



A Course In Miracles

Original Edition

Text
Workbook
Manual for Teachers

COURSE IN MIRACLES SOCIETY

A Course In Miracles

Original Edition[®]

TEXT

WORKBOOK FOR STUDENTS

MANUAL FOR TEACHERS

William T. Thetford and Helen Schucman, Editors



COURSE IN MIRACLES SOCIETY

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Omaha, Nebraska 68114 USA

VOICE 800-771-5056

FAX 402-391-0343

<http://jcim.net>

Course in Miracles Society (CIMS) is an international group of Course students and teachers organized to discover, authenticate and propagate the divine teachings of *A Course in Miracles*. As students, we seek to increase our knowledge of Jesus' words and to deepen our experience of his teaching. As teachers, we work to circulate the message of the *Course* throughout the world by our words, by our deeds, and by the example of our lives.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR PROJECTS

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Web site: *<http://jcim.net>*

e-mail: *cims@jcim.net*

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A Course in Miracles
ORIGINAL EDITION®

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A Course In Miracles

T E X T



COURSE IN MIRACLES SOCIETY

Your past learning must have taught you the wrong things simply because it has not made you happy. On this basis alone, its value should be questioned.

If learning aims at change, and that is always its purpose, are you satisfied with the changes your learning has brought you? Dissatisfaction with learning outcomes must be a sign of learning failure since it means that you did not get what you want. The curriculum of the Atonement is the opposite of the curriculum you have established for yourselves, but so is its outcome. If the outcome of yours has made you unhappy and if you want a different one, a change in the curriculum is obviously necessary.

T8:4-5

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Foreword

This course is a beginning, not an end. Your Friend goes with you. You are not alone. No one who calls on Him can call in vain. Whatever troubles you, be certain that He has the answer and will gladly give it to you if you simply turn to Him and ask it of Him. He will not withhold all answers that you need for anything that seems to trouble you. He knows the way to solve all problems and resolve all doubts. His certainty is yours. You need but ask it of Him, and it will be given you.

You are as certain of arriving home as is the pathway of the sun laid down before it rises, after it has set, and in the half-lit hours in between. Indeed, your pathway is more certain still, for it cannot be possible to change the course of those whom God has called to Him. Therefore obey your will, and follow Him Whom you accepted as your Voice, to speak of what you really want and really need. His is the Voice for God, and also yours. And thus He speaks of freedom and of truth.¹

With these words, *A Course in Miracles* concludes its prescribed curriculum of 365 daily lessons, and it is with these words, too, that we begin our study.

A Course in Miracles (often called just “the Course”) is a self-study course for retraining the mind that is spiritual, rather than religious, in its perspective. Although it uses Christian terminology, it is ecumenical in its approach, and its underlying ontology is reminiscent of ancient refrains, echoing the world’s most hallowed traditions.

The Course is pragmatic in its method, and its aim is a peaceful mind: “Knowledge is not the motivation for learning this course. Peace is.”² Nevertheless, the Course frequently emphasizes its simplicity.³

The story of the Course began when, in the midst of an environment of intense competition and negative attitudes, Columbia University clinical psychologist Dr. William T. Thetford decided he had had enough and declared to his colleague, Dr. Helen Schucman, “There must be a better way, and I’m determined to find it.” Dr. Schucman vowed to help him.

What ensued was a dramatic progression of waking dreams for Schucman, which culminated in October 1965 with her experience of a voice which spoke clearly in her mind, saying “This is a course in miracles. Please take notes.”

With Thetford’s support and assistance in transcribing her shorthand notes, Schucman took down some 1,500 typewritten pages of *A Course in Miracles* over

¹ WkBk.E.1-2.

² Tx.8.1.

³ For example, see Tx.9.29, 10.74, and 15.39.

a period of seven years.

Schucman did not claim to be the author of the material herself. As she often explained, she heard a kind of inner dictation and she felt compelled to write it down, even though at times she disagreed with the content and resisted the process. The voice which spoke through Helen clearly identifies himself as Jesus. Nonetheless, one need not be Christian nor accept Christianity's traditional doctrines to benefit from the teachings of the *Course*. Indeed, traditional Christians will at first find many of the pronouncements contained in this work to be startling and perhaps unbelievable. Persistence and open-mindedness will nevertheless be rewarded.

The dictation of *A Course in Miracles* was completed in September 1972 and resulted in three volumes—the Text, the Workbook for Students, and the Manual for Teachers. As the development of the material progressed, Schucman and Thetford faced the formidable task of organizing the original typescript (often called the “Urtext”) into what would become *A Course in Miracles*. They divided the Text into chapters and sections and gave titles to each, and they removed a great deal of material from the early chapters, material they believed was meant for them personally, not for the *Course*. The edition that resulted from those efforts is the book you hold in your hands.

The Text volume of the *Original Edition* has undergone an evolutionary process since the 1972 manuscript of *A Course in Miracles* was discovered and released on the internet in late 1999. In early 2000 Course in Miracles Society (CIMS) printed the 1972 manuscript of the Text as *Jesus' Course in Miracles*. Distribution of that book was suspended during the continuance of the copyright litigation, which was concluded in early 2006.

In November 2006 the initial printing of the *Original Edition* (referred to as the 2006 Printing), containing the Workbook for Students and Manual for Teachers in addition to the Text, was released. The 2006 Printing corrected numerous typographic errors, misspellings, and aberrant punctuation that had appeared in the original 1972 manuscript and which were reproduced in the *Jesus' Course in Miracles* edition.

There was a second printing in 2009 (referred to as the 2009 Printing) which continued the process of correcting errors in the manuscript. In this undertaking the editors for the first time looked back to earlier manuscripts and restored material that appeared to have been inadvertently or mistakenly omitted in retyping. This process of restoration has continued through the 2012, 2017, and 2018 Printings, adhering always to the fundamental directive, “fidelity to Source.” Among the improvements, beginning with the 2012 Printing, was the updating of paragraph numbering in Chapters 2, 9, 26, and 27, necessitated mainly by the restoration of material from an earlier manuscript. Paragraph renumbering is described in footnotes where pertinent.

In its continuing evolution, this *Original Edition* faithfully reproduces the original transcript of the book that was the result of the collaboration between Schucman and Thetford, whom many believe were involved with each other in the “holy relationship” described in Chapters 17 through 22 of the Text. This edition preserves the original language of the dictation of those chapters, which were addressed to the two collaborators as they worked together to produce the manuscript. Later editing of the manuscript changed the focus of these important chapters and addresses them to a solitary reader, removing the mutuality that is explicit in the original dictation.

It seems clear that this *Original Edition* is what Schucman and Thetford originally intended to be *A Course in Miracles*. However, in 1973 Ken Wapnick, who had joined their small circle and received a copy of the 1972 manuscript, expressed his belief that additional editing was needed. Thetford withdrew from further detailed editing work, and Schucman and Wapnick resumed the editing process. Along with changes in paragraphing, punctuation, capitalization, and section titles, there was a great deal of line-by-line editing. In addition, about one-fifth of the material in the first five chapters was removed. Finally, a new section, the Clarification of Terms, was added. The resulting edition, published in 1975 by the Foundation for Inner Peace, became the *Course* with which the world would become familiar.

While we honor that edition of the *Course*, we believe that the additional editing resulted both in shifts of meaning and a change in the over-all tone of the work. When encountering Schucman and Thetford’s *Original Edition*, students often find fresh clarity as they read its wording or new understanding as they encounter passages that were not included in the later 1975 edition. In the case of editing, it seems to us that the “less-is-best” rule applies—the less tampering with the eloquent and carefully worded dictation that Schucman received, the better.

In this *Original Edition*, we have taken great care in dealing with the editorial issues presented by the original typed manuscript. Our focus has been upon reproducing as nearly as possible the content as it was originally given to Schucman and Thetford. It is to be noted, however, that there are a few occasions where we encountered material from the original dictation that appears to have been inadvertently or mistakenly dropped in the early retyping. In those instances, we have re-inserted the missing lines, noting our addition by placing the inserted material in square brackets. Otherwise, the only changes that have been made to the original manuscript of the *Course* as completed by Schucman and Thetford have been to correct obvious typographic errors and misspellings, to standardize punctuation and capitalization, and to format the material for print publication. Apart from the simple section and paragraph numbering which we include for ease

of reference and navigation, nothing has been added to or omitted from the work.

We would be remiss were we to fail to acknowledge the selfless support provided to the Course in Miracles Society by its members and others. From its earliest days, the work of the Society has been enabled by tireless contributions of labor and generous financial support provided by many individuals whose only compensation has been the satisfaction of fostering the circulation of this sacred writing in the world. To those supporters and all of our members, we extend a sincere “thank you.” We are most grateful.

Course in Miracles Society

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 may elect what you want to take at a given time.

² 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.

³ This course can therefore be summed up very simply in this way:

⁴ *Nothing real can be threatened.*

Nothing unreal exists.

⁵ Herein lies the peace of God.

Introduction to Miracles

I. PRINCIPLES OF MIRACLES

¹ 1. There is no order of difficulty among miracles. One is not “harder” or “bigger” than another. They are all the same. All expressions of love are maximal.

² 2. Miracles as such do not matter. The only thing that matters is their Source, Which is far beyond human evaluation.

³ 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 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.

⁵ 5. Miracles are habits and should be involuntary. They should not be under conscious control. Consciously selected miracles can be misguided.

⁶ 6. Miracles are natural. When they do *not* occur, something has gone wrong.

⁷ 7. Miracles are everyone’s right, but purification is necessary first.

⁸ 8. Miracles are [a form of] healing. They supply a lack, and they are performed by those who temporarily have more for those who temporarily have less.

⁹ 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 10. The use of miracles as spectacles to *induce* belief is wrong, or better, is a misunderstanding of their purpose. They are really used *for* and *by* believers.

¹¹ 11. Prayer is the medium of miracles. Prayer is the natural communication of the created with the Creator. Through prayer love is received, and through miracles love is expressed.

¹² 12. Miracles are thoughts. Thoughts can represent lower-order or higher-order reality. This is the basic distinction between intellectualizing and thinking. One makes the physical and the other creates the spiritual, and we believe in

what we make or create.

¹³ 13. Miracles are both beginnings and endings. They thus 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 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 15. Each day should be devoted to miracles. The purpose of time is to enable to learn to use it constructively. Time is thus a teaching device and a means to an end. It will cease when it is no longer useful in facilitating learning.

¹⁶ 16. Miracles are teaching devices for demonstrating that it is more blessed to give than to receive. They simultaneously increase the strength of the giver and supply strength to the receiver.

¹⁷ 17. Miracles are the transcendence of the body. They are sudden shifts into invisibility, away from a sense of lower-order reality. That is why they heal.

¹⁸ 18. A miracle is a service. It is the maximal service one individual can render another. It is a way of loving your neighbor as yourself. The doer recognizes his own and his neighbor's inestimable worth simultaneously.

¹⁹ 19. [Miracles make Souls one in Christ.] They depend on cooperation because the Sonship is the sum of all the Souls God created. Miracles therefore rest on the laws of eternity, not of time.

²⁰ 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 21. Miracles are natural expressions of total forgiveness. Through miracles, man accepts God's forgiveness by extending it to others.

²² 22. Miracles are associated with fear only because of the fallacious belief that darkness can *hide*. Man believes that what he cannot see does not exist, and his physical eyes cannot see in the dark. This is a very primitive solution and has led to a denial of the Spiritual eye.¹ The escape from darkness involves two stages:

²³ A. The recognition that darkness cannot hide. This step usually entails fear.

²⁴ B. The recognition that there is nothing you *want* to hide, even if you *could*. This step brings *escape* from fear.

²⁵ 23. Miracles rearrange perception and place the levels of perception in true

¹ The term "Spiritual eye" is later replaced by the Holy Spirit, and the "physical eye" becomes the ego. The emphasis on the two ways of seeing, however, remains throughout. [Note: This footnote by the Scribes is contained in the original 1972 manuscript. -Ed.]

perspective. This heals at *all* levels, because sickness comes from confusing the levels.

²⁶ 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. Your commitment is not yet total, and that is why you still have more to learn than to teach. When your equilibrium stabilizes, you will be able to teach as much as you learn, which will give you the proper balance. Meanwhile, remember that no effort is wasted, for unless you remember this, you cannot avail yourselves of *my* efforts, which *are* limitless. Only eternity is real. Why not use the illusion of time constructively?

²⁷ 24. Miracles enable man to heal the sick and raise the dead, because he made sickness and death himself and can abolish both. *You* are a miracle, capable of creating in the likeness of your Creator. Everything else is only your own nightmare and does not exist. Only the creations of light are real.

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

²⁹ I am in charge of the process of Atonement, which I undertook to begin. When you offer a miracle unto any of my brothers, you do it unto *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. The purpose of my part in the Atonement is the canceling out of all lacks of love which men could not otherwise correct. The word “sin” should be changed to “lack of love,” because “sin” is a man-made word with threat connotations which he made up himself. No *real* threat is involved anywhere. Nothing is gained by frightening yourselves, and it is very destructive to do so.

³⁰ 26. Miracles represent *freedom* from fear. “Atoning” really means “undoing.” The undoing of fear is an essential part of the Atonement value of miracles.

³¹ 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. When you have been restored to the recognition of your original state, you naturally become part of the Atonement yourself. As you share *my* inability to tolerate lack of love in yourself and others, you *must* join the Great Crusade to correct it. The slogan for the Crusade is “Listen, learn and *do*”: Listen to my voice, learn to undo error, and *do* something to correct it. The first two are not enough. The real members of *my* party are *active* workers.

³² The power to work miracles *belongs* to you. I will provide the opportunities to do them, but *you* must be ready and willing since you are already able. Doing

them will bring conviction in the ability, since conviction really comes through accomplishment. The ability is the potential; the achievement is its expression; and the Atonement is the purpose.

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

³⁴ The disciples were specifically told to be physicians of the Lord and to heal others. They were also told to *heal themselves* and were promised that I would never leave them or forsake them. Atonement is the natural profession of the Children of God, because they have professed me. "Heaven and earth shall pass away" simply means that they will not continue to exist as separate states. My word, which is the resurrection and the light, shall not pass away, because light 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*.

³⁵ 28. Miracles are a means of organizing different levels of consciousness.

³⁶ Miracles come from the below or subconscious level. Revelations come from the above or superconscious level. The conscious level is in between and reacts to either sub- or superconscious impulses in varying ratios. Consciousness is the level which engages in the world and is capable of responding to both. Having no impulses from itself and being primarily a mechanism for inducing response, it can be very wrong.

³⁷ Revelation induces complete but temporary suspension of doubt and fear. It represents the original form of communication between God and His Souls, involving an extremely personal sense of closeness to creation which man tries to find in physical relationships. Physical closeness *cannot* achieve this. The subconscious impulses properly induce miracles, which are genuinely interpersonal and result in real closeness to others. This can be misunderstood by a *personally* willful consciousness as impulses toward physical gratification.

³⁸ Revelation unites Souls directly with God. Miracles unite [Souls] directly with each other. Neither emanates from consciousness, but both are *experienced* there. This is essential, because consciousness is the state which produces action, though it does *not* inspire it. Man is free to believe what he chooses, and what he *does* attests to what he believes. The deeper levels of his subconscious *always* contain the impulse to miracles, but he is free to fill its more superficial levels, which are closer to consciousness, with the impulses of this world and to identify himself with them. This results in *denying* himself access to the miracle level underneath. In conscious actions, then, his relationships also become superficial, and miracle-inspired relating becomes impossible.

³⁹ 29. Miracles are a way of *earning* release from fear.

⁴⁰ Revelation induces a state in which fear has *already* been abolished. Miracles are thus a means, and revelation is an end. [In this sense, they work together.] Miracles do not depend on revelation; they *induce* it. Revelation is intensely personal and cannot actually be translated into conscious content at all. That is why any attempt to describe it in words is usually incomprehensible. Revelation induces *only* experience. Miracles, on the other hand, induce [interpersonal] *action*. Miracles are more useful now because of their [*impersonal*] nature. In this phase of learning, working miracles is more important, because freedom from fear cannot be thrust upon you.

⁴¹ 30. Miracles praise God through men. They praise God by honoring His creations, affirming their perfection. They heal because they deny body-identification and affirm Soul-identification. By perceiving the spirit, they adjust the levels and see them in proper alignment. This places the spirit at the center, where Souls can communicate directly.

⁴² 31. Miracles should inspire gratitude, not awe. Man should thank God for what he really is. The Children of God are very holy, and the miracle honors their holiness.

⁴³ God's creations never lose their holiness, although it can be hidden. The miracle uncovers it and brings it into the light where it belongs. Holiness can never be really hidden in darkness, but man can deceive himself about it. This illusion makes him fearful, because he knows in his heart it *is* an illusion, and he exerts enormous efforts to establish its reality. The miracle sets reality where it belongs. Eternal reality belongs only to the Soul, and the miracle acknowledges only the truth. It thus dispels man's illusions about himself and puts him in communion with himself *and* God.

⁴⁴ 32. Christ inspires all miracles, which are really intercessions. They intercede for man's holiness and make his perceptions holy. By placing him beyond the physical laws, they raise him into the sphere of celestial order. In *this* order, man *is* perfect.

⁴⁵ The Soul never loses its communion with God. Only the mind *needs* Atonement. The miracle joins in the Atonement of Christ by placing the mind in the service of the spirit. This establishes the proper function of the mind and corrects its errors.

⁴⁶ 33. Miracles honor man *because* he is lovable. They dispel illusions about him and perceive the light in him. They thus atone for his errors by freeing him from his own nightmares. They release him from a prison in which he has imprisoned

himself, and by freeing his mind from illusions, they restore his sanity. Man's mind *can* be possessed by illusions, but his spirit is eternally free. If a mind perceives without love, it perceives an empty shell and is unaware of the spirit within it. But the Atonement restores the Soul to its proper place. The mind that serves the spirit is invulnerable.

⁴⁷ 34. Miracles restore the [Soul] to its fullness. By atoning for lack, they establish perfect protection. The strength of the Soul leaves no room for intrusions. The forgiven are filled with the Soul, and they forgive in return. It is the duty of the released to release their brothers.

⁴⁸ The forgiven *are* the means of Atonement. Those released by Christ must join in releasing their brothers, for this is the plan of the Atonement. Miracles are the way in which minds which serve the spirit unite with Christ for the salvation or release of all God's creations.

⁴⁹ 35. Miracles are expressions of love, but it does *not* follow that they will always [be effective]. 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 exhaustion, because you will act under direct communication.

⁵⁰ 36. Christ-controlled miracles are part of the Atonement, but Christ-guidance is personal [and leads to *personal* salvation]. The impersonal nature of miracles is an essential ingredient, because this enables *me* to control their distribution. Christ-guidance leads to the highly *personal* experience of revelation. This is why it involves *personal* choice. A guide does *not* control, but he *does* direct, leaving the following up to you. "Lead us not into temptation" means "guide us out of our own errors." "Take up thy cross and follow me" means, "Recognize your errors and choose to abandon them by following my guidance."

⁵¹ Remember that error cannot really threaten truth, which can *always* withstand it. *Only* the error is really vulnerable. You are free to establish your kingdom where you see fit, but the right choice is inevitable if you remember this:

⁵² *The Soul is in a state of grace forever.*

*Man's reality is **only** his Soul.*

Therefore, man is in a state of grace forever.

⁵³ Atonement undoes all errors in this respect and thus uproots the *real* source of fear. Whenever God's reassurances are experienced as threat, it is *always* because you are defending misplaced and misdirected loyalty. That is what projection

always involves. Error is lack of love. When man projects this onto others, he *does* imprison them, but only to the extent that he reinforces 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, and this undoes their distortions and frees them from prison.

⁵⁴ 37. Miracles are examples of right thinking. Reality contact at all levels becomes strong and accurate, thus permitting correct delineation of intra- and interpersonal boundaries. As a result, the doer's perceptions are aligned with truth as God created it.

