirming the unreality of our perception of sin in anyone and everyone.

I am redeemed when I elect to follow in this way. You have not left me comfortless. I have within both the memory of You, and One Who leads me to it. (1:5–7)

We were lost, “sold” into slavery by our own hand. But God did not abandon us. He gave us two things. It’s interesting to notice the distinction here. He gave us 1) the memory of God in our minds, and 2) the Holy Spirit Who leads us to discover that memory. Many times I’ve heard people say that the Holy Spirit is the memory of God within us; that isn’t how it appears here. The memory of God is something that is truly my own, part of me; my own right mind remembers God. The Holy Spirit is the Guide Who leads me back to rediscover the hidden treasure within my Self.

Father, I would hear Your Voice and find Your peace today. For I would love my own Identity, and find in It the memory of You. (1:8–9)

The memory of God lies in my own Identity. In remembering my Self I remember God. Let His Voice lead me to that remembrance as I sit, quietly, with Him today. I have very powerful help. And where that help leads me is to the point of loving my own Identity. I cannot love what I am unless I love—in the form of forgiveness—everyone else. That is so because what I am is identical to what everyone is; we are all the Son of God, the Christ. If I judge others I am judging myself, because I am what they are.

WHAT AM I?

Part 2: W-pII.14.1:4–6

I am the holy Home of God Himself. (1:4)

Wow! That makes more of an impact on us, put that way, than simply saying, “God is in me.” I am God’s Home. Home is not just some place God happens to be; it is where He resides, where He chooses to be, where He can make Himself comfortable, so to speak. In Psalm 132:14, God is said to have proclaimed about Zion, or Jerusalem, “This [is] my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.” Now, *we* are His home. Now, He speaks to you, and to me, saying that we are His rest forever, that He will dwell in us because He has desired it. That was His intention all along when He created us.

I am the Heaven where His Love resides. (1:5)

We may have naively believed that God lives in Heaven and not in us. Here, we see that, yes, God lives or resides in Heaven, but *we are Heaven*. What a mind-blower that is! I’ll bet you have thought, for most of your life, that if you were good enough, or if you were holy enough, or if you had enough faith, you’d get to go to Heaven. Sorry, no go. You can’t *goto* Heaven because you *are* Heaven, where God’s Love resides.

I am His holy Sinlessness Itself, for in my purity abides His own. (1:6)

Did you notice that all three of these sentences use words about God’s place of residence? “...the holy Home...where His Love resides...in my purity abides His own.” God isn’t just passing through! He isn’t just visiting. He *lives* here, in me, in you; this is His home. He *abides* [stays, remains] here, in us.

I have to confess that I can’t quite yet wrap my mind around the idea that *I am* God’s holy Sinlessness. “Sinlessness” seems like a rather abstract concept; I have a little trouble understanding how I can

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besinlessness. The second half of the sentence helps me out a little: “for in my purity abides His own.”

I can sort of grasp it by an analogy. A parent who gives his or her time and energy to raising a child, teaching it all they know, finds their own success and happiness in that child’s success and happiness. “My child’s happiness is my own. My child’s success is my own.” I think it is similar to that. God extended Himself as us. What we are is His extension. Our purity *is* His; if we are not sinless, no more is He. We are what He is, extended outward. If I am not pure, He is not, for our nature is His. If we are what He is, then it is true in reverse; He is what we are. Therefore, “I am His holy Sinlessness Itself.”