

The Ancient Melody

Notes from *A Course in Miracles*

Nothing real can be threatened.

Nothing unreal exists.

Herein lies the peace of God.

If I defend myself I am attacked.

Who would defend himself unless he thought he was attacked, that the attack is real, and that his own defense can save himself? And herein lies the folly of defense; it gives illusions full reality, and then attempts to handle them as real. It adds illusions to illusions, thus making correction doubly difficult. And it is this you do when you attempt to plan the future, activate the past, or organize the present as you wish.

You operate from the belief you must protect yourself from what is happening because it must contain what threatens you. A sense of threat is an acknowledgement of an inherent weakness; a belief that there is danger which has power to call on you to make appropriate defense. The world is based on this insane belief. And all its structures, all its thoughts and doubts, its penalties and heavy armaments, its legal definitions and its codes, its ethics and its leaders and its gods, all serve but to preserve its sense of threat. For no one walks the world in armature but must have terror striking at his heart.

Defense is frightening. It stems from fear, increasing fear as each defense is made. You think it offers safety. Yet it speaks of fear made real and terror justified. Is

it not strange you do not pause to ask, as you elaborate your plans and make your armor thicker and your locks more tight, what you defend, and how, and against what?

Let us consider first what you defend. It must be something that is very weak and easily assaulted. It must be something made easy prey, unable to protect itself and needing your defense. What but the body has such frailty that constant care and watchful, deep concern are needful to protect its little life? What but the body falters and must fail to serve the Son of God as worthy host?

Yet it is not the body that can fear, nor be a thing of fear. It has no needs but those which you assign to it. It needs no complicated structures of defense, no health-inducing medicine, no care and no concern at all. Defend its life, or give it gifts to make it beautiful or walls to make it safe, and you but say your home is open to the thief of time, corruptible and crumbling, so unsafe it must be guarded with your very life.

Is not this picture fearful? Can you be at peace with such a concept of your home? Yet what endowed the body with the right to serve you thus except your own belief? It is your mind which gave the body all the functions that you see in it, and set its value far beyond a little pile of dust and water. Who would make

defense of something that he recognized as this?

The body is in need of no defense. This cannot be too often emphasized. It will be strong and healthy if the mind does not abuse it by assigning it to roles it cannot fill, to purposes beyond its scope, and to exalted aims which it cannot accomplish. Such attempts, ridiculous yet deeply cherished, are the sources for the many mad attacks you make upon it. For it seems to fail your hopes, your needs, your values and your dreams.

The "self" that needs protection is not real. The body, valueless and hardly worth the least defense, need merely be perceived as quite apart from you, and it becomes a healthy, serviceable instrument through which the mind can operate until its usefulness is over. Who would want to keep it when its usefulness is done?

Defend the body and you have attacked your mind. For you have seen in it the faults, the weaknesses, the limits and the lacks from which you think the body must be saved. You will not see the mind as separate from bodily conditions. And you will impose upon the body all the pain that comes from the conception of the mind as limited and fragile, and apart from other minds and separate from its Source.

These are the thoughts in need of healing, and the

body will respond with health when they have been corrected and replaced with truth. This is the body's only real defense. Yet is this where you look for its defense? You offer it protection of a kind from which it gains no benefit at all, but merely adds to your distress of mind. You do not heal, but merely take away the hope of healing, for you fail to see where hope must lie if it be meaningful.

A healed mind does not plan. It carries out the plans that it receives through listening to Wisdom that is not its own. It waits until it has been taught what should be done, and then proceeds to do it. It does not depend upon itself for anything except its adequacy to fulfill the plans assigned to it. It is secure in certainty that obstacles can not impede its progress to accomplishment of any goal that serves the greater plan established for the good of everyone.

A healed mind is relieved of the belief that it must plan, although it cannot know the outcome which is best, the means by which it is achieved, nor how to recognize the problem that the plan is made to solve. It must misuse the body in its plans until it recognizes this is so. But when it has accepted this as true, then is it healed, and lets the body go.

Enslavement of the body to the plans the unhealed mind sets up to save itself must make the body sick. It

is not free to be the means of helping in a plan which far exceeds its own protection, and which needs its service for a little while. In this capacity is health assured. For everything the mind employs for this will function flawlessly, and with the strength that has been given it and cannot fail.

It is, perhaps, not easy to perceive that self-initiated plans are but defenses, with the purpose all of them were made to realize. They are the means by which a frightened mind would undertake its own protection, at the cost of truth. This is not difficult to realize in some forms which these self-deceptions take, where the denial of reality is very obvious. Yet planning is not often recognized as a defense.

The mind engaged in planning for itself is occupied in setting up control of future happenings. It does not think that it will be provided for, unless it makes its own provisions. Time becomes a future emphasis, to be controlled by learning and experience obtained from past events and previous beliefs. It overlooks the present, for it rests on the idea the past has taught enough to let the mind direct its future course.