⁵⁵ 38. A miracle is a correction factor introduced into false thinking by me. It acts as a catalyst, shaking up erroneous perception and reorganizing it properly. This places man under the Atonement principle, where his perception is healed. Until this has occurred, revelation of the divine order is impossible.

⁵⁶ 39. The Spiritual eye is the mechanism of miracles, because what It perceives *is* true. It perceives both the creations of God and the creations of man. Among the creations of man, it can also separate the true from the false by Its ability to perceive totally rather than selectively. It thus becomes the proper instrument for reality testing, which always involves the necessary distinction between the false and the true.

⁵⁷ 40. The miracle dissolves error, because the Spiritual eye identifies error as false or unreal. This is the same as saying that by perceiving light, darkness automatically disappears.

⁵⁸ 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" fallacy, from which *only* error can proceed. Truth is always abundant. Those who perceive and acknowledge that they have everything have no need for driven behavior of *any* kind.

⁵⁹ 41. The miracle acknowledges all men as your brothers and mine. It is a way of perceiving the universal mark of God in them. 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.

⁶⁰ "God is not mocked" is not a warning but a reassurance on this point. God *would* be mocked if any of His creations lacked holiness. The creation *is* whole, and the mark of wholeness is holiness.

⁶¹ 42. Wholeness is the perceptual content of miracles. It thus corrects or atones for the faulty perception of lack anywhere.

⁶² Here we begin to make the fundamental distinction between miracles and projection. The stimulus *must* precede the response and will also determine the kind of response that is evoked. Behavior *is* response, so that the question “response to what?” becomes crucial. Since stimuli are identified through perception, you first perceive the stimulus and then behave accordingly. It follows, then, that:

⁶³ *As ye perceive,
So shall ye behave.*

⁶⁴ The Golden Rule asks you to behave toward others as you would have them behave toward 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 accurately, because appropriate behavior *depends* on lack of level confusion. The presence of level confusion *always* results in variable reality testing and therefore in variability in behavioral appropriateness. Since you and your neighbor are equal members of the same family, as you perceive both, so you will behave toward both. The way to perceive for Golden Rule behavior is to look out from the perception of your *own* holiness and perceive the holiness of others.

⁶⁵ The emptiness engendered by fear should be replaced by love, because love and its absence are in the same dimension, and correction cannot be undertaken except *within* a dimension. Otherwise, there has been a confusion of levels. Death is a human affirmation of a belief in “[hate],” or level confusion. That is why the Bible says, “There *is* no death” and why I demonstrated that death does not exist. I came to fulfill the law by *reinterpreting* it. The law itself, if properly understood, offers only protection to man. It is those who have not yet “changed their minds” who entered the “hellfire” concept into it.

⁶⁶ 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.

⁶⁷ 43. A *major* contribution of miracles is their strength in releasing man from his misplaced sense of isolation, deprivation, and lack.

⁶⁸ Miracles are affirmations of Sonship, which is a state of completion and abundance. Whatever is true and real is eternal and *cannot* change or *be* changed. The Soul is therefore unalterable because it is *already* perfect, but the mind can

elect the level it chooses to serve. The *only* limit which is put on its choice is that it *cannot* serve two masters.

⁶⁹ The mind, if it elects to do so, becomes a medium by which the Soul 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 genuinely 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.

⁷⁰ The miracle is thus a sign that the mind has chosen to be led by Christ in His 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 *reversal* of the Golden Rule rests. As these false underpinnings are given up, the equilibrium is temporarily experienced as unstable. However, the fact is that *nothing* is less stable than an orientation that is upside down. Nor can anything which holds it that way be really conducive to greater stability.

⁷¹ 44. Miracles arise from a miraculous state of mind. By being one, this state of mind goes out to *anyone*, 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 their Creator.

⁷² 45. The miracle is an expression of an inner awareness of Christ and the acceptance of His Atonement. The mind is then in a state of grace and naturally becomes gracious both to the host within and the stranger without. By bringing in the stranger, he becomes your brother.

⁷³ 46. A miracle is never lost. It touches many people you do not even know and sometimes produces undreamed of changes in forces of which you are not even aware. That is not your concern. The miracle will always bless *you*.

⁷⁴ The 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 Christ-controlled because of His complete awareness of the whole plan. The impersonal nature of miracle-mindedness ensures *your* grace, but only Christ is in a position to know where grace can be *bestowed*.

⁷⁵ 47. Miracle-mindedness means miracle-readiness. Readiness means that you should always keep your perceptions straight, so that you will *always* be ready, willing, and able. These are the essentials for “listen, learn, and do.” You must be *ready* to listen, *willing* to learn, and *able* to do. Only the last is involuntary because it is the *application* of miracles, which must be Christ-controlled. The other two,

which are the *voluntary* aspects of miracle-mindedness, *are up to you*.

⁷⁶ 48. Awe is an inappropriate response to miracles.

⁷⁷ 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. It implies that one of a lesser order stands before a greater one. This is the case *only* when a Soul stands before its Creator. Souls are perfect creations and experience awe only in the Presence of the Creator of perfection.

⁷⁸ The miracle, on the other hand, is a sign of love among equals. Equal cannot 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 a reasonable amount of obedience for his greater wisdom. He is also entitled to love because he *is* a brother and also 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 main difference between us as yet is that I have *nothing else*. This leaves me in a state of true holiness, which is only a *potential* in you.

⁷⁹ “No man cometh unto the Father but by me” is among the most misunderstood statements in the Bible. It does *not* mean that I am in any way separate or different from you *except in time*, which does not really exist at all. Actually, the quotation is more meaningful if it is considered on a vertical rather than a horizontal axis. Regarded along the vertical, man stands below me and I stand below God. In the process of “rising up,” I *am* higher. This is because, without me, the distance between God and man would be too great for you to encompass.

⁸⁰ I bridge the distance as an elder brother to man 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 can render complete only to the extent to which I can *share* it. This may appear to contradict the statement, “I and my Father are one,” but there are still separate parts in the statement in recognition that the Father is greater. (The original statement was “are of one kind”). The Holy Spirit is the bringer of revelations. 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.

⁸¹ 49. The Holy Spirit is the highest communication medium. Miracles do not involve this type of communication, because they are *temporary* communication devices. When man returns to his original form of communication with God, the need for miracles is over. The Holy Spirit mediates higher to lower communication, keeping

the direct channel from God to man open for revelation. Revelation is not reciprocal. It is always *from* God *to* man. The miracle *is* reciprocal because it involves equality.

⁸² 50. The miracle is a learning device which lessens the need for time. In the longitudinal or horizontal plane, the recognition of the true equality of all the members of the Sonship appears to involve almost endless time. However, the sudden shift from horizontal to vertical perception which the miracle entails introduces an interval from which the doer and the receiver both emerge much farther along in time than they would otherwise have been.

⁸³ The miracle thus has the unique property of shortening time by rendering the space of time it occupies unnecessary. There is *no* relationship between the time a miracle *takes* and the time it *covers*. It substitutes for learning that might have taken thousands of years. It does this by the underlying recognition of perfect equality and holiness between the doer and the receiver on which the miracle rests.

⁸⁴ We said before that the miracle abolishes time. It does this by a process of *collapsing* it and thus abolishing certain *intervals* within it. It does this, however, *within* the larger temporal sequence. It establishes an out-of-pattern time interval which is *not* under the usual laws of time. Only in this sense is it timeless. By collapsing time, it literally saves time. Much as daylight saving time does, it rearranges the distribution of light.

⁸⁵ 51. The miracle is the only device which man has at his immediate disposal for controlling time. Only revelation *transcends* time, having nothing to do with time at all.

⁸⁶ The miracle is much like the body in that both are learning aids which aim at facilitating a state in which they are unnecessary. When the Soul's original state of direct communication is reached, neither the body nor the miracle serves any purpose. While he believes he is in a body, however, man can choose between loveless and miraculous channels of expression. He can make an empty shell, but he *cannot* express nothing at all. He can wait, delay, paralyze himself, reduce his creativity to almost nothing, and even introduce a developmental arrest or even a regression. But he *cannot* abolish his creativity. He can destroy his medium of communication but *not* his potential.

⁸⁷ Man was *not* created by his own free will alone. Only what *he* creates is his to decide. 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 because he recognizes that every collapse of time brings all men closer to the ultimate *release* from time in which the Son and the Father *are* one.

⁸⁸ Equality does not imply homogeneity *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.

⁸⁹ You who want peace can find it only by complete forgiveness. You never really *wanted* peace before, so there was no point in being told how to achieve it. No learning is acquired by anyone unless he wants to learn it and believes in some way that he *needs* it. While the concept of lack does not exist in the creation of God, it is *very* apparent in the creations of man. It is, in fact, the essential difference. A need implies lack by definition. It involves the recognition that you would be better off in a state which is somehow different from the one you are in.

⁹⁰ Until the “separation,” which is a better term than the “fall,” nothing was lacking. This meant that man had no needs at all. If he had not deprived himself, he would never have experienced them. After the separation, needs became the most powerful source of motivation for human action. All behavior is essentially motivated by needs, but behavior itself is not a divine attribute. The body is the mechanism for behavior. The belief that he *could* be better off is the reason why man has this mechanism at his disposal.

⁹¹ Each one acts according to the particular hierarchy of needs he establishes for himself. His hierarchy, in turn, depends on his perception of what he *is*—that is, what he *lacks*. A sense of separation from God is the *only* lack he really needs to correct. This sense of separation would never have occurred if he had not distorted his perception of truth and thus perceived *himself* as lacking. The concept of *any* sort of need hierarchy arose because, having made this fundamental error, he had already fragmented himself into levels with different needs. As he integrates *he* becomes one, and his needs become one accordingly.

⁹² Unified need produces unified action, because it produces a lack of ambivalence. The concept of a need hierarchy, a corollary to the original error that man can be separated from God, requires correction at its own level before the error of perceiving levels at all can be corrected. Man cannot behave effectively while he operates at split levels. However, while he does, correction must be introduced from the bottom *up*. This is because he now operates in space, where concepts such as “up” and “down” are meaningful. Ultimately, space is as meaningless as time. The concept is really one of space-time *belief*.

⁹³ The physical world exists only because man can use it to correct his *unbelief*, which placed him in it originally. He can never control the effects of fear himself because he *made* fear and believes in what he made. In attitude, then, though *not* in content, he resembles his own Creator, Who has perfect faith in His creations *because* He created them. Belief in a creation produces its existence. That is why a man can believe in what no one else thinks is true. It is true for him because it was made *by* him.

⁹⁴ Every aspect of fear proceeds from upside-down perception. The more truly creative devote their efforts to correcting perceptual distortions. The neurotic devotes his to compromise. The psychotic tries to escape by establishing the certain truth of his own errors. It is most difficult to free him by ordinary means because he is more consistent in his own denial of truth. The miracle, however, makes no such distinctions. It corrects errors *because* they are errors. Thus, the next point to remember about miracles is:

⁹⁵ 52. 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.

⁹⁶ Christ-controlled 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, Christ-control takes no account at all of the magnitude of the miracle itself because the concept of size exists in a plane that is itself unreal. Since the miracle aims at *restoring* the awareness of reality, it would hardly be useful if it were bound by the laws which govern the error it aims to correct. Only man makes this kind of mistake. It is an example of the foolish consistency which his own false beliefs have engendered.

⁹⁷ The power and strength of man's creative will must be understood before the real meaning of denial can be appreciated and relinquished. It is *not* mere negation. It is a positive miscreation. While the miscreation is *necessarily* believed in by its maker, it does not exist at all at the level of true creation.

⁹⁸ 53. The miracle compares what man has made with the higher level creation, accepting what is *in accord* as true and rejecting the *discordant* as false. *All* aspects of fear are untrue because they do not exist at the higher creative level, and therefore do not exist at all. To whatever extent a man is willing to submit his beliefs to this test, to that extent are perceptions corrected.

⁹⁹ In sorting out the false from the true, the miracle proceeds along the following lines:

¹⁰⁰ *If perfect love casts out fear,
And if fear exists,
Then there is **not** perfect love.
But only perfect love **really** exists.
If there **is** fear,
It creates a state which does not exist.*

¹⁰¹ Believe this and you *will* be free. Only God can establish this solution, and *this* faith is His gift.

II. DISTORTIONS OF MIRACLE IMPULSES

¹⁰² You are involved in unconscious distortions which are producing a dense cover over miracle impulses and which make it hard for them to reach consciousness. The nature of any interpersonal relationship is limited or defined by what you want it to *do*. Relating is a way of achieving an outcome. The danger of defenses lies in their propensity for holding misperceptions rigidly in place. All actions which stem from reverse thinking are literally the behavioral expressions of those who know not what they do. A rigid orientation can be extremely reliable, even if it is upside-down. In fact, the more consistently upside-down it is, the *more* reliable it is.

¹⁰³ However, validity is still the ultimate goal, which reliability can only serve. Hostility, triumph, vengeance, self-debasement, and all kinds of expressions of lack of love are often very clearly seen in the fantasies which accompany them. But it is a *profound* error to imagine that because these fantasies are so frequent or occur so reliably that this implies validity. Remember that while validity implies reliability, the relationship is *not* reversible. You can be wholly reliable and *entirely* wrong. While a reliable instrument *does* measure something, what *use* is it unless you discover what the “something” is? This course, then, will concentrate on validity and let reliability fall naturally into place.

¹⁰⁴ The confusion of miracle impulses with physical impulses is a major source of perceptual distortion because it *induces*, rather than straightens out, the basic level confusion which underlies the perception of all those who seek happiness with the instruments of this world. Inappropriate physical impulses (or misdirected miracle impulses) result in conscious guilt if expressed and depression if denied. *All* real pleasure comes from doing God’s Will. This is because *not* doing it is a denial of self. *Denial* of error results in projection. *Correction* of error brings release. “Lead us not into temptation” means “do not let us deceive ourselves into believing that

we can relate in peace to God or to our brothers with *anything* external.”

¹⁰⁵ Child of God, you were created to create the good, the beautiful, and the holy. Do not lose sight of this. The love of God for a little while must still be expressed through one body to another, because the real vision is still so dim. Everyone can use his body best by enlarging man’s perception so he can see the *real* vision. *This* vision is invisible to the physical eye. The ultimate purpose of the body is to render itself unnecessary. Learning to do this is the only real reason for its creation.

¹⁰⁶ Fantasies of any kind are distorted forms of thinking, because they *always* involve twisting perception into unreality. Fantasy is a debased form of vision. Vision and revelation are closely related, while fantasy and projection are more closely associated, because both attempt to control external reality according to false internal needs. Twist reality in *any* way, and you are perceiving destructively. Reality was lost through usurpation, which in turn produced tyranny. I told you that you are now restored to your former role in the plan of Atonement, but you must still choose freely to devote yourselves to the greater restoration. As long as a single slave remains to walk the earth, your release is not complete. *Complete* restoration of the Sonship is the only true goal of the miracle-minded.

¹⁰⁷ *No* fantasies are true. They are distortions of perception by definition. They are a means of making false associations and obtaining pleasure from them. Man can do this only because he *is* creative. But, although he can perceive false associations, he can never make them real *except to himself*. Man believes in what he creates. If he creates miracles, he will be equally strong in his belief in *them*. The strength of *his* conviction will then sustain the belief of the miracle receiver. And fantasies become totally unnecessary as the wholly satisfying nature of reality becomes apparent to both.

The Illusion of Separation

I. INTRODUCTION

This section deals with a fundamental misuse of knowledge, referred to in the Bible as the cause of the “fall,” or separation. There are some definitions which I asked you to take from the dictionary which will be helpful here. They are somewhat unusual since they are not the first definitions which are given. Nevertheless, the fact that each of them does appear in the dictionary should be reassuring.

² *Project* (verb): to extend forward or out.

Project (noun): a plan in the mind.

World: a natural grand division.

³ We will refer later to projection as related to both mental health and mental illness. We have already observed that man can create an empty shell, but he cannot create nothing at all. This emptiness provides the screen for the misuse of projection.

⁴ The Garden of Eden, which is described as a literal garden in the Bible, was not an actual garden at all. It was merely a mental state of complete need-lack. Even in the literal account, it is noteworthy that the pre-separation state was essentially one in which man needed nothing. The “tree of knowledge” is also an overly literal figure. These concepts need to be clarified before the real meaning of the separation, or the “detour into fear,” can be fully understood.

⁵ To “project,” as defined above, is a fundamental attribute of God which He gave to His Son. In the creation, God projected His creative ability from Himself to the Souls He created, and He also imbued them with the same loving will to create. The Soul has not only been fully created but has also been created perfect. There is *no* emptiness in it. Because of its likeness to its Creator, it is creative. No Child of God can lose this ability because it is inherent in what he *is*, but he *can* use it inappropriately. Whenever projection is used inappropriately, it *always*

implies that some emptiness or lack exists and that it is in man's ability to put his *own* ideas there *instead* of truth.

⁶ If you consider carefully what this entails, the following will become quite apparent:

⁷ First, the assumption is implicit that what God created can be *changed* by the mind of man.

⁸ Second, the concept that what is perfect can be rendered imperfect or wanting is accepted.

⁹ Third, the belief that man can distort the creations of God, *including himself*, is accepted.

¹⁰ Fourth, the idea that since man can create himself, the direction of his own creation is up to *him* is implied.

¹¹ These related distortions represent a picture of what actually occurred in the separation. None of this existed before, nor does it actually exist now. The world *was* made as "a natural grand division," or a projecting outward of God. That is why everything that He created is like Him. Projection, as undertaken by God, is very similar to the kind of inner radiance which the Children of the Father inherit from Him. It is important to note that the term "project outward" necessarily implies that the *real* source of projection is internal. This is as true of the Son as of the Father.

¹² The world, in the original connotation of the term, included both the proper creation of man by God *and* the proper creation by man in his right mind. The latter required the endowment of man by God with free will because *all* loving creation is freely given. Nothing in these statements implies any sort of level involvement or in fact anything except one continuous line of creation in which all aspects are of the same order.

¹³ When the "lies of the serpent" were introduced, they were specifically called "lies" because they are not true. When man listened, all he heard was untruth. He does not have to continue to believe what is not true unless he chooses to do so. All of his miscreations can literally disappear in "the twinkling of an eye" because they are merely visual misperceptions. Man's Spiritual eye can sleep, but a sleeping eye can still see. What is seen in dreams seems to be very real. The Bible mentions that "a deep sleep fell upon Adam," and nowhere is there any reference to his waking up.

¹⁴ The history of man in the world as he sees it has not yet been marked by any genuine or comprehensive reawakening or rebirth. This is impossible as long as man projects in the spirit of miscreation. It still remains within him, however, to

project as God projected His own Spirit to him. In reality, this is his *only* choice, because his free will was given him for his own joy in creating the perfect.

¹⁵ All fear is ultimately reducible to the basic misperception that man has the ability to *usurp* the power of God. It can only be emphasized that he neither *can* nor *has been* able to do this. In this fact lies the real justification for his escape from fear. The escape is brought about by his acceptance of the Atonement, which places him in a position to realize that his own errors never really occurred. When the “deep sleep” fell upon Adam, he was in a condition to experience nightmares *because* he was asleep. If a light is suddenly turned on while someone is dreaming a fearful dream, he may initially interpret the light itself as a part of his own dream and be afraid of it. However, when he awakens the light is correctly perceived as the *release* from the dream, which is no longer accorded reality.

¹⁶ It is quite apparent that this release does *not* depend on the kind of “knowledge” which is nothing more than deceiving lies. The knowledge which illuminates rather than obscures is the knowledge which not only *sets* you free, but which 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 *all* kinds of errors on the other. Some miracles may *seem* to be of greater magnitude than others. But remember the first point in this course---that there is *no* order of difficulty in miracles.