The mind that plans is thus refusing to allow for change. What it has learned before becomes the basis for its future goals. Its past experience directs its choice of what will happen. And it does not see that

here and now is everything it needs to guarantee a future quite unlike the past, without a continuity of any old ideas and sick beliefs. Anticipation plays no part at all, for present confidence directs the way.

Defenses are the plans you undertake to make against the truth. Their aim is to select what you approve, and disregard what you consider incompatible with your beliefs of your reality. Yet what remains is meaningless indeed. For it is your reality that is the "threat" which your defenses would attack, obscure, and take apart and crucify.

What could you not accept, if you but knew that everything that happens, all events, past, present and to come, are gently planned by One Whose only purpose is your good? Perhaps you have misunderstood His plan, for He would never offer pain to you. But your defenses did not let you see His loving blessing shine in every step you ever took. While you made plans for death, He led you gently to eternal life.

Your present trust in Him is the defense that promises a future undisturbed, without a trace of sorrow, and with joy that constantly increases, as this life becomes a holy instant, set in time, but heeding only immortality. Let no defenses but your present trust direct the future, and this life becomes a meaningful encounter with the truth that only your defenses

would conceal.

Without defenses, you become a light which Heaven gratefully acknowledges to be its own. And it will lead you on in ways appointed for your happiness according to the ancient plan, begun when time was born. Your followers will join their light with yours, and it will be increased until the world is lighted up with joy. And gladly will our brothers lay aside their cumbersome defenses, which availed them nothing and could only terrify.

We will anticipate that time today with present confidence, for this is part of what was planned for us. We will be sure that everything we need is given us for our accomplishment of this today. We make no plans for how it will be done, but realize that our defenselessness is all that is required for the truth to dawn upon our minds with certainty.

For fifteen minutes twice today we rest from senseless planning, and from every thought that blocks the truth from entering our minds. Today we will receive instead of plan, that we may give instead of organize. And we are given truly, as we say:

*If I defend myself I am attacked.
But in defenselessness I will be strong,
And I will learn what my defenses hide.*

Nothing but that. If there are plans to make, you

will be told of them. They may not be the plans you thought were needed, nor indeed the answers to the problems which you thought confronted you. But they are answers to another kind of question, which remains unanswered yet in need of answering until the Answer comes to you at last.

All your defenses have been aimed at not receiving what you will receive today. And in the light and joy of simple trust, you will but wonder why you ever thought that you must be defended from release. Heaven asks nothing. It is hell that makes extravagant demands for sacrifice. You give up nothing in these times today when, undefended, you present yourself to your Creator as you really are.

He has remembered you. Today we will remember Him. For this is Eastertime in your salvation. And you rise again from what was seeming death and hopelessness. Now is the light of hope reborn in you, for now you come without defense, to learn the part for you within the plan of God. What little plans or magical beliefs can still have value, when you have received your function from the Voice for God Himself?

Try not to shape this day as you believe would benefit you most. For you can not conceive of all the happiness that comes to you without your planning. Learn

today. And all the world will take this giant stride, and celebrate your Eastertime with you. Throughout the day, as foolish little things appear to raise defensiveness in you and tempt you to engage in weaving plans, remind yourself this is a special day for learning, and acknowledge it with this:

*This is my Easter-time. And I would keep
It holy. I will not defend myself,
Because the Son of God needs no defense
Against the truth of his Reality.*

I am not a body. I am free.

For I am still as God created me.

Sickness is a defense against the truth.

No one can heal unless he understands what purpose sickness seems to serve. For then he understands as well its purpose has no meaning. Being causeless and without a meaningful intent of any kind, it cannot be at all. When this is seen, healing is automatic. It dispels this meaningless illusion by the same approach that carries all of them to truth, and merely leaves them there to disappear.

Sickness is not an accident. Like all defenses, it is an insane device for self-deception. And like all the rest, its purpose is to hide reality, attack it, change it, render it inept, distort it, twist it, or reduce it to a little pile of unassembled parts. The aim of all defenses is to keep the truth from being whole. The parts are seen as if each one were whole within itself.

Defenses are not unintentional, nor are they made without awareness. They are secret, magic wands you wave when truth appears to threaten what you would believe. They seem to be unconscious but because of the rapidity with which you choose to use them. In that second, even less, in which the choice is made, you recognize exactly what you would attempt to do, and then proceed to think that it is done.

Who but yourself evaluates a threat, decides escape is necessary, and sets up a series of defenses to reduce the threat that has been judged as real? All this cannot be done unconsciously. But afterwards, your plan requires that you must forget you made it, so it seems to be external to your own intent; a happening beyond your state of mind, an outcome with a real effect on you, instead of one effected by yourself.