¹⁷ In reality, you are perfectly unaffected by *all* expressions of lack of love. These can be either from yourself *and* others or from yourself *to* others or from others *to* you. Peace is an attribute in *you*. You cannot find it outside. All mental illness is some form of *external* searching. Mental health is *inner* peace. It enables you to remain unshaken by lack of love from without and capable through your own miracles of correcting the external conditions which proceed from lack of love in others.

II. THE REINTERPRETATION OF DEFENSES

¹⁸ 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. This means that you believe in what you *value*. If you are afraid, you are *valuing wrongly*. Human understanding will inevitably value wrongly and, by endowing all human thoughts with equal power, will inevitably *destroy* peace. That is why the Bible speaks of “the peace of God which *passeth* (human) understanding.” *This* peace is totally incapable of being shaken by human errors of *any* kind. It denies the ability of *anything* which is not of God to affect you in *any* way.

¹⁹ 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 device but a correction device. The “right mind” of the mentally healthy *depends* on it. 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 good they cannot do, but they cannot be performed in the spirit of doubt.

²⁰ God and the Souls He created are *completely* dependent on each other. The creation of the Soul has already been perfectly accomplished, but the creation *by* Souls has not. God created Souls so He could depend on them *because* He created them perfectly. He gave them His peace so they could not be shaken and would be unable to be deceived. Whenever you are afraid, you *are* deceived. Your mind is *not* serving the Soul. This literally starves the Soul by denying its daily bread. God offers *only* mercy. *Your* words should reflect only mercy because that is what you have received, and that is what you should *give*.

²¹ Justice is a temporary expedient or an attempt to teach man the meaning of mercy. Its judgmental side arises only because man is capable of *injustice* if that is what his mind creates. You are afraid of God’s Will because you have used your own will, which He created in the likeness of His own, to *miscreate*. What you do *not* realize is that the mind can miscreate *only* when it is *not* free. An imprisoned mind is not free by definition. It is possessed or held back by *itself*. Its will is therefore limited and is not free to assert itself. The real meaning of “are of one kind,” which was mentioned before, is “are of one mind or will.” When the will of the Sonship and the Father are one, their perfect accord *is* Heaven.

²² Denial of error is a powerful defense of truth. You will note that we have been shifting the emphasis from the negative to the positive use of denial. As we have already stated, denial is not a purely negative device; it results in positive miscreation. That is the way the mentally ill *do* employ it. But remember a very early thought of your own—“Never underestimate the power of denial.” In the service of the “right mind,” the denial of *error* frees the mind and reestablishes the freedom of the will. When the will is *really* free, it *cannot* miscreate because it recognizes *only* truth.

²³ False projection arises out of false denial, *not* out of its proper use. My own role in the Atonement is one of *true* projection; I can project to *you* the affirmation of truth. If you project error to me or to yourself, you are interfering with the

process. *My* use of projection, which can also be yours, is *not* based on faulty denial. It *does* involve, however, the very powerful use of the denial of errors. The miracle worker is one who accepts my kind of denial and projection, unites his own inherent abilities to deny and project with mine, and imposes them back on himself and others. This establishes the total *lack* of threat anywhere. Together we can then work for the real time of peace, which is eternal.

²⁴ The improper use of defenses is quite widely recognized, but their proper use had not been sufficiently understood as yet. They can *indeed* create man's perception both of himself and of the world. They can distort or correct depending on what you use them *for*.

²⁵ Denial should be directed only to error, and projection should be reserved only for truth. You should truly give as you have truly received. The Golden Rule can work effectively only on this basis.

²⁶ Intellectualization is a term which stems from the mind-brain confusion. "Right-mindedness" is the device which defends the *right* mind and gives it control over the body. "Intellectualization" implies a split, while "right-mindedness" involves healing.

²⁷ Withdrawal is properly employed in the service of withdrawing from the meaningless. It is *not* a device for escape, but for consolidation. There *is* only One Mind.

²⁸ Dissociation is quite similar. You *should* split off or dissociate yourself from error but only in defense of integration.

²⁹ Detachment is essentially a weaker form of dissociation.

³⁰ Flight can be undertaken in whatever direction you choose, but note that the concept itself implies flight *from* something. Flight from error is perfectly appropriate.

³¹ Distantiation can be properly used as a way of putting distance between yourself and what you *should* fly from.

³² Regression is an effort to return to your own original state. It can thus be utilized to *restore*, rather than to go back to the *less* mature.

³³ Sublimation should be a redirection of effort to the sublime.

³⁴ There are many other so-called "dynamic" concepts which are profound errors due essentially to the misuse of defenses. Among them is the concept of different levels of aspiration, which actually result from level confusion. However, the main point to be understood from this section is that you can defend truth as well as error and, in fact, much better.

³⁵ The means are easier to clarify after the value of the goal itself is firmly established. Everyone defends his own treasure. You do not have to tell him to do so because he will do it automatically. The real questions still remain. *What* do you treasure, and *how much* do you treasure it? Once you have learned to consider these two questions and to bring them into *all* your actions as the true criteria for behavior, I will have little difficulty in clarifying the means. You have not learned to be consistent about this as yet. I have therefore concentrated on showing you that the means *are* available whenever you *ask*. You can, however, save a lot of time if you do not extend this step unduly. The correct focus will shorten it immeasurably.

³⁶ The Atonement is the *only* defense which cannot be used destructively. That is because, while everyone must eventually join it, it is *not* a device which was generated by man. The Atonement *principle* was in effect long before the Atonement itself began. The principle was love, and the Atonement itself was an *act* of love. Acts were not necessary before the separation because the time-space belief did not exist. It was only after the separation that the defense of Atonement and the necessary conditions for its fulfillment were planned.

³⁷ It became increasingly apparent that all of the defenses which man can choose to use constructively *or* destructively were not enough to save him. It was therefore decided that he needed a defense which was so splendid that he could not misuse it, although he *could* refuse it. His choice could not, however, turn it into a weapon of attack, which is the inherent characteristic of all other defenses. The Atonement thus becomes the *only* defense which is *not* a two-edged sword.

³⁸ The Atonement actually began long before the crucifixion. Many Souls offered their efforts on behalf of the separated ones, but they could not withstand the strength of the attack and had to be brought back. Angels came, too, but their protection did not suffice because the separated ones were not interested in peace. They had already split their minds and were bent on further dividing rather than reintegrating. The levels they introduced into their minds turned against each other, and they established differences, divisions, cleavages, dispersions, and all the other concepts related to the increasing splits which they produced.

³⁹ Not being in their right minds, they turned their defenses from protection to assault and acted literally insanely. It was essential to introduce a split-proof device which could be used *only* to heal, if it were used at all. The Atonement was built into the space-time belief in order to set a limit on the need for the belief 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 of understanding is no longer necessary. The eternally creative have nothing to learn. Only after the separation was it necessary to direct the creative forces to learning because changed behavior had become mandatory.

⁴⁰ Men can learn to improve their behavior and can also learn to become better and better learners. This serves to bring them 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 are different degrees is learning meaningful. The “evolution” of man is merely a process by which he proceeds from one degree to the next. He corrects his previous missteps by stepping forward. This represents a process which is actually incomprehensible in temporal terms because he *returns* as he goes forward.

⁴¹ The Atonement is the device by which he can free himself from the past as he goes ahead. It *undoes* his past errors, thus making it unnecessary for him to keep retracing his steps without advancing to his return. In this sense the Atonement saves time but, like the miracle which serves it, does *not* abolish it. As long as there is need for Atonement, there is need for time. But the Atonement as a completed plan does have a unique relationship *to* time. Until the Atonement is finished, its various phases will proceed *in* time, but the whole Atonement stands at time’s end. At this point, the bridge of the return has been built.

⁴² The Atonement is a *total* commitment. You still think this is associated with loss. This is the same mistake *all* the separated ones make in one way or another. They cannot believe that a defense which 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 turn against the self very unexpectedly. This tendency cannot be controlled *except* by miracles.

⁴³ The miracle turns the defense of Atonement to the protection of the inner self, which, as it becomes more and more secure, assumes its natural talent of protecting others. The inner self knows itself as both a brother *and* a Son. You know that when defenses are disrupted, there is a period of real disorientation accompanied by fear, guilt, and usually vacillations between anxiety and depression. This course is different in that defenses are *not* being disrupted but *reinterpreted*, even though you may experience it as the same thing. In the reinterpretation of defenses, only their use for *attack* is lost. Since this means they can be used only *one* way, they become much stronger and much more dependable. They no longer oppose the Atonement but greatly facilitate it.

⁴⁴ The Atonement can only be accepted *within* you. You have perceived it largely as *external* thus far, and that is why your experience of it has been minimal. The reinterpretation of defenses is essential in releasing the *inner* light. Since the separation, man's defenses have been used almost entirely to defend himself *against* the Atonement and thus maintain the separation. They themselves generally see this as a need to protect the *body*. The many body fantasies with which men's minds are engaged arise from the distorted belief that the body can be used as a means for attaining "atonement."

⁴⁵ Perceiving the body as a temple is only the first step in correcting this kind of distortion. It alters part of the misperception but not all of it. It *does* recognize, however, that the concept of Atonement in physical terms is not appropriate. However, the next step is to realize that a temple is not a building at all. Its *real* holiness lies in the *inner* altar around which the building is built. The inappropriate emphasis men have put on beautiful church buildings is a sign of their *fear* of Atonement and their unwillingness to reach the altar itself. The *real* beauty of the temple cannot be seen with the physical eye. The Spiritual eye, on the other hand, cannot see the building at all because it has perfect sight. It *can*, however, see the altar with *perfect* clarity.

⁴⁶ 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 of the mind which must be undone. This is what is meant by "the restoration of the temple." It does not mean the restoration of the building but the opening of the altar to receive the Atonement. This heals the separation and places *within* man the one defense against *all* separation mind-errors which can make him perfectly invulnerable.

⁴⁷ The acceptance of the Atonement by everyone is only a matter of time. In fact, both time *and* matter were created for this purpose. This appears to contradict free will because of the inevitability of the final decision. If you review the idea carefully, however, you will realize that this is not true. Everything is limited in some way by the manner of its creation. Free will can temporize and is capable of enormous procrastination. But it cannot depart entirely from its Creator, Who set the limits on its ability to miscreate by virtue of its own *real* purpose.

⁴⁸ The misuse of will engenders a situation which in the extreme becomes altogether intolerable. Pain thresholds can be high, but they are not limitless. Eventually everyone begins to recognize, however dimly, that there *must* be a better way. As this recognition becomes more firmly established, it becomes a perceptual

turning-point. This ultimately reawakens the Spiritual eye, simultaneously weakening the investment in physical sight. The alternating investment in the two types or levels of perception is usually experienced as conflict for a long time and can become very acute, but the outcome is as certain as God.

⁴⁹ The Spiritual eye literally *cannot see* error and merely looks for Atonement. All the solutions which the physical eyes seek dissolve in its sight. The Spiritual eye, which looks within, 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 real strength of *Its* vision, It pulls the will into Its service and impels the mind to concur. This reestablishes the true power of the will and makes it increasingly unable to tolerate delay. The mind then realizes with increasing certainty that delay is only a way of increasing unnecessary pain, which it need not tolerate at all. The pain threshold drops accordingly, and the mind becomes increasingly sensitive to what it would once have regarded as very minor intrusions of discomfort.

⁵⁰ The Children of God are *entitled* to perfect comfort, which comes from a sense of 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 is *already* provided and does not involve any effort at all on their part. Their egocentricity usually misperceives this as personally insulting, an interpretation which obviously arises from their misperception of themselves. Egocentricity and communion *cannot* coexist. Even the terms are contradictory.

⁵¹ The Atonement is the only gift that is worthy of being offered to the altar of God. This is because of the inestimable value of the altar itself. It was created perfect and is entirely worthy of receiving perfection. God *is* lonely without His Souls, and *they* are lonely without Him. Men must learn to perceive the world as a means of *healing* the separation. The Atonement is the *guarantee* that they will ultimately succeed.

III. HEALING AS RELEASE FROM FEAR

⁵² The emphasis will now be on healing. The miracle is the means, the Atonement is the principle, and healing is the result. Those who speak of “a miracle of healing” are combining two orders of reality inappropriately. Healing is *not* a miracle. The Atonement or the final miracle is a *remedy*, while any type of healing is a result. The *kind* of error to which Atonement is applied is irrelevant. Essentially, *all* healing is the release from fear. To undertake this, you *cannot* be fearful yourself. You do not understand healing because of your *own* fear.

⁵³ A major step in the Atonement plan is to undo error at *all* levels. Illness, which is really “not-right-mindedness,” is the result of level confusion in the sense that it always entails the belief that what is amiss in one level can adversely affect another. We have constantly referred to miracles as the means of correcting level confusion, and all mistakes must be corrected at the level on which they occur. Only the *mind* is capable of error. The body can *act* erroneously, but this is only because it is responding to mis-thought. The body cannot create, and the belief that it *can*, a fundamental error, produces all physical symptoms.

⁵⁴ All physical illness represents a belief in magic. The whole distortion which created 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. If it is understood that the mind, which is the *only* level of creation, cannot create beyond itself, neither type of confusion need occur.

⁵⁵ The reason only the mind can create is more obvious than may be immediately apparent. The Soul *has been* created. The body is a learning device for the mind. Learning devices are not lessons in themselves. Their purpose is merely to facilitate the thinking of the learner. The most that 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.

⁵⁶ 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 a fact in human experience. Its abilities can be and frequently are over-evaluated. However, it is almost impossible to deny its existence. Those who do so are engaging in a particularly unworthy form of denial. The term “unworthy” here implies simply that it is not necessary to protect the mind by denying the unmindful. [There is little doubt that the mind can miscreate.] If one denies this unfortunate aspect of the mind’s power, one is also denying the power itself.

⁵⁷ All material means which man accepts as remedies for bodily ills are merely restatements of magic principles. It was the first level of the error to believe that the body created its own illness. It is a second misstep to attempt to heal it through non-creative agents. It does not follow, however, that the use of these very weak corrective devices is evil. Sometimes the illness has a sufficiently great hold over a mind to render a person inaccessible to 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.

⁵⁸ 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 inappropriately exposed to an “undiluted” miracle, they may be precipitated into panic. This is particularly likely to occur when upside-down perception has induced the belief that miracles are frightening.

⁵⁹ The value of the Atonement does not lie in the manner in which it is expressed. In fact, if it is truly used, it will inevitably *be* expressed in whatever way is most helpful to the receiver[, not the giver]. This means that a miracle, to attain its full efficacy, *must* be expressed in a language which the recipient can understand *without* fear. It does not follow by any means 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 impose regression in the improper sense upon it.

⁶⁰ 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 very prevalent. This misperception arose from the underlying misbelief that harm can be limited to the body. This was because of the much greater fear that the mind can hurt itself. Neither error is really 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.

⁶¹ It is essential to remember that *only* the mind can create. Implicit in this is the corollary that correction belongs at the *thought* level. To repeat an earlier statement and to extend it somewhat, the Soul is already perfect and therefore does not require correction. The body does not really exist except as a learning device for the mind. This learning device is *not* subject to errors of its own because it was created but is *not* creating. It should be obvious, then, that correcting the creator or inducing it to give up its miscreations is the only application of creative ability which is truly meaningful.

⁶² Magic is essentially mindless or the miscreative use of the mind. Physical medications are forms of “spells.” Those who are *afraid* to use the mind to heal should not attempt to do so. The very fact that they *are* afraid has made them vulnerable to miscreation. They are therefore likely to misunderstand any healing they might induce and, because egocentricity and fear usually occur together, may be unable to accept the real Source of the healing. Under these conditions, it is safer for them to rely *temporarily* on physical healing devices, because they cannot

misperceive them as their own creations. As long as their sense of vulnerability persists, they should be preserved from even attempting miracles.

⁶³ We have already said that the miracle is an expression of miracle-mindedness. Miracle-mindedness merely means right-mindedness in the sense that we are now using it. The right-minded neither exalt nor depreciate the mind of the miracle worker *or* the miracle receiver. However, as a creative act, 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 or he will be unable to reestablish right-mindedness in someone else.

⁶⁴ The healer who relies on his *own* readiness is endangering his understanding. He is perfectly safe as long as he is completely unconcerned about *his* readiness but maintains a consistent trust in *mine*. If your miracle working propensities are not functioning properly, it is *always* because fear has intruded on your right-mindedness and has literally upset it (or turned it upside-down). All forms of not-right-mindedness are the result of refusal to accept the Atonement *for yourself*. If the miracle worker *does* accept it, he places himself in a position to recognize that those who need to be healed are simply those who have not realized that right-mindedness *is* healing.

⁶⁵ The *sole* responsibility of the miracle worker is to accept the Atonement for himself. This means that he recognizes that mind is the only creative level and that its errors *are* healed by the Atonement. Once he accepts this, his mind can *only* heal. By denying his mind any destructive potential and reinstating its purely constructive powers, he has placed himself in a position where he can undo the level confusion of others. The message he then gives to others is the truth that *their* minds are similarly constructive and that *their* miscreations cannot hurt them. By affirming this, the miracle worker releases the mind from over-evaluating its own learning device (the body) and restores the mind to its true position as the learner.

⁶⁶ 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. The Soul is already illuminated, and the body in itself is too dense. The mind, however, can bring *its* illumination *to* the body by recognizing that density is the opposite of intelligence and therefore unamenable to independent learning. It is, however, easily brought into alignment with a mind which has learned to look beyond density toward light.

⁶⁷ Corrective learning always begins with the awakening of the Spiritual eye and the turning away from the belief in physical sight. The reason this so often entails fear is because man is afraid of what his Spiritual eye will see. We said before that the Spiritual eye cannot see error and is capable only of looking beyond it to the defense of Atonement. There is no doubt that the Spiritual eye *does* produce extreme discomfort by what it sees. Yet what man forgets is that the discomfort is *not* the final outcome of its perception. When the Spiritual eye is permitted to look upon the defilement of the altar, it also looks *immediately* toward the Atonement.

⁶⁸ *Nothing* the Spiritual eye perceives can induce fear. *Everything* that results from accurate spiritual awareness is merely channelized toward correction. Discomfort is aroused only to bring the *need* for correction forcibly into awareness. What the physical eye sees is *not* corrective nor can it be corrected by *any* device which can be seen physically. As long as a man believes in what his physical sight tells him, *all* his corrective behavior will be misdirected. The *real* vision is obscured, because man cannot endure to see his own defiled altar. But since the altar *has* been defiled, his state becomes doubly dangerous unless it *is* perceived.

⁶⁹ The fear of healing arises, in the end, from an unwillingness to accept the unequivocal fact that healing is necessary. Man is not willing to look on what he has done *to himself*. Healing is an ability lent to man after the separation, before which it was completely unnecessary. Like all aspects of the space-time belief, healing ability is temporary. However, as long as time persists, healing is needed as a means for human protection. This is because healing rests on charity, and charity is a way of perceiving the perfection of another even if he cannot perceive it himself.

⁷⁰ Most of the loftier concepts of which man is capable now are time-dependent. Charity is really a weaker reflection of a much more powerful love-encompassment which is *far* beyond any form of charity that man can conceive of as yet. Charity is essential to right-mindedness in the limited sense in which right-mindedness 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 for charity. The charity which is accorded him is both an acknowledgment that he *is* weak and a recognition that he *could be* stronger.

⁷¹ The way in which both of these perceptions are stated clearly implies their dependence on time, making it quite apparent that charity lies within the human limitations, though toward its higher levels. We said before that only revelation transcends time. The miracle, as an expression of true human charity, can only shorten

time at most. It must be understood, however, that whenever a man offers a miracle to another, he is shortening the suffering of *both*. This introduces a correction into the whole record which corrects retroactively as well as progressively.

IV. FEAR AS LACK OF LOVE

⁷² You believe that “being afraid” is involuntary, something beyond your control. Yet I have told you several times that only *constructive* acts should be involuntary. We have said that Christ-control can take over everything that does *not* matter, while Christ-guidance can direct everything that *does* if you so choose. Fear cannot be Christ-controlled, but it *can* be self-controlled. It *prevents* me from controlling it. The correction is therefore a matter of *your* will, because its presence shows that you have raised the *unimportant* to a higher level than it warrants. You have thus brought it under *your* will, where it does not belong. This means that *you* feel responsible for it. The level confusion here is obvious.

⁷³ The reason I cannot control fear for you is that you are attempting to raise to the mind level the proper content of lower-order reality. I do not foster level confusion, but *you* can choose to correct it. You would not tolerate insane *behavior* on your part and would hardly advance the excuse that you could not help it. Why should you tolerate insane *thinking*? There is a confusion here which you would do well to look at clearly. *You* 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.

⁷⁴ 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 or 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 willed wrongly. This is why you feel responsible for it. You must change your *mind*, not your behavior, and this *is* a matter of will.

⁷⁵ You do not need guidance *except* at the mind level. Correction belongs *only* at the level where creation is possible. The term 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 which have brought the fear about. These conditions *always* entail a separated mind willingness. At that level, you *can* help it. You are much too tolerant of mind wandering, thus passively condoning its

miscreations. The particular result does not matter, but the fundamental error *does*. The correction is always the same. Before you will to do anything, ask me if your will is in accord with mine. If you are sure that it is, there will *be* no fear.

⁷⁶ Fear is always a sign of strain, which arises whenever the *will* to do conflicts with *what* you do. This situation arises in two ways:

⁷⁷ First, you can will to do conflicting things, either simultaneously or successively.

This produces conflicted behavior, which is intolerable to yourself because the part of the will that wants to do something *else* is outraged.

⁷⁸ Second, you can *behave* as you think you should but without entirely *willing* to do so. This produces consistent behavior but entails great strain *within* the self.

⁷⁹ In both cases, the will and the behavior are out of accord, resulting in a situation in which you are doing what you do *not* will. This arouses a sense of coercion, which usually produces rage. The rage then invades the mind and projection in the wrong sense is likely to follow. Depression or anxiety is virtually certain. ²

⁸⁰ Remember that whenever there is fear, it is because you have *not made up your mind*. Your will is split, and your behavior inevitably becomes erratic. Correcting at the behavioral level can shift the error from the first to the second type of strain described above but will *not* obliterate the fear. It is possible to reach a state in which you bring your will under my guidance without much conscious effort, but this implies habit patterns which you have not developed dependably as yet. God cannot ask *more* than you will. The strength to *do* comes from your own undivided *will* to do. There is *no* strain in doing God's Will as soon as you recognize that it is also your *own*.

⁸¹ 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 wills, thus producing inevitable strain because willing and doing become discordant. This cannot be corrected by better *doing*, but it *can* be corrected by higher *willing*.

V. THE CORRECTION FOR LACK OF LOVE

⁸² The first corrective step is *know first* that this is an expression of fear. Then ^{say} to yourself that you must somehow have willed not to love, or the fear which arises from behavior-will conflict could not have arisen. Then the whole process

² Starting with the 2012 Printing, a paragraph break was added at 2.79, which had previously been shown as part of 2.78. Paragraphs 80 through the end of Chapter 2 have been renumbered. —Ed.

is nothing more than a series of pragmatic steps in the larger process of accepting the Atonement as *the* remedy. These steps can be summarized as follows:

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

⁸⁷ We have emphasized that the miracle, or the *expression* of Atonement, is always a sign of real respect *from* the worthy *to* the worthy. 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, because you have done something loveless, having willed without love. This is precisely the situation for which the Atonement was offered. The need for the remedy inspired its creation. As long as you recognize only the need for the remedy, you will remain fearful. However, as soon as you *remedy* it, you have also abolished the fear. This is how true healing occurs.

⁸⁸ Everyone experiences fear, and no one enjoys it. Yet it would take very little right-thinking to realize why fear occurs. Very few people appreciate the real power of the mind, and no one remains fully aware of it all the time. However, if anyone hopes to spare himself from fear, there are some things he must realize and realize fully. The mind is a very powerful creator, and it never loses its creative force. It never sleeps. Every instant it is creating and *always* as you will. Many of your ordinary expressions reflect this. For example, when you say, “Don’t give it a thought,” you imply that if you do not think about something, it will have no effect on you. And this is true enough.

⁸⁹ On the other hand, many other expressions clearly illustrate the prevailing *lack* of awareness of thought-power. For example, you say, “Just an idle thought,” and mean that the thought has no effect. You also speak of some actions as “thoughtless,” implying that if the person had thought, he would not behave as he did. While expressions like “think big” give some recognition to the power of thought, they still come nowhere near the truth. You do not expect to grow when you say it, because you do not really think that you will.

⁹⁰ 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 merely arrogant, but that is not the real reason why you do not believe it. People *prefer* to believe that their thoughts cannot exert real control, because they are literally *afraid* of them. Many psychotherapists attempt to help people who are afraid, say, of their death wishes by depreciating the power

of the wish. They even try to “free” the patient by persuading him that he can think whatever he wants without any *real* effect at all.

⁹¹ There is a real dilemma here which only the truly right-minded can escape. Death wishes do not kill in the physical sense, but they *do* kill spiritual awareness. *All* destructive thinking is dangerous. Given a death wish, a man has no choice except to *act* upon the thought or behave *contrary* to it. He thus chooses *only* between homicide and fear. The other possibility is that he depreciates the power of his thought. This is the usual psychoanalytic approach. It *does* allay guilt but at the cost of rendering thinking impotent. If you believe that what you think is ineffectual you may cease to be overly afraid of it, but you are hardly likely to respect it.

⁹² The world is full of examples of how man has depreciated himself because he is afraid of his own thoughts. In some forms of insanity, thoughts are glorified, but this is only because the underlying depreciation was too effective for tolerance. The truth is that there *are* no “idle” thoughts. *All* thinking produces form at some level. The reason people are afraid of ESP and so often react against it is because they *know* that thoughts can hurt them. Their own thoughts have made them vulnerable.

⁹³ You who constantly complain about fear still persist in creating it. I told you before that you cannot ask *me* to release you from fear because I *know* it does not exist, but *you* do not. If I merely 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 in this world. I would hardly help 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 except for a small part of the day and somewhat inconsistently even then. You may feel at this point that it would take a miracle to enable you to do this, which is perfectly true.

⁹⁴ Men are not used to miraculous thinking, but they can be *trained* to think that way. All miracle workers need that kind of training. I cannot let them leave their minds unguarded, or they will not be able to help me. Miracle working entails a full realization of the power of thought and real avoidance of miscreation. Otherwise, a miracle will be necessary to set the mind *itself* straight, a circular process which would hardly foster the time collapse for which the miracle was intended. Nor would it induce the healthy respect for true cause and effect which every miracle worker must have.

⁹⁵ [Miracles cannot free the miracles worker from fear.] Both miracles *and* fear

come from thoughts, and if you were not free to come from thoughts, and if you were not free to choose one, you would also not be free to choose the other. By choosing the miracle, you *have* rejected fear. You have been afraid of God, of me, of yourselves, and of practically everyone you know at one time or another. This is because you have misperceived or miscreated us and believe in what you have made. You would never have done this if you were not afraid of your own thoughts. The vulnerable are essentially miscreators because they misperceive creation.

⁹⁶ You persist in believing that when you do not consciously watch your mind, it is unmindful. It is time, however, to consider the whole world of the unconscious or “unwatched” mind. This may well frighten you because it is the *source* of fear. The unwatched mind is responsible for the whole content of the unconscious which lies *above* the miracle level. All psychoanalytic theorists have made some contribution in this connection, but none of them has seen it in its true entirety. They have all made one common error in that they attempted to uncover unconscious *content*. You cannot understand unconscious activity in these terms because “content” is applicable *only* to the more superficial unconscious levels, to which the individual himself contributes. This is the level at which he can readily introduce fear and usually does.

⁹⁷ When man miscreates he is in pain. The cause and effect principle here is temporarily a real expediter. Actually, “Cause” is a term properly belonging to God, and “Effect,” which should also be capitalized, is His Son. This entails a set of Cause and Effect relationships which are totally different from those which man introduced into his own miscreations. The fundamental opponents in the real basic conflict are creation and miscreation. *All fear* is implicit in the second, just as all *love* is inherent in the first. Because of this difference, the basic conflict *is* one between love and fear.

⁹⁸ It has already been said that man believes he *cannot* control fear because he himself created it. His belief in it seems to render it out of his control by definition. Yet any attempt to resolve the basic conflict through the concept of *mastery* of fear is meaningless. In fact it asserts the *power* of fear by the simple assumption that it *need* be mastered. The essential resolution rests entirely on the mastery of *love*. In the interim, the *sense* of conflict is inevitable since man has placed himself in a strangely illogical position. He believes in the power of what does not exist.

⁹⁹ Two concepts which *cannot* coexist are “nothing” and “everything.” To whatever extent one is believed in, the other *has been* denied. In the conflict fear is really nothing, and love is everything. This is because whenever light enters

darkness, the darkness is abolished. What man believes is true for him. In this sense the separation *has* occurred, and to deny this is merely to misuse denial. However, to concentrate on error is merely a further misuse of defenses. The true corrective procedure is to recognize error temporarily but *only* as an indication that *immediate* correction is mandatory. This establishes a state of mind in which the Atonement can be accepted *without* delay.

¹⁰⁰ It should be emphasized, however, that ultimately there is no compromise possible between everything and nothing. Time is essentially a device by which all compromise in this respect can be given up. It seems to be abolished by degrees because time itself involves a concept of intervals which do not really exist. The faulty use of creation made this necessary as a corrective device. "And God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" needs only one slight correction to be entirely meaningful in this context. It should read, "He gave it to His only begotten Son."

¹⁰¹ It should especially be noted that God has only *one* Son. If all the Souls God created *are* His Sons, then every Soul *must* be an integral part of the whole Sonship. You do not find the concept that the whole is greater than its parts difficult to understand. You should therefore not have too much trouble in understanding this.

¹⁰² The Sonship in its oneness *does* transcend the sum of its parts. However, this is obscured as long as any of its parts are 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 fully understood.

¹⁰³ Any part of the Sonship can believe in error or incompleteness if he so elects. However, if he does so, he is believing in the existence of nothingness. The correction of this error is the Atonement. We have already briefly spoken about readiness, but there are some additional points which might be helpful here. Readiness is nothing more than the *prerequisite* for accomplishment. The two should not be confused. As soon as a state of readiness occurs, there is usually some will to accomplish, but this is by no means necessarily undivided. The state does not imply more than a *potential* for a shift of will.

¹⁰⁴ 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 only *love* can be mastered. You have attested only to your readiness. Mastery of love involves a much more complete confidence than either of you has attained. However, the readiness at least is an indication that you ³⁶believe this is possible. That is only the beginning of confidence. In case this be misunderstood

to imply that an enormous amount of time will be necessary between readiness and mastery, let me remind you that time and space are under my control.

¹⁰⁵ One of the chief ways in which man can correct his magic-miracle confusion is to remember that he did not create himself. He is apt to forget this when he becomes egocentric, and this places him in a position where the belief in magic in some form is virtually inevitable. His will to create was given him by his own Creator, Who was expressing the same will in His creation. Since creative ability rests in the mind, everything that man creates is necessarily a matter of will. It also follows that whatever he creates is real in his own sight but not necessarily in the sight of God. This basic distinction leads us directly into the real meaning of the Last Judgment.

VI. THE MEANING OF THE LAST JUDGMENT

¹⁰⁶ The Last Judgment is one of the greatest threat concepts in man's perception. This is only because he does not understand it. Judgment is not an essential attribute of God. Man brought judgment into being only because of the separation. After the separation, however, there *was* a place for judgment as one of the many learning devices which had to be built into the overall plan. Just as the separation occurred over many millions of years, the Last Judgment will extend over a similarly long period and perhaps an even longer one. Its length depends, however, on the effectiveness of the present speed-up.

¹⁰⁷ We have frequently noted that the miracle is a device for shortening but not abolishing time. If a sufficient number of people become truly miracle-minded quickly, the shortening process can be almost immeasurable. It is essential, however, that these individuals free themselves from fear sooner than would ordinarily be the case because they must emerge from the conflict if they are to bring peace to other minds.

¹⁰⁸ The Last Judgment is generally thought of as a procedure undertaken by God. Actually it will be undertaken by man with my help. It is a final healing rather than a meting out of punishment, however much man may think that punishment is deserved. Punishment is a concept in *total* opposition to right-mindedness. The aim of the Last Judgment is to *restore* right-mindedness to man.

¹⁰⁹ The Last Judgment might be called a process of right evaluation. It simply means that finally all men will come to understand what is worthy and what is not. After this, their ability to choose can be directed reasonably. Until this distinction is made, however, the vacillations between free and imprisoned will

cannot *but* continue. The first step toward freedom *must* entail a sorting out of the false from the true. This is a process of division only in the constructive sense and reflects the true meaning of the Apocalypse. Man will ultimately look upon his own creations and will to preserve only what is good, just as God Himself looked upon what He had created and knew that it *was* good.

¹¹⁰ At this point, the will can begin to look with love on its own creations because of their great worthiness. The mind will inevitably disown its miscreations which, without the mind's belief, will no longer exist. The term "Last Judgment" is frightening not only because it has been falsely projected onto God, but also because of the association of "last" with death. This is an outstanding example of upside-down perception. Actually, if the meaning of the Last Judgment is objectively examined, it is quite apparent that it is really the doorway to life.

¹¹¹ No one who lives in fear is really alive. His own last judgment cannot be directed toward himself because he is not his own creation. He can, however, apply it meaningfully and at *any* time to everything he has created and retain in his memory *only* what is good. This is what his right-mindedness cannot *but* dictate. The purpose of time is solely to "give him time" to achieve this judgment. It is his own perfect judgment of his own creations. When everything he retains is loveable, there *is* no reason for fear to remain with him. This *is* his part in the Atonement.

THREE

Retraining the Mind

I. INTRODUCTION

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 study. You will also need them for preparation. Without this, you may become much too fearful when the unexpected *does* occur to make constructive use of it. However, as you study these earlier sections, you will begin to see some of their implications, which will be amplified considerably later on.

² The reason a solid foundation is necessary is because of the confusion between fear and awe to which we have already referred and which so many people hold. You will remember that we 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* a proper reaction in the Presence of your Creator. I have been careful to clarify my own role in the Atonement, without either over- or understating it. I have also tried to do the same in connection with yours. I have stressed that awe is *not* an appropriate reaction to me because of our inherent equality.

³ Some of the later steps in this course, however, *do* involve a more direct approach to God Himself. It would be most unwise to start on these steps without careful preparation or awe will be confused with fear, and the experience will be more traumatic than beatific. 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.

II. SPECIAL PRINCIPLES FOR MIRACLE WORKERS

⁴ 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.

⁵ 2. Clear distinction between what *has been* created and what *is being* created is essential. *All* forms of correction (or healing) rest on this *fundamental* correction in level perception.

⁶ 3. Another way of stating the above point is: Never confuse right- with wrong-mindedness. Responding to *any* form of miscreation with anything *except a desire to heal* (or a miracle) is an expression of this confusion.

⁷ 4. The miracle is always a *denial* of this error and an affirmation of the truth. Only right-mindedness *can* create 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 in the improper sense.

⁸ 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.

⁹ 6. Miraculous forgiveness is *only* correction. It has *no* element of judgment at all. "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" in no way evaluates *what* they do. It is strictly limited to an appeal to God to heal their minds. There is no reference to the outcome of their mis-thought. *That* does not matter.

¹⁰ 7. The biblical injunction, "Be of one mind" is the statement for revelation-readiness. My *own* injunction, "Do this in remembrance of me" is the request for cooperation from miracle workers. It should be noted that the two statements are not in the same order of reality. The latter involves a time awareness, since to remember implies recalling the past in the present. Time is under *my* direction, but Timelessness belongs to God alone. In time we exist for and with each other. In Timelessness we coexist with God.

III. ATONEMENT WITHOUT SACRIFICE

¹¹ There is another point which must be perfectly clear before any residual fear which may still be associated with miracles becomes entirely groundless. The crucifixion did *not* establish the Atonement. The resurrection did. This is a point which many very sincere Christians have misunderstood. No one who is free

of the scarcity-error 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. Many ministers preach this every day.

¹² This particularly unfortunate interpretation, which arose out of the combined misprojections of a large number of my would-be followers, has led many people to be bitterly afraid of God. This particularly anti-religious concept enters into many religions, and this is neither by chance nor by coincidence. Yet the real Christian would have to 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 man?

¹³ 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 turn a whole frame of reference around in order to justify it. This procedure is painful in its minor applications and genuinely tragic on a mass basis. Persecution is a frequent result, undertaken to justify the terrible misperception that God Himself persecuted His own Son on behalf of salvation. The very words are meaningless.

¹⁴ It has been particularly difficult to overcome this because, although the error itself is no harder to overcome than any other error, men were unwilling to give this one up because of its prominent “escape” value. In milder forms a parent says, “This hurts me more than it hurts you,” and feels exonerated in beating a child. Can you believe that the Father *really* thinks this way? It is so essential that *all* such thinking be dispelled that we must be very 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.

¹⁵ “Vengeance is Mine sayeth the Lord,” is a strictly karmic viewpoint. It is a real misperception of truth by which man assigns his own “evil” past to God. The “evil conscience” from the past has nothing to do with God. He did not create it, and He does not maintain it. God does *not* believe in karmic retribution. His Divine Mind does not create that way. *He* does not hold the evil deeds of a man even against himself. Is it likely, then, that He would hold against anyone the evil that *another* did?

¹⁶ Be very sure that you recognize how utterly impossible this assumption really is and how *entirely* it arises from misprojection. This kind of error is responsible for a host of related errors including the belief that God rejected man and forced him out of the Garden of Eden. It is also responsible for the fact that 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 man is very inventive when it comes to twisting symbols around.

¹⁷ God Himself is *not* symbolic; He is *fact*. The Atonement too is totally without symbolism. It is perfectly clear because it exists in light. Only man's attempts to shroud it in darkness have made it inaccessible to the unwilling and ambiguous to the partly willing. 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, which does not exist. It is, however, *perfectly* aware of *everything* that is true.

¹⁸ The Resurrection demonstrated that *nothing* can destroy truth. Good can withstand *any* form of evil because light abolishes *all* forms of darkness. The Atonement is thus the perfect lesson. It is the final demonstration that all of the other lessons which I taught are true. Man is released from *all* errors if he believes in this. The deductive approach to teaching accepts the generalization which is applicable to *all* single instances rather than building up the generalization after analyzing numerous single instances separately. If you can accept the *one* generalization *now*, there will be no need to learn from many smaller lessons.

¹⁹ *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 [the Soul] remembers its Creator. All sense of separation disappears, and level confusion vanishes. 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.

²⁰ 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 will 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*."

²¹ Sacrifice is a notion totally unknown to God. It arises solely from fear. This is particularly unfortunate because frightened people are apt to be vicious. Sacrificing another in *any* way is a clear cut violation of God's own injunction that man should be merciful even as his Father in Heaven. It has been hard for many Christians to realize that this commandment (or assignment) also 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.

²² I have been correctly referred to as “the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.” Those who represent the lamb as blood-stained, an all-too-widespread error, do *not* understand the meaning of the symbol. Correctly understood, it is a very simple parable which merely speaks of my innocence. The lion and the lamb lying down together refers to the fact 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.

²³ There has been some human controversy about the nature of seeing in relation to the integrative powers of the brain. Correctly understood, the issue revolves around the question of whether the body or the mind can see (or understand). This is not really open to question at all. The body is not capable of understanding, and only the mind can perceive *anything*. A pure mind knows the truth, and this *is* its strength. It cannot attack the body because it recognizes exactly what the body *is*. This is what “a sane mind in a sane body” really means. It does *not* confuse destruction with innocence because it associates innocence with strength, *not* with weakness.

²⁴ Innocence is *incapable* of sacrificing anything, because the innocent mind *has* everything and strives only to *protect* its wholeness. This is why it *cannot* misproject. It can only honor man, 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 only in the sense that the state of innocence, or grace, is one in which the meaning of the Atonement is perfectly apparent. The innocence of God is the true state of mind of His Son. In this state, man’s mind *does* see God [and because] he sees Him as he is[, he knows] that the Atonement, *not* sacrifice, is the *only* appropriate gift to His own altar, where nothing except true perfection belongs. The understanding of the innocent is *truth*. That is why their altars are truly radiant.

IV. MIRACLES AS ACCURATE PERCEPTION

²⁵ We have repeatedly stated that the basic concepts referred to in this course are *not* matters of degree. Certain fundamental concepts *cannot* be meaningfully understood in terms of coexisting polarities. 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 that behavior is erratic until a firm commitment to one or the other is made.

²⁶ A firm commitment to darkness or nothingness is impossible. No one has ever lived who has not experienced *some* light and *some* [of everything]. This makes everyone really unable to deny truth totally, even if he generally deceives

himself in this connection. That is why those who live largely in darkness and emptiness never find any lasting solace. Innocence is *not* a partial attribute. It is not a real defense *until* it is total. When it is partial, it is characterized by the same erratic nature that holds for other two-edged defenses.

²⁷ The partly innocent are apt to be quite stupid at times. It is not until their innocence becomes a genuine viewpoint which is universal in its 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 really exist. 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 creative power of the miracle.

²⁸ The miracle perceives everything *as it is*. If nothing but the truth exists (and this is really a redundant statement, because what is not true *cannot* exist) right-minded seeing cannot see anything *but* perfection. We have said many times that *only* what God creates, or what man creates with the same will, has any real existence. This, then, is all the innocent can see. They do not suffer from the distortions of the separated ones. The way to correct all such distortions is to withdraw your *faith* from them and invest it *only* in what is true.

²⁹ You *cannot* validate the invalid. I would suggest that you voluntarily give up all such attempts because they can only be frantic. If you are willing to validate what *is* true in everything you perceive, you will make it true for *you*. Truth overcomes *all* error. This means that if you perceive truly, you are canceling out misperceptions in yourself *and* in others simultaneously. Because you see them as they are, you offer them your own validation of *their* truth. This is the healing which the miracle actively fosters.

V. PERCEPTION VERSUS KNOWLEDGE

³⁰ We have been emphasizing perception and have said very little about cognition as yet, because you are confused about the difference between them. The reason we have dealt so little with cognition is because you must get your perceptions straightened out before you can *know* anything. To know is to be certain. Uncertainty merely means that you do *not* know. Knowledge is power *because* it is certain, and certainty is strength. Perception is merely temporary. It is an attribute of the space-time belief and is therefore subject to fear or love. Misperceptions produce fear, and true perceptions produce love. *Neither* produces certainty, because *all* perception varies. That is why it is *not* knowledge.

³¹ True perception is the *basis* for knowledge, but *knowing* is the affirmation of truth. All your difficulties ultimately stem from the fact that you do not recognize or *know* yourselves, each other, or God. To recognize means to “know again,” implying that you knew before. You can see in many ways, because perception involves different interpretations, and this means that it is not whole. The miracle is a way of perceiving, *not* of knowing. It is the right answer to a question, and you do not ask questions at all when you know.

³² 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. They are subject to transitory states, and this necessarily implies variability. How you perceive at any given time determines what you *do*, and action *must* occur in time. Knowledge is timeless, because certainty is *not* questionable. You *know* when you have *ceased* to ask questions.

³³ The questioning mind perceives itself in time and therefore looks for *future* answers. The unquestioning mind is closed because it believes the future and present will be the same. This establishes an unchanged state or stasis. It is usually an attempt to counteract an underlying fear that the future will be *worse* than the present, and this fear inhibits the tendency to question at all.

³⁴ Visions are the natural perception of the Spiritual eye, but they are still corrections. The Spiritual eye 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. Properly speaking, “a vision of God” is 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 do not last.

³⁵ The Bible instructs you to “*know yourself*” or *be certain*. Certainty is *always* of God. When you love someone, you have perceived him as he is, and this makes it possible for you to *know* him. However, it is not until you *recognize* him that you *can* know him. While you ask questions about God, you are clearly implying that you do *not* know Him. Certainty does not require action. When you say that you are *acting* on the basis of knowledge, you are really confusing perception and cognition. Knowledge brings the mental 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. Perception involves the body, even in its most spiritualized form. Knowledge comes from the altar within and is timeless because it is certain. To perceive the truth is *not* the same as knowing it.

³⁶ If you attack error in one another, you will hurt yourself. You cannot *recognize* each other when you attack. Attack is *always* made on a stranger. You are *making*

him a stranger by misperceiving him so that 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. Right perception is necessary before God can communicate directly to His own altars which He has established in His Sons. There He can communicate His certainty, and *His* knowledge will bring peace *without* question.

³⁷ 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 the Biblical description of God as “Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.” It also explains the quotation, “Before Abraham was *I am*.” Perception can and must be stabilized, but knowledge *is* stable. “Fear God and keep His commandments” should read “*Know* God and accept His certainty.” There are no strangers in His creation. To create as He created, you can create only what you *know* and accept as yours. God knows His Children with perfect certainty. He created them *by* knowing them. He recognized them perfectly. When they do not recognize each other, they do not recognize Him.

VI. CONFLICT AND THE EGO

³⁸ [The Soul knows, loves, and creates. These are its unequivocal functions.] The abilities man now possesses are only shadows of his real strengths. All of his functions are equivocal and open to question or doubt. This is because he is not certain how he will *use* them. He is therefore incapable of knowledge, being uncertain. He is also incapable of knowledge, because he can perceive lovelessly. He cannot create surely, because his perception deceives [and illusions are not pure.] Perception did not exist until the separation had introduced degrees, aspects, and intervals. The Soul has no levels, and *all* conflict arises from the concept of levels. [Wars arise where some regard others as if they were on a different level. All interpersonal conflicts arise from this fallacy.] Only the levels of the Trinity are capable of unity. The levels which man created by the separation cannot *but* conflict. This is because they are essentially meaningless to each other.

³⁹ Freud realized this perfectly and that is why he conceived the different levels in his view of the psyche as forever irreconcilable. They were conflict-prone by definition, because they wanted different things and obeyed different principles. In *our* picture of the psyche, there is an unconscious level which properly consists *only* of the miracle ability and which should be under *my* direction. There is also a conscious level, which perceives or is aware of impulses from both the unconscious and the superconscious. Consciousness is thus the level of perception

but *not* of knowledge. Again, to perceive is *not* to know.

⁴⁰ Consciousness was the first split that man introduced into himself. He became a *perceiver* rather than a creator in the true sense. Consciousness is correctly identified as the domain of the ego. The ego is a man-made attempt to perceive himself as he *wished* to be rather than as he *is*. This is an example of the created-creator confusion we have spoken of before. Yet man can only *know* himself as he *is* because that is all he can be *sure* of. Everything else *is* open to question.

⁴¹ The ego is the questioning compartment in the post-separation psyche which man created for himself. It is capable of asking valid questions but *not* of perceiving valid answers because these are cognitive and cannot *be* perceived. The endless speculation about the meaning of mind has led to considerable confusion because the mind *is* confused. Only One-Mindedness is without confusion. A separated or divided mind *must* be confused; it is uncertain by definition. It *has* to be in conflict because it is out of accord with itself.

⁴² Intrapersonal conflict arises from the same basis as interpersonal conflict. One part of the psyche perceives another part as on a different level and does not understand it. This makes the parts strangers to each other, without recognition. This is the essence of the fear-prone condition in which attack is *always* possible. Man has every reason to feel afraid as he perceives himself. This is why he cannot escape from fear until he *knows* that he did not and could not create himself. He can *never* make his misperceptions valid. His creation is beyond his own error, and that is why he *must* eventually choose to heal the separation.

⁴³ 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, a fact which clearly demonstrates a lack of association with knowledge. The term “right-mindedness” is properly used as the *correction* for “wrong-mindedness,” and applies to the state of mind which induces accurate perception. It is miraculous because it *heals* misperception, and this is indeed a miracle in view of how man perceives himself.

⁴⁴ Perception *always* involves some misuse of will, because it involves the mind in areas of uncertainty. The mind is very active because it has will-power. When it willed the separation, it willed to perceive. Until then, it willed *only* to know. Afterwards it willed 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 Soul’s service, where perception is meaningless. The superconscious is the level of the mind which wills this.

⁴⁵ The mind chose to divide itself when it willed to create both its own levels

and the ability to perceive, but it could not entirely separate itself from the Soul because it is from the Soul that it derives its whole power to create. Even in miscreation will is affirming its Source or it would merely cease to be. This is impossible because it is part of the Soul which God created and which is therefore eternal.

⁴⁶ The ability to perceive made the body possible because you must perceive *something* and *with* something. This is why perception involves an exchange or translation, which knowledge does not need. The interpretive function of perception, actually a distorted form of creation, then permitted man to interpret the body as *himself*, which, though depressing, was an attempt to escape from the conflict he had induced. The superconscious, which *knows*, could not be reconciled with this loss of power because it is incapable of darkness. This is why it became almost inaccessible to the mind and entirely inaccessible to the body.

⁴⁷ Thereafter, the superconscious was perceived as a threat, because light does abolish darkness merely by establishing the fact that it is not there. The truth will *always* overcome error in this sense. This is not an *active* process of destruction at all. We have already emphasized that knowledge does not *do anything*. It can be *perceived* as an attacker, but it *cannot* attack. What man perceives as its attack is merely his own vague recognition of the fact that it can always be *remembered*, never having been destroyed.

⁴⁸ God and the Souls He created remain in surety, and therefore *know* that no miscreation exists. Truth cannot deal with unwilling error because it does not will to be blocked out. I was a man who remembered the Soul and its knowledge, and as a man I did not attempt to *counteract* error with knowledge so much as 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 the Soul and its own real purpose.

⁴⁹ 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 own way. Without them your choice is certain. Sane perception *induces* sane choosing. The Atonement was an act based on true perception. I cannot choose for you, but I *can* help you make your own right choice. "Many are called, but few are chosen" should read, "*All* are called, but few choose to listen. Therefore, they do not choose *right*."

⁵⁰ The "chosen ones" are merely those who choose right *sooner*. This is the real meaning of the celestial speed-up. Strong wills can do this *now*, and you *will* find rest for your Souls. God knows you only in peace, and this *is* your reality.

VII. THE LOSS OF CERTAINTY

⁵¹ We said before that the abilities which man possesses are only shadows of his real strengths and that the intrusion of the ability to perceive, which is inherently judgmental, was introduced only *after* the separation. No one has been sure of anything since. You will also remember, however, that I 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 make a distinction which will greatly facilitate clarity in our subsequent statements.

⁵² Since the separation, the words "create" and "make" have been greatly confused. When you make something, you make it out of a sense of lack or need. Anything that is made is made for a specific purpose and has no true generalizability. When you make something to fill a perceived lack, which is obviously why you would want to make anything, you are tacitly implying that you believe in separation. Knowing, as we have frequently observed, does not lead to doing at all.

⁵³ The confusion between your own creation and what *you* create is so profound that it has become literally impossible for you to know anything. Knowledge is always stable, and it is quite evident that human beings are not. Nevertheless, they *are* perfectly stable as God created them. In this sense, when their behavior is unstable they are *disagreeing* with God's idea of the creation. Man can do this if he chooses, but he would hardly *want* to do it if he were in his right mind. The problem that bothers you most is the fundamental question which man continually asks of himself, but which cannot properly be directed to himself at all. He keeps asking himself what he *is*. This implies that the answer is not only one which he knows but is also one which is up to him to supply.

⁵⁴ Man *cannot* perceive himself correctly. He *has* no image. The word "image" is always perception-related and *not* a product of [knowing]. Images are symbolic and stand for something else. The current emphasis on "changing your image" merely recognizes the power of perception, but it also implies that there is nothing to *know*. Knowing is *not* open to interpretation. It is possible to "interpret" meaning, but this is always open to error because it refers to the *perception* of meaning. Such wholly needless complexities are the result of man's attempt to regard himself as both separated and unseparated at the same time. It is impossible to undertake a confusion as fundamental as this without engaging in further confusion.

⁵⁵ Methodologically, man's mind has been very creative but, as always occurs when method and content are separated, it has not been utilized for anything but an attempt to escape a fundamental and entirely inescapable impasse. This

kind of thinking cannot result in a creative outcome, although it has resulted in considerable ingenuity. It is noteworthy, however, that this ingenuity has almost totally divorced him from knowledge. Knowledge does not *require* ingenuity. When we say “the truth shall set you free,” we mean that all this kind of thinking is a waste of time, but that you *are* free of the need to engage in it if you are willing to let it go.

⁵⁶ Prayer is a way of asking for something. Prayer 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. Essentially, a prayer for forgiveness is nothing more than a request that we may be able to *recognize* something we already have. In electing to perceive instead of to know, man placed himself in a position where he could resemble his Father *only* by miraculously perceiving. He has lost the knowledge that he *himself* is a miracle. Miraculous creation was his Source and also his real function.

⁵⁷ “God created man in His own image and likeness” is correct in meaning, but the words are open to considerable misinterpretation. This is avoided, however, if “image” is understood to mean “thought” and “likeness” is taken as “of a like quality.” God *did* create the Soul 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.” Perception at every level involves selectivity and is incapable of organization without it. In all types of perception, there is a continual process of accepting and rejecting or organizing and reorganizing, of shifting and changing focus. Evaluation is an essential part of perception, because judgments *must* be made for selection.

⁵⁸ What happens to perceptions if there *are* no judgments and there is 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 *all* the laws which govern 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.

⁵⁹ Forgiveness is the healing of the perception of separation. Correct perception *of each other* is necessary, because minds have willed to see themselves as separate. Each Soul knows God completely. That *is* the miraculous power of the Soul. The fact that each one has this power completely is a fact that is entirely alien to human thinking, in which if anyone has everything, there is nothing *left*. God’s

miracles are as total as His Thoughts because they *are* His Thoughts.

⁶⁰ 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* a separated state, and a perceiver *does* need healing. Communion, not prayer, is the natural state of those who know. God and His miracles *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.

VIII. JUDGMENT AND THE AUTHORITY PROBLEM

⁶¹ We have already discussed the Last Judgment in some though insufficient detail. After the Last Judgment there will be no more. This is symbolic only in the sense that everyone is much better off *without* judgment. When the Bible says, “Judge not that ye be not judged” it merely means that if you judge the reality of others at all, you will be unable to avoid judging your own. The choice to judge rather than to know was the cause of the loss of peace. Judgment is the process on which perception, but *not* cognition, rests. We have discussed this before in terms of the selectivity of perception, pointing out that evaluation is its obvious prerequisite.

⁶² Judgment *always* involves rejection. It is *not* an ability which emphasizes only the positive aspects of what is judged, whether it be in or out of the self. However, what has been perceived and rejected—or judged and found wanting—remains in the unconscious because it *has* been perceived. One of the illusions from which man suffers is the belief that what he judged against has no effect. This cannot be true unless he also believes that what he judged against does not exist. He evidently does *not* believe this, or he would not have judged against it. It does not matter in the end whether you judge 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 choose *from*.

⁶³ You have no idea of the tremendous release and deep peace that comes from meeting yourselves and your brothers totally without judgment. When you recognize what you and 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 a totally fallacious 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 yourselves. In the presence of knowledge, *all* judgment is automatically suspended, and this is the process

which enables recognition to *replace* perception.

⁶⁴ Man is very fearful of everything he has perceived but has refused to accept. He believes that, because he has refused to accept it, he has lost control over it. This is why he sees it in nightmares or in pleasant disguises in what seem to be his happier dreams. Nothing that you have refused to accept can be brought into awareness. It does *not* follow that it is dangerous, but it *does* follow that you have *made* it dangerous.

⁶⁵ When you feel tired, it is merely because you have judged yourself as capable of being tired. When you laugh at someone, it is because you have judged him as debased. When you laugh at yourself, you are singularly likely to laugh at others, if only because you cannot tolerate the idea of being more debased than they are. All of this does make you feel tired because it is essentially disheartening. You are not *really* capable of being tired, but you are *very* capable of wearying yourselves. The strain of constant judgment is virtually intolerable. It is a curious thing that any ability which is so debilitating should be so deeply cherished.

⁶⁶ Yet, if you wish to be the author of reality, which is totally impossible anyway, you *will* insist on holding onto judgment. You will also use the term with considerable fear, believing that judgment will someday be used against *you*. To whatever extent it *is* used against you, it is due only to your belief in its efficacy as a weapon of defense for your own authority. The issue of authority is really a question of authorship. When an individual has an “authority problem,” it is *always* because he believes he is the author of himself, projects his delusion onto others, and then perceives the situation as one in which people are literally fighting him for his authorship. This is the fundamental error of all those who believe they have usurped the power of God.

⁶⁷ The 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. Souls were *given* their true Authorship, but men preferred to be anonymous when they chose to separate themselves from their Author. The word “authority” has been one of their most fearful symbols ever since. Authority has been used for great cruelty because, being uncertain of their true Authorship, men believe that their creation was anonymous. This has left them in a position where it *sounds* meaningful to consider the possibility that they must have created themselves.

⁶⁸ The dispute over authorship has left such uncertainty in the minds of men that some have even doubted whether they really exist at all. Despite the apparent contradiction in this position, it is in one sense more tenable than the view

that they created themselves. At least it acknowledges the fact that *some* true authorship is necessary for existence.

⁶⁹ 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, when you lose something, it does not mean that the “something” has gone. It merely means that you do not know where it is. Existence does not depend on your ability to identify it nor even to place it. It is perfectly possible to look on reality without judgment and merely *know* that it is there.

⁷⁰ Peace is a natural heritage of the Soul. Everyone is free to refuse to *accept* his inheritance, but he is *not* free to establish what his inheritance *is*. The problem which everyone must decide is the fundamental question of authorship. 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 themselves the reason for their own peace, so that they see themselves only in pieces. This strange perception *is* the authority problem.

⁷¹ There is no man 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 if it were *not* free, or the obviously circular reasoning involved in his position would be quite apparent. Free will *must* lead to freedom. Judgment *always* imprisons because it separates segments of reality according to the highly unstable scales of desire. Wishes are not facts by definition. To wish is to imply that willing is not sufficient. Yet no one 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 will to accept my own inheritance.”

IX. CREATING VERSUS THE SELF-IMAGE

⁷² Every system of thought must have a starting point. It begins with either a making or a creating, a difference which we have discussed already. 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 men live. It is a mistake to believe that a thought system which is 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 not understand why you have so much trouble with this course and will be unable to escape from the prisons which you have made for yourselves.

⁷³ You cannot resolve the authority problem by depreciating the power of your minds. To do so is to deceive yourself, and this will hurt you because you *know* the strength of the mind. You also know that you *cannot* weaken it, any more than you can weaken God. The “devil” is a frightening concept, because he is thought of as extremely powerful and extremely active. He is perceived as a force in combat with God, battling Him for possession of the Souls He created. He deceives by lies and builds kingdoms of his own in which everything is in direct opposition to God. Yet he *attracts* men rather than repels them, and they are seen as willing to “sell” him their Souls in return for gifts they *recognize* are of no real worth.

⁷⁴ This makes absolutely no sense. The whole picture is one in which man acts in a way he *himself* realizes is self-destructive but which he does not choose to correct and therefore perceives the cause as beyond his control. We have discussed the fall, or separation, before, but its meaning must be clearly understood without symbols. The separation is not symbolic. It is an order of reality or a system of thought that is real enough in time, though *not* in eternity. All beliefs are real to the believer.

⁷⁵ The fruit of only *one* tree was “forbidden” to man in his 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 “tree” which was forbidden 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 which sees either God *or* His creations as capable of destroying their own purpose is in error.

⁷⁶ Eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge is a symbolic expression for incorporating into the self the ability for self-creating. This is the *only* sense in which God and His Souls are *not* co-creators. The belief that they *are* is implicit in the “self concept,” a concept now made acceptable by its *weakness* and explained by a tendency of the self to create an *image* of itself. Its fear aspect is often ascribed to fear of retaliation by a “father figure,” a particularly curious idea in view of the fact that no one uses the term to refer to the physical father. It refers to an *image* of a father in relation to an *image* of the self.

⁷⁷ Images are perceived, *not* known. Knowledge cannot deceive, but perception *can*. Man can perceive himself as self-creating, but he cannot do more than *believe* it. He *cannot* make it true. And, as we said before, when you finally perceive correctly, you can only be glad that you cannot. But until then, the belief that

you *can* is the central foundation stone in your thought system, and all your defenses are used to attack ideas which might bring it to light. You still believe you are images of your own creation. Your minds are split with your Souls 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.

⁷⁸ 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. Never underestimate the power of this denial. Look at your lives and see what the devil has made. But *know* that this making will surely dissolve in the light of truth, because its *foundation* is a lie.

⁷⁹ Your creation by God is the *only* foundation which cannot be shaken because the light is *in* it. Your starting point is truth, and you must return to this beginning. Much has been perceived since then, but nothing else has happened. That is why your Souls are still in peace, even though your minds are 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.

⁸⁰ The Bible says that 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 *willing* 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 man can *not*. Only the oneness of knowledge is conflictless. 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.

FOUR

The Root of All Evil

I. INTRODUCTION

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 dispirited, but to be Self-centered in the right sense is to be inspired, or in the Soul. The truly inspired are enlightened and cannot abide in darkness.

² You can speak from the Soul or from the ego, precisely as you choose. If you speak from the Soul, you have chosen “to be still and know that *I* am God.” These words are inspired because they come from knowledge. If you speak from the ego, you are disclaiming knowledge instead of affirming it and are thus dispiriting yourself. Do not embark on foolish journeys, because they are indeed in vain. The ego may desire them, but the Soul cannot embark on them, because it is forever unwilling to depart from its Foundation.

³ The journey to the cross should be the last foolish journey for every mind. Do not dwell upon it, but dismiss it as accomplished. If you can accept it as your *own* last foolish journey, you are also free to join my resurrection. Human living has indeed been needlessly wasted in a repetition compulsion. It reenacts the separation, the loss of power, the foolish journey of the ego in an attempt at reparation, and finally the crucifixion of the body or death.

⁴ Repetition compulsions can be endless unless they are given up by an act of will. Do not make the pathetic human error of “clinging to the old rugged cross.” The only message of the crucifixion was that we can *overcome* the cross. Unless you do so, you are free to crucify yourself as often as you choose. But 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 to prepare you to undertake it.

II. RIGHT TEACHING AND RIGHT LEARNING

⁵ We have spoken of many different human symptoms, and at this level there is almost endless variation. There is, however, only *one* cause of all of them. The authority problem is “the root of all evil.” Money is but one of its many reflections and is a reasonably representative example of the kind of thinking which stems from it. The idea of buying and selling implies precisely the kind of exchange that the Soul cannot understand at all because its supply is always abundant and all its demands are fully met.

⁶ Every symptom which the ego has made involves a contradiction in terms. This is because the mind is split between the ego and the Soul, 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 only produce ideas which are inconceivable. The term “profess” is used quite frequently in the Bible. To profess is to identify with an idea and offer the idea to others to be their own. The idea does not lessen; it becomes *stronger*.

⁷ 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, they will lack conviction. A good teacher must believe in the ideas which he professes, but he must meet another condition; he must also believe in the students to whom he offers his 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 ones because they cannot conceive of it as a change towards *healing* the separation. They *always* perceive it as a change towards further separation because the separation was their first experience of change.

⁸ You believe that if you allow no change to enter into your ego, your Soul will find peace. This profound confusion is possible only if one maintains that the same thought system can stand on two foundations. *Nothing* can reach the Soul from the ego, and nothing *from* the Soul can strengthen the ego or reduce the conflict within it. The ego *is* a contradiction. Man’s self and God’s Self *are* in opposition. They are opposed in creation, in will, and in outcome. They are fundamentally irreconcilable because the Soul cannot perceive and the ego cannot know. They are therefore *not in communication* and can never *be* in communication. Nevertheless, the ego can learn because its maker can be misguided but *cannot* make the totally lifeless out of the life-given. The Soul need not be taught, but the ego *must*.

⁹ The ultimate reason why learning is perceived as frightening is because learning *does* lead to the relinquishment (*not* destruction) of the ego to the light of the Soul. 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 never attack your egos, but I *do* try to teach you how their thought system[s] arose. When I remind you of your *true* creation, your egos cannot *but* respond with fear.

¹⁰ Teaching and learning are your greatest strengths now, because you *must* change your mind and help others change theirs. It is pointless to refuse to tolerate change because you believe you can demonstrate that by doing so the separation has not occurred. The dreamer who doubts the reality of his dream while he is still dreaming is not really healing the level-split. You *have* dreamed of a separated ego, and you *have* believed in a world which rests upon it. This is very real to you. You cannot undo this by doing nothing and *not* changing.

¹¹ If you are willing to renounce the role of guardian[s] of your thought system[s] and open [them] to me, I will correct [them] very gently and lead you home. Every good teacher hopes to give his students so much of his own thinking that they will one day no longer need him. This is the one real goal of the parent, teacher, and therapist. This goal will not be achieved by those who believe that they will *lose* their child or pupil or patient if they succeed. 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 law-maker *believes*.

¹² It is natural enough 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 in 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 Souls cannot clash at all. If you perceive a teacher as merely a “larger ego,” you *will* be afraid because to *enlarge* an ego *is* to increase separation anxiety. 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.

¹³ 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* maintain it. I am constantly being perceived as a teacher either to be exalted or rejected, but I do not accept either perception for myself.

¹⁴ Your worth is *not* established by your teaching *or* your learning. Your worth

was established by God. As long as you dispute this, *everything* you do will be fearful, particularly any situation which lends itself to the “superiority-inferiority” fallacy. 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. Once 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 Soul is never at stake because He *did*. Any confusion on this point is a delusion and no form of devotion is possible as long as this delusion lasts.

¹⁵ The ego tries to exploit *all* situations into forms of praise for itself in order to overcome its doubts. It will be doubtful forever, or rather as long as you believe in it. You who made it *cannot* trust it because you *know* it is not real. The only *sane* solution is not to try to change reality, which is indeed a fearful attempt, but to see it as it *is*. You are part of reality, which stands unchanged beyond the reach of your ego but within easy reach of your Soul. 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.

¹⁶ God is *not* the author of fear. *You* are. You have chosen, therefore, to create unlike Him, and you have made fear for yourselves. You are not at peace because you are not fulfilling your function. God gave you a very lofty responsibility which you are not meeting. You *know* this, and you are afraid. In fact, your egos have 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 believability is merely to postpone the inevitable.

¹⁷ The word “inevitable” is fearful to the ego but joyous to the Soul. God is inevitable, and you *cannot* avoid Him any more than He can avoid *you*. The ego is afraid of the Soul’s joy because, once you have experienced it, you will withdraw all protection from the ego and become totally without the 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 are the Souls He created.

¹⁸ Release yourselves and release others. Do not present a false and unworthy picture of yourself to others, and do not accept such a picture of them yourselves. 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.

¹⁹ Of your egos you can do nothing to save yourselves or others, but of your Souls you can do everything for the salvation of both. Humility is a lesson for the ego, *not* for the Soul. The Soul 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 better perception. The Kingdom of Heaven is the *right* of the Soul, 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.

²⁰ I will substitute for your ego if you wish but *never* for your Soul. 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, which are *very* closely related, but he does not confuse *himself* with the father because he does this, although the child may. I can be entrusted with your body and your ego simply 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.

²¹ 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. The Soul is far beyond the need of your protection *or* mine. Remember this:

*²² In this world you **need** not have tribulation **because**
I have overcome the world.*

²³ *That* is why you should be of good cheer.

III. THE EGO AND FALSE AUTONOMY

²⁴ You have asked lately how the mind could ever have made the ego. This is a perfectly reasonable question; in fact, the best question you could ask. There is, however, no point in giving an historical answer, because the past does not matter in human terms, 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.

²⁵ Each man makes one ego for himself, although it is subject to enormous variation because of its instability, and one for everyone he perceives, which is equally variable. Their interaction is a process which literally alters both, because they were not made either *by* or *with* the unalterable. It is particularly 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 presence. *Thinking* about another ego is as effective in changing relative perception as is physical interaction. There could be no better example of the fact that the ego is an idea, though not a reality-based thought.

²⁶ Your own present state is a good example of how the mind made the ego. You *do* have knowledge at times, but when you throw it away, it is as if you never had it. This willfulness is so apparent that one need only perceive it to see that it *does* happen. If it can occur that way in the present, why is it surprising that it occurred that way in the past? Psychology rests on the principle of the continuity of behavior. Surprise is a reasonable response to the unfamiliar but hardly to something that has occurred with such persistence. I am using your present state [as an example] of how the mind *can* work, provided you fully recognize that it *need* not work that way. Why are you surprised that something happened in the dim past when it is so clearly happening right now?

²⁷ You forget the love that animals have for their own offspring and the need they feel to protect them. This is because they regard them as part of themselves. No one disowns something he regards as a very real part of himself. Man reacts to his ego much as God does to His Souls: with love, protection, and great charity. The reaction of man to the self he made is not at all surprising. In fact it duplicates in many ways how he will one day react to his *real* creations, which are as timeless as he is. The question is not *how* man responds to his ego, but what he believes he *is*.

²⁸ Belief is an ego function, and as long as your origin is open to belief at all, you *are* regarding it from an ego viewpoint. [That is why the Bible quotes me as saying “Ye believe in God, believe also in me.” Belief *does* apply to me, because I am the teacher of the ego.] When teaching is no longer necessary, you will merely *know* God. Belief that there *is* another way 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 a scissors, even though they may well harm themselves if you do not. The speed-up has placed you in the same position.

²⁹ You are *not* prepared, and in this sense you *are* babies. You have no sense of real self-preservation and are very likely to decide that you need precisely what would hurt you most. Whether you know it now or not, however, you *have* willed to cooperate in a concerted and very commendable effort to become both *harmless* and *helpful*, two attributes which *must* go together. Your attitudes, even toward this, are necessarily conflicted, because *all* attitudes are ego-based. This will not last. Be patient awhile and remember that the outcome is as certain as God.

³⁰ Only those who have a real and lasting sense of abundance *can* be truly charitable. This is quite obvious when you consider the concepts involved. To the ego, to give anything implies that you will do without it. When you associate giving with sacrifice, then, you give only because you believe that you are somehow getting something better so that you can 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 and is therefore continually preoccupied with the scarcity principle which gave rise to it. This is the meaning of Freud’s “reality principle” since Freud thought of the ego as very weak and deprived, capable of functioning *only* as a thing in need.

³¹ The “reality principle” of the ego is not real at all. The ego is forced to perceive the “reality” of other egos because it cannot establish the reality of *itself*. In fact, its whole perception of other egos *as* real is only an attempt to convince itself that *it* is real. “Self esteem” in ego terms means nothing more than that the ego has deluded itself into accepting its reality and is therefore temporarily less predatory. This “self esteem” is *always* vulnerable to stress, a term which actually refers to a condition in which the delusion of the ego’s reality is threatened. This produces either ego deflation or ego inflation, resulting in either withdrawal or attack.

³² The ego literally lives by comparisons. This means that 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. All appetites are “getting” mechanisms, representing the ego’s need to confirm itself. This is as true of bodily appetites as it is of the so-called “higher” ego needs. Bodily appetites are *not* physical in origin. The ego regards the body as its home and *does* try to satisfy itself through the body, but the *idea* that this is possible is a decision of the ego, which is completely confused

about what is *really* possible. This accounts for its erratic nature.

³³ The ego believes it is completely on its own, which is merely another way of describing how 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 consider the validity of the premise itself, because this premise is its *foundation*. The ego *is* the belief of the mind that it is completely on its own. Its ceaseless attempts to gain the Soul's acknowledgment and thus to establish its own existence are utterly useless.

³⁴ The Soul 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 the Soul, it *does* perceive itself as rejected by "something" which is greater than itself. This is why self-esteem in ego terms *must* be a delusion. The creations of God do not create myths, although the creative efforts of man *can* turn to mythology. It can do so, however, only under one condition; what man then makes is no longer creative. Myths are entirely perceptions and are so ambiguous in form and so characteristically good and evil in nature that the most benevolent of them is not without fearful components, if only by innuendo.

³⁵ Myths and magic are closely associated in that myths are usually related to the ego origins and magic to the powers which the ego ascribes to itself. Every mythological system includes some account of "the creation" and associates this with its particular perception of magic. The "battle for survival" is nothing more than the ego's struggle to preserve itself and its interpretation of its own beginning. This beginning is always associated with physical birth, because no one maintains that the ego existed before that point in time. The religiously ego-oriented believe that the Soul existed before and will continue to exist afterwards, after a temporary lapse in ego life. Some actually believe that the Soul will be punished for this lapse, even though in reality it could not possibly know anything about it.

³⁶ The term "salvation" does *not* apply to the Soul, 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 Soul, but which must be accomplished before One-Mindedness can be restored. Right-mindedness dictates the next step automatically, because right perception is uniformly without attack, so that wrong-mindedness is obliterated. The ego cannot survive without judgment and is laid aside accordingly. The mind then has only *one* direction in which it can move. The direction which the mind will take is always automatic, because it cannot *but* be dictated by the thought system to which the mind adheres.

³⁷ Every thought system has internal consistency, and this provides the basis for

the continuity of behavior. However, this is a matter of reliability and not validity. “Reliable behavior” is a meaningful perception as far as ego thinking goes. However, “valid behavior” is an expression which is inherently contradictory, because validity is an *end* and behavior is a *means*. These cannot be combined logically, because when an end has been attained, the means for its attainment are no longer meaningful.

³⁸ A hypothesis is either false or true, to be accepted or rejected accordingly. If it is shown to be true, it becomes a fact, after which no one attempts to evaluate it unless its status *as fact* is questioned. *Every* idea to which the ego has accorded the status of fact is questionable, because facts are in the realm of knowledge.

³⁹ Confusing realms of discourse is a thinking error which philosophers have recognized for centuries. Psychologists are generally quite deficient in this respect, as are many theologians. Data from one realm of discourse do not mean anything in another, because they can be understood only *within* the thought system of which they are a part. That is why psychologists are concentrating increasingly on the ego in an attempt to unify their clearly unrelated data. It need hardly be said that an attempt to relate the unrelated *cannot* succeed.

⁴⁰ The more recent ecological emphases are but another ingenious way of trying to impose order on chaos. We have already credited the ego with considerable ingenuity, though not with creativeness. It should, however, be remembered that inventiveness is really wasted effort, even in its most ingenious forms. We do not have to explain *anything*. This is why we need not trouble ourselves with inventiveness. The highly specific nature of invention is not worthy of the abstract creativity of God’s creations.

IV. LOVE WITHOUT CONFLICT

⁴¹ You have never understood what “the Kingdom of Heaven is within you” means. The reason you have not understood it 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 of the Atonement, a message which in its totality transcends the sum of its parts. Christmas is not a time; it is a state of mind. The Christ Mind wills from the Soul, *not* from the ego, and the Christ Mind *is* yours.

⁴² You too have a kingdom which your Soul created. It has *not* ceased to create because your ego has set you on the road of perception. Your Soul’s creations are

no more fatherless than *you* are. Your ego and your Soul will never be co-creators, but your Soul and *your* Creator will *always* be. Be confident that your creations are as safe as you are.

⁴³ *The Kingdom is perfectly united and perfectly protected,
and the ego will **not** prevail against it. Amen.*

⁴⁴ That was written in that form because it is a good thing to use as a kind of a prayer in moments of temptation. It is a Declaration of Independence. You will find it very helpful if you understand it fully.

⁴⁵ In its characteristically upside-down way, the ego has taken the impulses from the superconscious and perceives them as if they arise in the unconscious. The ego judges what is to be accepted, and the impulses from the superconscious are unacceptable to it because they clearly point to the nonexistence of the ego itself. The ego therefore experiences threat and not only censors but also reinterprets the data. However, as Freud correctly pointed out, what you have repressed can retain a very active life *beyond* your awareness.

⁴⁶ Repression thus operates to conceal not only the baser impulses but also the most lofty ones from awareness because *both* are threatening to the ego and, being concerned primarily with its own preservation in the face of threat, the ego perceives them *as the same*. The threat-value of the lofty is actually much greater to the ego because the pull of God Himself can hardly be equated with the pull of human appetites. 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.

⁴⁷ The upper level of the unconscious thus contains the Call of God as well as the call of the body. That is why the basic conflict between love and fear is unconscious; the ego cannot tolerate either and represses both by resorting to inhibition. Society depends on inhibiting the latter, but *salvation* depends on *disinhibiting* the former. The reason you need *my* help is because you have repressed your own Guide and therefore need guidance. My role is to separate the true from the false in your unconscious so it can break through the barriers the ego has set up and shine into your minds. Against our united strength, the ego *cannot* prevail.

⁴⁸ It should be apparent to you by now why the ego regards the Soul as its “enemy.” The ego arose from the separation, and its continued existence depends on *your* continuing belief in the separation. Having reduced the Soul impulses to the unconscious, the ego has to 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 the Soul 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?

⁴⁹ You who identify *with* your egos cannot believe that God loves you. *You* do not love what you have 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 own maker. You cannot conceive of the real relationship which exists between God and His Souls because of the hatred you have for the self *you* have made. You project onto your *own* idea of yourself the will to separate, which conflicts with the love you feel for what you made *because* you made it. No human love is without this ambivalence, and since no ego has experienced love *without* ambivalence, the concept is beyond its understanding.

⁵⁰ Love will enter immediately into *any* mind which 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 which is so different from anything the ego can offer that you will never recover. The word "recover" is used quite literally here—you will never be able to cover or hide again. It is necessary to repeat here that your belief in darkness and in 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*.

⁵¹ 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. You can never be bound except in honor, and that is always voluntary. 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.

⁵² 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 meanness which 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 minds for the scraps of meanness 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 neither honor it nor love it unless it is true.

⁵³ I will never forsake you any more than God will, but I *must* wait as long as you choose to forsake yourself. Because I wait in love and not in impatience, you will surely ask me truly. 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 about 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?

⁵⁴ In your own unconscious, deeply repressed by the ego, is the declaration of your release. *God has given you everything.* This is the one fact that means the ego does not exist and which therefore makes it profoundly afraid. In the ego's language, remember, "to have" and "to be" are different, but they are identical to the Soul. The Soul 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 made no distinction before between *having* the Kingdom of God and *being* the Kingdom of God.

⁵⁵ The calm being of God's Kingdom, which in your sane mind is perfectly conscious, is ruthlessly banished from the part of the mind which 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 you have been willing to expend to protect your higher mind. Who but the insane would undertake to believe what is not true and then protect this belief at the *cost* of truth?

V. THE ESCAPE FROM FEAR

⁵⁶ If you cannot hear the Voice of God, it is because you do not choose to listen. The fact that you *do* listen to the voice of your ego is demonstrated by your attitudes, your feelings, and your behavior. Your attitudes are obviously conflicted, your feelings have a narrow range on the negative side but are never purely joyous, and your behavior is either strained or unpredictable. Yet this is what you *want*. This is what you are fighting to keep and what you are vigilant to save. Your minds are filled with schemes to save the face of your egos, and you do not seek the Face of God. 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.

⁵⁷ We have said that you cannot change your mind by changing your behavior, but we have also said, and many times before, 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 Soul that 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 minds *to think with God's*.

⁵⁸ This may seem hard to you, 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 yourselves and at each other and see in both the glorious creations of a glorious Father.

⁵⁹ When you are sad, *know that this need not be*. Depression *always* arises ultimately from a sense of being deprived of something you want and do not have. *Know* you are deprived of nothing except by your own decisions, and then decide otherwise.

⁶⁰ When you are anxious, *know* that all anxiety comes from the capriciousness of the ego *and need not be*. You can be as vigilant *against* the ego's dictates as *for* them.

⁶¹ When you feel guilty, *know* 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 your ego has hurt, the Atonement cannot release you. As long as you feel guilty, your ego is in command because only the ego *can* experience guilt. *This need not be*.

⁶² Watch your mind for the temptations of the ego and do not be deceived by it. *Know* it offers you nothing. When you have given up this voluntary dispiriting, 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*.

⁶³ The habit of engaging *with* God and His creations is easily made if you actively refuse to let your minds 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 to

gladden yourselves and how many of them you have refused? There is no limit to the power of a Son of God, but he himself can limit the expression of his power as much as he chooses.

⁶⁴ Your mind and mine can unite in shining your ego away and releasing the strength of God into everything you think and will and do. Do not settle for anything *less* than this, and refuse to accept anything *but* this as your goal. Watch your minds 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 your judgment and found wanting there. Without your own allegiance, protection, and love, it cannot exist. Judge your ego truly, and you *must* withdraw allegiance, protection, and love from it.

⁶⁵ You are mirrors 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.

⁶⁶ The first coming of Christ is just 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 over part of the minds of men and the healing of the mind. I was created like you in the first, and I have called you to join with me in the second. If you will think over your lives, you will see how carefully the preparations were made. 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* is so distorted that you believe I was mistaken in choosing you. I assure you this is a mistake of your egos. Do *not* mistake it for humility.

⁶⁷ Your egos are trying to convince you that *they* are 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 must come into your minds and heal them. Although I am *not* attacking your egos, I *am* working with your higher mind whether you are asleep or awake, just as your ego does with your lower mind. I am your vigilance in this, because you are too confused to recognize your own hope. I was *not* mistaken. Your minds *will* elect to join with mine, and together we are invincible.

⁶⁸ You 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 dispirited 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 *know* that miracles are natural because they are expressions of love. My calling you is as natural as your answer and as inevitable.

VI. THE EGO-BODY ILLUSION

⁶⁹ *All* things work together for good. There are *no* exceptions except in the ego's judgment. Control is a central factor in what the ego permits into consciousness and one to which it devotes its maximum vigilance. This is *not* the way a balanced mind holds together. *Its* control is unconscious. The ego is further off balance by keeping its primary *motivation* unconscious and raising control rather than sensible judgment 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.

⁷⁰ A major source of the ego's off-balanced state is its lack of discrimination between impulses from God and from the body. Any thought system which makes this confusion *must* be insane. Yet this demented state 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 the idea of God is at least logical, since this idea *does* dispel the ego. Fear of dissolution from the Higher Source, then, makes *some* sense in ego-terms. But fear of the body, with which the ego identifies so closely, is more blatantly senseless.

⁷¹ The body is the ego's home by its own election. It is the only identification with which the ego feels safe, because the body's vulnerability 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 does not accept the idea that the body is *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 constantly informed that the body can *not* protect it. This, of course, is not only accurate but perfectly obvious.

⁷² 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 unconscious, the question can and does produce uneasiness, but it cannot be answered because it cannot be *asked*. This is the question which *must* be asked: "Where am I to go for protection?" Even the insane ask it unconsciously, but it requires real sanity to ask it consciously.

⁷³ When the Bible says, "Seek and ye shall find," it 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*. As a teacher with some experience, let me remind you that learning and *wanting* to learn are inseparable. All learners learn best when they believe that what they are trying to learn is of *value* to them. However, values in this world are hierarchical, and not everything you may want to learn has lasting value.

⁷⁴ Indeed, many of the things you want to learn are 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 which the ego has tried to develop but has systematically failed. It may surprise you to learn that had the ego wished to do so it could have made the eternal because, as a product of the mind, it *is* endowed with the power of its own creator. However, the *decision* to do this, rather than the ability to do it, is what the ego cannot tolerate. That is because the decision, from which the ability would naturally develop, would necessarily involve accurate perception, a state of clarity which the ego, fearful of being judged truly, *must* avoid.

⁷⁵ The results of this dilemma are peculiar, but no more so than the dilemma itself. The ego has reacted characteristically here as elsewhere because mental illness, which is *always* a form of ego involvement, is not a matter of reliability as much as of validity. The ego compromises with the issue of the eternal, just as it does with all issues that touch on the real question in any way. By compromising in connection with all *tangential* questions, it hopes to hide the real question *and keep it out of mind*. The ego's characteristic busyness with non-essentials is for precisely that purpose.

⁷⁶ Consider the alchemist's age-old attempts to turn base metal into gold. The one question which the alchemist did not permit himself to ask was, "What *for*?" He could not ask this because it would immediately become apparent that there was no sense in his efforts even if he succeeded. If gold became more plentiful, its value would decrease, and his own purpose would be defeated. The ego has countenanced some strange compromises with the idea of the eternal, making

many odd attempts to relate the concept to the *unimportant* in an effort to satisfy the mind without jeopardizing itself. Thus, it has permitted minds to devote themselves to the possibility of perpetual *motion*, but *not* to perpetual thoughts.

⁷⁷ Ideational preoccupations with problems set up to be incapable of solution are also favorite ego devices for impeding the strong-willed from making real learning progress. The problems of squaring the circle and carrying pi to infinity are good examples. A more recent ego attempt is particularly noteworthy. The idea of preserving the *body* by suspension, thus giving it the kind of limited immortality which the ego can tolerate, is among its more recent appeals to the mind. It is noticeable, however, that in all these diversionary tactics, the one question which is *never* asked by those who pursue them is, “What *for*?”

⁷⁸ This is the question which *you* must learn to ask in connection with *everything* your mind wishes to undertake. What is the purpose? Whatever it is, you cannot doubt that it will channelize your efforts automatically. When you make a decision of purpose, then, you have made a decision about your future effort, a decision which will remain in effect unless you change the *decision*.

⁷⁹ Psychologists are in a good position to realize that the ego is capable of making and accepting as real some very distorted associations. The confusion of sex with aggression and the resulting behavior, which is perceived as the same for both, serves as an example. This is “understandable” to the psychologist and does not produce surprise. The lack of surprise, however, is *not* a sign of understanding. It is a symptom of the psychologist’s ability to accept as reasonable a compromise which is clearly senseless—to attribute it to the mental illness of the patient rather than his own and to limit his questions about both the patient *and* himself to the trivial.

⁸⁰ Such relatively minor confusions of the ego are not among its more profound misassociations, although they do reflect them. Your egos have been blocking the more important questions which your minds *should* ask. You do not understand a patient while you yourselves are willing to limit the questions you raise about *his* mind because you are also accepting these limits for *yours*. This makes you unable to heal him *and* yourselves. Be always unwilling to adapt to *any* situation in which miracle-mindedness is unthinkable. That state in itself is enough to demonstrate that the perception is wrong.

VII. THE CONSTANT STATE

⁸¹ It cannot be emphasized too often that correcting perception is merely a temporary expedient. It is necessary to do so 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 judgment which it entails that it *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, and since this is a sensible question, it has a sensible answer. You must be careful, however, that you really understand the question. What *is* the “you” who are living in this world?

⁸² 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 essential difference from everything else the mind can grasp. “A little knowledge” is not dangerous except to the ego. Vaguely it senses threat, and being unable to realize that “a little knowledge” is a meaningless phrase since “all” and “a little” in this context are the same, the ego decides that, since “all” is impossible, the fear does not lie there. “A little,” however, is a scarcity concept, and *this* the ego understands well. “A little,” then, is perceived as the real threat.

⁸³ The essential thing to remember is that the ego *does not recognize* the real source of its perceived threat, and if *you* associate yourself with the ego, *you* do not perceive the whole situation as it is. Only your allegiance to it gives the ego *any* power over you.

⁸⁴ We 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 yourselves as necessarily conflicted as long as you are here, or more properly, as long as you *believe* that you are here.

⁸⁵ The ego is nothing more than a *part* of your belief about yourselves. Your other life has continued without interruption and has been and always will be totally unaffected by your attempts to dissociate. The ratio of repression and dissociation varies with the individual ego-illusion, but dissociation is always involved or you would not believe that you *are* here. In learning to escape from the illusions you have made, your great debt to each other is something you must never forget. It is exactly the same debt that you owe to me. Whenever you react egotistically towards each other, you are throwing away the graciousness of your indebtedness and the holy perception it would produce.

⁸⁶ 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 ever 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 your egos for guidance. The results will convince you increasingly that your choice in turning to me is the only sane one you can make. No one who has learned from experience that one choice brings peace and joy while another brings chaos and disaster needs much conditioning.

⁸⁷ The ego cannot withstand the conditioning process because the process itself *demonstrates* that there is another way. Conditioning by rewards has always been more effective than conditioning by 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 the difference, but you are by no means convinced as yet. The very fact that you are preoccupied with the idea of escaping *from* the ego shows this.

⁸⁸ You *cannot* escape from the ego by humbling it or controlling it or punishing it. Remember that the ego and the Soul *do not know* each other. The separated mind cannot maintain the separation *except* by dissociating. Having done this, it utilizes repression against 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* willingness to use the device that enables it to endure.

⁸⁹ 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 have been chosen to live so as to demonstrate that you are *not* an ego. I repeat that I do not choose God's channels wrongly. The Holy One shares my trust and always approves my Atonement decisions because my will is never out of accord with His. I have told you before that I am in charge of the whole Atonement. This is *only* because I completed my part in it as a man and can now complete it through other men. My chosen receiving and sending channels cannot fail because I will lend them *my* strength as long as theirs is wanting.

⁹⁰ I will go with you to the Holy One, and through *my* perception, *He* can bridge the little gap. Your gratitude to *each other* is the only gift I want. I will bring it to God for you, knowing that to know your brother *is* to know God. A little knowledge is an all-encompassing thing. If you are grateful to each other, you are grateful to God for what He created. Through your gratitude, you can come to know each other, and one moment of real recognition makes all men your brothers because they are all of your Father. Love does not conquer all things,

but it *does* set all things right. Because you are all the Kingdom of God, I can lead you back to your own creations, which you do not yet know. What has been dissociated is still there.

⁹¹ As you come closer to a brother, you *do* approach me and, as you withdraw from him, *I* become distant to you. Your giant step forward was to insist on a “collaborative venture.” This does not go against the true spirit of meditation; it is inherent in it. Meditation is a collaborative venture with God. 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 as you hear them. That is because the function of love is one.

⁹² 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 bring it near very slowly, so he can learn how his misery lessens as he approaches it. This conditions him to associate his misery with its absence and to associate the opposite of misery with its presence. It gradually becomes desirable as he changes his mind about its worth.

⁹³ I am conditioning you to associate misery with the ego and joy with the Soul. You have conditioned yourselves the other way around. A far greater reward, however, will break through any conditioning if it is repeatedly offered whenever the old habit pattern is broken. You are still free to choose, but can you really *want* the rewards of the ego in the presence of the rewards of God?

VIII. CREATION AND COMMUNICATION

⁹⁴ It should be clear by now that, while the content of any particular ego-illusion does not matter, it is usually more helpful to correct it in a specific context. Ego-illusions are *quite* specific, although they frequently change and although the mind is naturally abstract. The mind nevertheless becomes concrete voluntarily as soon as it splits. However, only *part* of it splits, so only *part* of it is concrete. The concrete part is the same part that believes in the ego because the ego *depends* on the specific. It is the part that believes your existence means you are *separate*.

⁹⁵ Everything the ego perceives is a separate whole, without the relationships that imply *being*. The ego is thus *against* communication except in so far as it is utilized to *establish* separateness rather than to abolish it. The communication

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. While this is always so, individual egos perceive different kinds of threat which are quite specific in their own judgment. For example, although all forms of perceived demands may be classified or judged by the ego as coercive communication which must be disrupted, the response of breaking communication will nevertheless be to a *specific* person or persons.

⁹⁶ The specificity of the ego's thinking, then, results in a spurious kind of generalization which is really not abstract at all. It will respond in certain specific ways to *all* stimuli which it perceives as related. In contrast the Soul 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.

⁹⁷ *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 in that 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.

⁹⁸ Existence as well as being rests 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, including the Soul. To whatever extent you permit this state to be curtailed, you are limiting your sense of your *own* reality, which becomes total only by your 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.

⁹⁹ God, Who encompasses *all* being, nevertheless created beings who have everything individually but who want to share it to increase their joy. Nothing that is real can be increased *except* by sharing. That is why God Himself created

you. Divine Abstraction takes joy in application, and 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 being there is no difference between “having” and “being” as there is in existence. In the state of being, the mind gives everything always.

¹⁰⁰ 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 thanks and no perception with which to judge such offerings. But unless you take your 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.

¹⁰¹ God *has* kept your kingdom for you, but He cannot share His joy with you until you know it with your whole mind. Even revelation is not enough because it is communication *from* God. It is not enough until it is *shared*. God does not need revelation returned to Him, which would clearly be impossible, but He *does* want revelation brought to others. This cannot be done with the actual revelation because its content cannot be expressed, and it is intensely personal to the mind which receives it. It can, however, still be returned *by* that mind through its attitudes to *other* minds which the knowledge from the revelation brings.

¹⁰² God is praised whenever any mind learns to be wholly helpful. This is impossible without being wholly harmless because the two beliefs coexist. The truly helpful are invulnerable because they are *not* protecting their egos, so that 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 own 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.

IX. TRUE REHABILITATION

¹⁰³ Every mind which is split needs rehabilitation. The medical orientation to rehabilitation emphasizes the body, while the vocational orientation stresses the ego. The “team” approach generally leads more to confusion than to anything

else because it is too often misused as a way of exerting the ego's domination over other egos, rather than as a real experiment in the cooperation of minds. Rehabilitation as a movement is an improvement over the overt neglect of those in need of help, but it is often little more than a painful attempt on the part of the halt to lead the blind.

¹⁰⁴ The ego is likely to fear broken bodies because it cannot tolerate them. The ego cannot tolerate ego weakness either without ambivalence because it is afraid of its own weakness as well as the weakness of its chosen home. When it is threatened, the ego blocks your natural impulse to help, placing you under the strain of divided will. You may then be tempted to withdraw to allow your ego to recover and to gain enough strength to be helpful again on a basis limited enough *not* to threaten your ego but too limited to give *you* joy. Those with broken bodies are often looked down on by the ego because of its belief that nothing but a perfect body is worthy as its *own* temple.

¹⁰⁵ A mind that recoils from a hurt body is in great need of rehabilitation itself. *All* symptoms of hurt need true helpfulness, and whenever they are met with this, the mind that so meets them heals *itself*. Rehabilitation is an attitude of praising God as He Himself knows praise. He offers praise to you, and you must offer it to others. The chief handicaps of the clinicians lie in their attitudes to those whom their egos perceive as weakened and damaged. *By* these evaluations, they have weakened and damaged their own helpfulness and have thus set their own rehabilitation back. Rehabilitation is *not* concerned either with the ego's fight for control or its need to avoid and withdraw. You can do much on behalf of your own rehabilitation *and* that of others if in a situation calling for healing you think of it this way:

¹⁰⁶ *I am here **only** to be truly helpful.
I am here to represent Christ, 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.*

FIVE

Healing and Wholeness

I. INTRODUCTION

To heal is to make happy. I have told you before to think how many opportunities you have to gladden yourselves and how many you have refused. This is exactly the same as telling you that you have refused to heal yourselves. The light that belongs to you is the light of joy. Radiance is not associated with sorrow. Depression is often contagious but, although it may affect those who come in contact with it, they do not yield to the influence wholeheartedly. But joy calls forth an integrated willingness to share in it and thus promotes the mind's natural impulse *to respond as one*.

² 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 wholeheartedly. To be wholehearted, you *must* be happy. If fear and love cannot coexist and if it is impossible to be wholly fearful and remain alive, then 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 done. *Every* part benefits and benefits equally.

³ *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 do not have to 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 to be 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:

⁴ *Let me know this brother as I know myself.*

II. HEALING AS JOINING

⁵ Healing is an act of 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 Himself 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 the Soul knows no difference between “being” and “having.” The higher mind thinks according to the laws which the Soul obeys and therefore honors only the laws of God. To Him, getting is meaningless and giving is all. Having everything, the Soul *holds* everything *by* giving it and thus creates as the Father created.

⁶ If you think about it, you will see that, 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 person 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 which the ego makes between giving and *losing* is gone.

⁷ Let us start our process of reawakening with just a few simple concepts:

⁸ *Thoughts **increase** by being given away.*

*The more who believe in them, the **stronger** they become.*

***Everything** is an idea.*

*How, then, is it possible that giving and losing **can** be
meaningfully associated?*

⁹ This is the invitation to the Holy Spirit. I told you that I could 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 nothing more than your own right mind. He was also 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.

¹⁰ The Holy Spirit is the only part of the Holy Trinity which is symbolic. He is referred to in the Bible 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.” The Holy Spirit is a difficult concept to grasp precisely because it *is* symbolic

and therefore open to many different interpretations. As a man and as one of God's creations, my right thinking, which came from the Universal Inspiration which *is* the Holy Spirit, taught me first and foremost that this Inspiration is for all. I could not have It myself *without* knowing this.

¹¹ The word "know" is proper in this context because the Holy Inspiration is so close to knowledge that it calls it forth; or better, allows it to come. We have spoken before of the higher or the "true" perception, which is so close 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 senses the knowledge that lies beyond perception. It came into being with the separation as a protection, inspiring the beginning of the Atonement at the same time. Before that, there was no need for healing and no one was comfortless.

III. THE MIND OF THE ATONEMENT

¹² God honored even the miscreations of His Children because they had made them, but He also blessed them with a way of thinking that could raise their perceptions until they became so lofty that they could reach almost back to Him. The Holy Spirit is the Mind of the Atonement. It represents a state of mind that comes close enough to One-Mindedness that transfer to it is at last possible. Transfer depends on common elements in the old learning and the new situation to which it is transferred. 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 "carried" over since the last step is taken by God.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ First, its universality is perfectly clear, and no one who receives it could ever believe for one instant that sharing it involves anything *but* gain.

¹⁵ 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. [Third, it is an unequivocal call to love. Every other voice is still.]

¹⁶ There is a point at which sufficient quantitative changes produce real qualitative differences. The next point requires real understanding, because it is the point at which the shift occurs. Finally, it points the way *beyond* the healing which it brings and leads the mind *beyond* its own integration into the paths of creation.

¹⁷ 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 time perception which the miracle introduces. The Holy Spirit is the *motivation* for miracle-mindedness, the will to *heal* the separation by letting it go. This will is *in* you, because God placed it in your mind, and although you can keep it asleep, you cannot obliterate it.

¹⁸ God Himself keeps this will alive by transmitting it from His Mind to yours as long as there is time. It is partly His and partly yours. The miracle itself is just this fusion or 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 was God's Answer to the separation, the means by which the Atonement could repair until the whole mind returned to creating.

¹⁹ The Atonement and the separation began at the same time. When man made the ego, God placed in him the call to joy. This call is so strong that the ego always dissolves at its sound. That is why you can choose to listen to 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.

IV. THE VOICE FOR GOD

²⁰ 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 Souls. 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.

²¹ You *are* the Kingdom of Heaven, but you have let the belief in darkness enter your minds, 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 that 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.

²² This *is* a conflict state. It *means* that knowledge has been lost, because knowledge is sure. 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 through another will. 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 which you must make. In the holy state, the will is free in the sense that its *creative* power is unlimited, but choice itself is meaningless.

²³ Freedom to choose is the same *power* as freedom to create, but its *application* is different. Choosing *means* divided will. The Holy Spirit is one way of choosing. This way is in you because there is also *another* way. 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 of His Will for which the Holy Spirit speaks. The call to return is stronger than the call to depart, but it speaks in a different way.

²⁴ 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 have made for yourselves. The Voice for God is always quiet, because it speaks of peace. Yet peace is stronger than war because it heals. War is division, not increase. No one gains from strife.

²⁵ “What profiteth it a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own Soul?” That means that if he listens to the wrong voice, he has *lost sight* of his Soul. He *cannot* lose it, but he *can* not know it. It is therefore *lost to him* until he chooses right. The Holy Spirit is your Guide in choosing. He is the part of your mind which *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.

²⁶ The Holy Spirit is the way in which God’s Will can be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Both Heaven and earth are in *you*, because the call of both is in your will and therefore 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 will to serve. The call you answer now is an evaluation because it is a *decision*. The decision itself is very simple. It is made on the basis of which call is worth more to you.

²⁷ 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 *for yourself*. The will for this decision is the will to *share* it, because the decision itself *is* the decision to share. It is *made by giving* and is therefore the *one* act of mind that resembles true creation. You understand the role of “models” in the learning process and the importance of the models you value and choose to follow in determining what you will to learn. 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.

²⁸ I promised you that the mind that made the decision 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 awake 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?

²⁹ 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 reconsider the Biblical statement, “My yoke is easy and my burden light” in this way: “Let us join together, for my message is light.”

³⁰ I came into your minds because you had grown vaguely aware of the fact that there *is* another way or another Voice. Having given this invitation to the Holy Spirit, I could come to provide the model for *how to think*. Psychology has become the study of *behavior*, but no one denies the basic law that behavior is a response to *motivation*, and motivation is will. 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.

³¹ 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.

V. THE GUIDE TO SALVATION

³² The way to learn to know your brother is by perceiving the Holy Spirit in him. We have already said that the Holy Spirit is the bridge or thought-transfer of perception to knowledge, so we can use the terms as if they were related, because in His Mind they *are*. The 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, since we have said it before, but in *experience*.

³³ 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 the parts of God. 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. Therefore, it is strengthened by being given away. It increases in *you* as you give it to your brothers. Since thoughts do not have to be conscious to exist, your brother does not have to be aware of the Holy Spirit either in himself or in you for this miracle to occur.

³⁴ Your brother 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 ways of seeing your brother which are diametrically opposed to each other. 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.

³⁵ 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 *own* mind. It is not weak in itself, but it *is* limited by your unwillingness to hear it. Will itself is an idea and is therefore strengthened by being shared. If you make the mistake of looking for the Holy

Spirit in yourself alone, your meditations 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.

³⁶ Delay is of the ego, because time is *its* concept. Delay is obviously a time idea. Both time and delay are meaningless in eternity. We 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 in the same realm of discourse in which the ego itself operates, or the mind would be unable to understand the change.

³⁷ We have repeatedly emphasized that one level of the mind is not understandable to another. So it is with the ego and the Soul, with time and eternity. Eternity is an idea of God, so the Soul 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 which is really eternal is *now*. That is what we really mean when we say that "now is the only time." The literal nature of this statement does not mean anything to the ego, which interprets it at best to mean "don't worry about the future." That is not what it really means at all.

³⁸ The Holy Spirit is the Mediator between the interpretations of the ego and the knowledge of the Soul. His ability to deal with symbols enables Him to work *against* the ego's beliefs in its own language. His equal ability to look *beyond* symbols into eternity also enables Him to understand the laws of God, for which He speaks. He can thus perform the function of *reinterpreting* what the ego makes, *not* by destruction but by *understanding*. Understanding is light, and light leads to knowledge. The Holy Spirit is *in* light because He is in you who *are* light, but you yourselves do not know this. It is therefore the task of the Holy Spirit to reinterpret *you* on behalf of God.

³⁹ You cannot understand yourselves 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 *yourself*. It is of this that the Holy Spirit reminds you. It is this that the Holy Spirit *sees*. This vision invariably 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.

⁴⁰ 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 with all its might. The Holy Spirit counters this welcome by welcoming peace. Peace and eternity are as closely related as are time and war. Perception as well as knowledge derives meaning from relationships. Those which you accept are the foundations of your beliefs. The separation is merely another term for a split mind. It was not an act, but a *thought*. Therefore, the idea of separation can be given away, just as the idea of unity can. Either way, the idea will be strengthened *in the mind of the giver*.

⁴¹ 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 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 minds *already* understand to teach you that you do *not* understand it. The Holy Spirit can deal with an unwilling learner without going counter to his will because part of his will *is* still for God. Despite the ego's attempts to conceal this part, it is still much stronger than the ego, even though the ego does not recognize it. The Holy Spirit recognizes it perfectly, because it is His own dwelling place or the place in the mind where He is at home.

⁴² *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 *reinterpreter* of what the ego made, sees it only as a teaching device for bringing you home. The Holy Spirit must perceive time and reinterpret it into the timeless. The mind must be led into eternity *through* time because, having made time, it is capable of perceiving its opposite.

⁴³ The Holy Spirit 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 Holy Communion always, and He is part of *you*. He is your Guide to salvation, because He holds the remembrance of things past and to come. He holds this gladness gently in your minds, asking only that you *increase* it in His name by sharing it, to increase His joy in *you*.

VI. THERAPY AND TEACHING

⁴⁴ You must have noticed how often I have used your own ideas to help you. You have learned to be a loving, wise, and very understanding therapist *except for yourself*. That exception has given you more than perception for others because

of what you saw in *them* but *less* than knowledge of your real relationships *to* them, because you did not accept them as *part* of you. Understanding *is* beyond perception because it introduces meaning. It is, however, below knowledge even though it can grow *towards* it. It is possible, with great effort, to understand someone else to some extent and to be quite helpful to him, but the effort is misdirected. The misdirection is quite apparent; it is directed away from *you*.

⁴⁵ This does not mean that it is *lost* to you, but it *does* mean that you are not aware of it. I have saved all your kindnesses and every loving thought you have had. I have purified them of the errors which hid their light and have 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. What fear has hidden still is part of you.

⁴⁶ Joining the Atonement, which I have repeatedly asked you to do, is always a way *out* of fear. This does not mean that you can safely fail to acknowledge anything that is true. However, the Holy Spirit will not fail to 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 grasp. It belongs to you because you created it. It is yours because it is a part of you, just as you are part of God because He created *you*.

⁴⁷ The Atonement is the *guarantee* of the safety of the Kingdom. Nothing good is 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. What the ego makes, it *keeps to itself*, and so it is without strength. Its unshared existence does not die; it was merely never born. Real birth is not a beginning; it is a *continuing*. Everything that can continue has *been* born, but it can *increase* as you are willing to return the part of your mind that needs healing to the higher part and thus render your creating undivided.

⁴⁸ As a therapist, you yourself tell your patients that the real difference between neurotic and “healthy” guilt feelings is that neurotic guilt feelings *do not help anyone*. This distinction is wise though incomplete. Let us make the distinction a little sharper now. Neurotic guilt feelings are a device of the ego for “atoning” without sharing and for asking pardon without change. The ego *never* calls for *real* Atonement and cannot tolerate forgiveness, which *is* change.

⁴⁹ Your concept of “healthy guilt feelings” has merit, but without the concept of the Atonement, it lacks the healing potential it holds. You made the distinction in terms of feelings, which led to a decision not to *repeat* the error, which is only *part* of healing. Your concept lacked the idea of *undoing* it. What you were really

advocating, then, was adopting a policy of sharing without a real *foundation*. I have come to *give* you the foundation, so your own thoughts can make you *really* free. You have carried the burden of the ideas you did not share and which were therefore too weak to increase, but you did not recognize how to undo their existence *because* you had made them.

⁵⁰ You *cannot* cancel out your past errors alone. They will *not* disappear from your mind without remedy. The remedy is *not* of your making, any more than *you* are. The Atonement cannot be understood except as a *pure act of sharing*. That is what is meant when we 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*. Your ego can keep you in exile *from* the Kingdom, but in the Kingdom itself it has no power.

⁵¹ You have become willing to receive my messages as I give them without interference by the ego, so we can clarify an earlier point. We said that you will one day teach as much as you learn and that will keep you in balance. The time is now because you have *let* it be now. You cannot learn *except* by teaching.

⁵² I heard one voice because I had learned that learning is attained *by* teaching. I understood that *I could not atone for myself alone*. Listening to one voice means the will to *share* the voice in order to hear it yourself. The mind that was in me is still irresistibly drawn to every mind created by God, because God’s Wholeness *is* the wholeness of His Son.

⁵³ Turning the other cheek does *not* mean that you should submit to violence without protest. It means that 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. Teaching is done in many ways: by formal means, by guidance, and above all *by example*. Teaching is therapy, because it means the *sharing* of ideas and the awareness that to share them is to *strengthen* them. The union of the Sonship *is* its protection. The ego cannot prevail against the Kingdom *because* it is united, and the ego fades away and is undone in the presence of the attraction of the parts of the Sonship, which hear the call of the Holy Spirit to be as One.

⁵⁴ 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 which

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, He leads you back to God where you belong, and how can you find this way except by taking your brother with you?

⁵⁵ 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 will forsake yourselves and God if you forsake *any* of your brothers. You are more than your brother's keeper. In fact, you do not *want* to keep him. You must learn to see him as he is and *know* that he belongs to God as you do. How could you treat your brother better than by rendering unto God the things which are God's?

⁵⁶ Ideas do not *leave* the mind which thought them to have a separate being, nor do separate thoughts conflict with one another in space, because they do not occupy space at all. However, human ideas *can* conflict in content, because they occur at different levels and include opposite thoughts at the *same* level. *It is impossible to share opposing thoughts.* The Holy Spirit does not *let* you forsake your brothers. Therefore, you can really share *only* the parts of your thoughts which are of Him and which He also keeps for *you*. And of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. All the rest remains with you until He 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 will to share them *is* their purification.

⁵⁷ 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 withhold it from the Kingdom. The joint will of *all* 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.

⁵⁸ How can you who are so holy suffer? All your past except its beauty is gone, and nothing is left except a blessing. 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.

VII. THE TWO DECISIONS

⁵⁹ 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 all the means at its disposal to side with Heaven or earth, as it elects. But again, let us 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.

⁶⁰ 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 the *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.

⁶¹ The ego *is* the part of the mind which believes in division. How can part of God detach itself *without* believing it is attacking Him? We spoke before of the authority problem as involving the concept of *usurping* God's power. The ego believes that this is what *you* did because it believes it *is* you. It follows, then, that 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.

⁶² 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 it speaks *for* it. Listening to the ego's voice *means* that you believe it is possible to attack God. You believe that a part of Him has been torn away by *you*. The classic picture of fear of retaliation *from without* then follows because the severity of the guilt is so acute that it *must* be projected. Although Freud was wrong about the basic conflict itself, he was very accurate in describing its effects.

⁶³ Whatever you accept *into* your mind has reality for you. It is, however, only your *acceptance* of it that makes it real. If you enthrone the ego in it, the fact that you have accepted it or allowed it to enter *makes* it your reality. This is because the mind, as God created it, *is* capable of creating reality. We 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*. Perverted thinking will *always* be attended with guilt because it *is* the belief in sin.

⁶⁴ The ego does not perceive sin as a lack of love. It perceives sin as a *positive act of assault*. This is an interpretation which 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, it heals the body because *it* has been healed. The sane mind cannot conceive of illness, because it cannot conceive of attacking anyone or anything.

⁶⁵ We 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 over 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.

⁶⁶ 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 which is anything *but* ineffectual. Its effects will follow automatically *until the decision is changed*. This is repeated here because you have not learned it. But again, your decision can be *unmade* as well as made. Remember, though, that the *alternatives* are unalterable.

⁶⁷ The Holy Spirit, like the ego, is a decision. Together they constitute all the alternatives which the mind can accept and obey. The ego and the Holy Spirit 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* have 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.

⁶⁸ Irrational thought is a thought *disorder*. 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 thought disorder is attended by guilt at its inception and

maintained by guilt in its continuance. Guilt is inescapable for those who believe they order their own thought and must therefore obey its orders. This makes them feel *responsible* for their mind errors, without recognizing that by *accepting* this responsibility they are really 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.

⁶⁹ 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 a thought disorder, and a remedy whose efficacy is beyond doubt, how can its symptoms remain? You have reason to question the validity of symptom cure, but *no one* believes that the symptoms can remain if the underlying *cause* is removed.

VIII. TIME AND ETERNITY

⁷⁰ The *continuing* will to remain separated is the only possible reason for continuing guilt feelings. We have said this before, but we did not emphasize the destructive results of this decision at that time. *Any* decision of the mind will affect both behavior *and* experience. What you will, you *expect*. This is not delusional. Your mind *does* create your future, and it can turn it back to full creation at any minute *if it accepts the Atonement first*. It will also turn back to full creation the instant it has done so. Having given up its thought disorder, the proper ordering of thought becomes quite apparent.

⁷¹ 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 have therefore changed your belief in your status. 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.

⁷² Guilt feelings are the *preservers* of time. They induce fears of future retaliation or abandonment and thus ensure that the future will remain like the past. This is the ego's continuity and gives it a false sense of security through the belief 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 make it free. Your ego cannot accept

this freedom and will oppose your free decision 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.

⁷³ The mind does indeed know its power, because the mind does indeed know God. 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? What you do not understand is that 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, and speaking itself was unnecessary before the ego was made.

⁷⁴ The ego speaks in judgment and the Holy Spirit reverses its decisions, much as the Supreme Court has the power to reverse the lower courts' decisions about the laws of this world. The ego's decisions are *always* wrong, because they are based on a complete fallacy which they were made to uphold. *Nothing* the ego perceives is interpreted correctly. Not only does it cite Scripture for its purpose, but it even interprets Scripture as a witness for itself. The Bible is a fearful thing to the ego because of its prejudiced judgment. Perceiving it as fearful, it interprets it fearfully. Having made *you* afraid, you do not appeal to the Higher Court, because you believe its judgment would be *against* you.

⁷⁵ We need cite only a few examples to see how the ego's interpretations have misled you. A favorite ego quotation is "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." Another is "Vengeance is mine, sayeth the Lord." Still another is "I will visit the sins of the father unto the third and fourth generation," and also "The wicked shall perish." There are many others, but if you will let the Holy Spirit reinterpret these in His own light, they will suffice.

⁷⁶ "As ye sow, so shall ye reap" merely means that what you believe to be 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 explained if you remember that ideas increase only by being shared. This quotation therefore emphasizes the fact 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.

⁷⁷ "I will visit the sins of the fathers unto the third and fourth generation," as interpreted by the ego, is particularly vicious. It is used, in fact, as an attempt

to guarantee its survival beyond itself. Actually, all the quotation means is that the Holy Spirit in later generations retains the power to interpret *correctly* what former generations have thought and thus release *their* thoughts from the ability to produce fear anywhere in the Sonship. “The wicked shall perish” is merely a statement of fact if the word “perish” is properly understood. Every loveless thought *must* be undone. Even the word “undone” is fearful to the ego, which interprets “I am undone” as “I am destroyed.”

⁷⁸ 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 entirely to release you from fear. The part of your thought which you have given to the ego will merely return to the Kingdom, where your whole mind *belongs*. The ego is a form of arrest, but arrest is merely delay. It does *not* involve the concept of punishment, although the ego welcomes that interpretation. You *can* delay the completion of the Kingdom, but you *cannot* introduce the concept of assault into it.

⁷⁹ When I said, “I am come as a light into the world,” I surely came to share the light with you. Remember the symbolic reference we made before to the ego’s dark glass, and remember also that we said, “Do not look there.” It is still true that “where you look to find yourself is up to you.” The Higher Court will *not* 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.

⁸⁰ 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. The case may be foolproof, but it is *not* God-proof. The Voice for God will not hear it at all because He can only witness truly. His verdict will always be “Thine is the Kingdom” because He was *given* you to remind you of what you are.

⁸¹ Your patience with each other is your patience with yourselves. 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. What you need to learn now is that only infinite patience *can* produce 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.

⁸² To say that time is temporary is merely redundant. We have repeatedly said that time is a learning device which will 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 you to eternity and remain to bless *your* creations there. He is the only blessing you can truly give, because He is so truly blessed, and because He has been given you so freely by God, you must give Him as you received Him.

IX. THE ETERNAL FIXATION

⁸³ The idea of “set” is among the better psychological concepts. Actually, it is used quite frequently in the Bible and also in this course under many different terms. For example, “God will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed (or set) on Him,” a statement which means that God’s peace is set in the Holy Spirit because it is fixed on God. It is also fixed in you. You, then, *are* fixed in the peace of God. The concept of “fixation” is also a very helpful one which Freud understood perfectly. Unfortunately, he lost his understanding because he was afraid and, as you know all too well, fear is incompatible with good judgment. Fear distorts thinking and therefore *disorders* thought.

⁸⁴ Freud’s system of thought was extremely ingenious because Freud was extremely ingenious, and a mind *must* endow its thoughts with its own attributes. This is its inherent strength, although it may misuse its power. Freud lost much of the potential value of his thought system, because he did *not* include himself in it. This is a dissociated state, because the thinker cuts himself off from his thoughts. Freud’s thought was so conflicted that he could not have retained his sanity as *he* saw it *without* dissociation. That is why the many contradictions which are quite apparent in his thinking became increasingly less apparent to *him*. A man who knows what fixation really means and yet does not yield to it is terribly afraid.

⁸⁵ Fixation is the pull of God, on whom your mind *is* fixed because of the Holy Spirit’s irrevocable set. “Irrevocable” means “cannot be called back or redirected.” The irrevocable nature of the Holy Spirit’s set is the basis for His unequivocal Voice. The Holy Spirit *never* changes His Mind. Clarity of thought *cannot* occur under conditions of vacillation. Unless a mind is fixed in its purpose, it is *not* clear. Clarity literally means the state of light, and enlightenment *is* understanding. Enlightenment stands *under* perception, because you have denied it as the *real* foundation of thought. This is the basis for *all* delusional systems.

⁸⁶ The concept of fixation as Freud saw it has a number of learning advantages. First, it recognizes that man can be fixated at a point in development which does *not* accord with a point in time. This clearly could have been a means toward real

release from the time belief, had Freud pursued it with an open mind. Freud, however, suffered all his life from refusal to allow eternity to dawn upon his mind and enlighten it truly. As a result, he overlooked *now* entirely and merely saw the continuity of past and future.

⁸⁷ Second, although Freud misinterpreted what the Holy Spirit told him, or better, reminded him of, he was too honest to deny more than was necessary to keep his fear in tolerable bounds as he perceived the situation. Therefore, he emphasized that the point in development at which the mind is fixated is more real to *itself* than the external reality with which it disagrees. This again could have been a powerful *release* mechanism had Freud not decided to involve it in a strong *defense* system because he perceived it as an attack.

⁸⁸ Third, although Freud interpreted fixation as involving irrevocable “danger points” to which the mind could always regress, the concept can also be interpreted as an irrevocable call to sanity which the mind cannot *lose*. Freud himself could not accept this interpretation, but throughout his thought system, the “threat” of fixation remained and could never be eliminated by any living human being. Essentially, this was the basis of Freud’s pessimism, personally as well as theoretically. He tried every means his very inventive mind could devise to set up a form of therapy which could enable the mind to escape from fixation forever, even though he *knew* this was impossible.

⁸⁹ This knowledge plagued Freud’s belief in his own thought system at every turn because he was both an honest man and a healer. He was therefore only partially insane and was unable to relinquish the *hope* of release even though he could not cope with it. The reason for this amount of detail is because *you* are in the same position. You were eternally fixated on God in your creation, and the pull of this fixation is so strong that you will never overcome it. The reason is perfectly clear. The fixation is on a level so high that it cannot *be* surmounted. You are *always* being pulled back to your Creator, because you *belong* to Him.

⁹⁰ Do you *really* believe you can make a voice that can drown out His? Do you *really* believe that you can devise a thought system which can separate you from His? Do you *really* believe that 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.