It is this quick forgetting of the part you play in making your "reality" that makes defenses seem to be beyond your own control. But what you have forgot can be remembered, given willingness to reconsider the decision which is doubly shielded by oblivion. Your not remembering is but the sign that this decision still remains in force, as far as your desires are concerned. Mistake not this for fact. Defenses must make facts unrecognizable. They aim at doing this, and it is this they do.

Every defense takes fragments of the whole, assembles them without regard to all their true relationships, and time constructs illusions of a whole that is not there. It is this process that imposes threat, and not whatever outcome may result. When parts are wrested from the whole and seen as separate and wholes within themselves, they become symbols standing for attack upon the whole; successful in effect, and never to be seen as whole again. And yet

you have forgotten that they stand but for your own decision of what should be real, to take the place of what is real.

Sickness is a decision. It is not a thing that happens to you, quite unsought, which makes you weak and brings you suffering. It is a choice you make, a plan you lay, when for an instant truth arises in your own deluded mind, and all your world appears to totter and prepare to fall. Now are you sick, that truth may go away and threaten your establishments no more.

How do you think that sickness can succeed in shielding you from truth? Because it proves the body is not separate from you, and so you must be separate from the truth. You suffer pain because the body does, and in this pain are you made one with it. Thus is your "true" identity preserved, and the strange, haunting thought that you might be something beyond this little pile of dust silenced and stilled. For see, this dust can make you suffer, twist your limbs and stop your heart, commanding you to die and cease to be.

Thus is the body stronger than the truth, which asks you live, but cannot overcome your choice to die. And so the body is more powerful than everlasting life, Heaven more frail than hell, and God's design for the salvation of His Son opposed by a decision stronger than His Will. His Son is dust, the Father

incomplete, and chaos sits in triumph on His throne.

Such is your planning for your own defense. And you believe that Heaven quails before such mad attacks as these, with God made blind by your illusions, truth turned into lies, and all the universe made slave to laws which your defenses would impose on it. Yet who believes illusions but the one who made them up? Who else can see them and react to them as if they were the truth?

God knows not of your plans to change His Will. The universe remains unheeding of the laws by which you thought to govern it. And Heaven has not bowed to hell, nor life to death. You can but choose to think you die, or suffer sickness or distort the truth in any way. What is created is apart from all of this. Defenses are plans to defeat what cannot be attacked. What is unalterable cannot change. And what is wholly sinless cannot sin.

Such is the simple truth. It does not make appeal to might nor triumph. It does not command obedience, nor seek to prove how pitiful and futile your attempts to plan defenses that would alter it. Truth merely wants to give you happiness, for such its purpose is. Perhaps it sighs a little when you throw away its gifts, and yet it knows, with perfect certainty, that what God wills for you must be received.

It is this fact that demonstrates that time is an illusion. For time lets you think what God has given you is not the truth right now, as it must be. The Thoughts of God are quite apart from time. For time is but another meaningless defense you made against the truth. Yet what He wills is here, and you remain as He created you.

Truth has a power far beyond defense, for no illusions can remain where truth has been allowed to enter. And it comes to any mind that would lay down its arms, and cease to play with folly. It is found at any time; today, if you will choose to practice giving welcome to the truth.

This is our aim today. And we will give a quarter of an hour twice to ask the truth to come to us and set us free. And truth will come, for it has never been apart from us. It merely waits for just this invitation which we give today. We introduce it with a healing prayer, to help us rise above defensiveness, and let truth be as it has always been:

*Sickness is a defense against the truth.
I will accept the truth of what I am,
And let my mind be wholly healed today.*

Healing will flash across your open mind, as peace and truth arise to take the place of war and vain imaginings. There will be no dark corners sickness can

conceal, and keep defended from the light of truth. There will be no dim figures from your dreams, nor their obscure and meaningless pursuits with double purposes insanely sought, remaining in your mind. It will be healed of all the sickly wishes that it tried to authorize the body to obey.

Now is the body healed, because the source of sickness has been opened to relief. And you will recognize you practiced well by this: The body should not feel at all. If you have been successful, there will be no sense of feeling ill or feeling well, of pain or pleasure. No response at all is in the mind to what the body does. Its usefulness remains, and nothing more.

Perhaps you do not realize that this removes the limits you had placed upon the body by the purposes you gave to it. As these are laid aside, the strength the body has will always be enough to serve all truly useful purposes. The body's health is fully guaranteed, because it is not limited by time, by weather or fatigue, by food and drink, or any laws you made it serve before. You need do nothing now to make it well, for sickness has become impossible.

Yet this protection needs to be preserved by careful watching. If you let your mind harbor attack thoughts, yield to judgment or make plans against uncertainties to come, you have again misplaced

yourself, and made a bodily identity which will attack the body, for the mind is sick.

Give instant remedy, should this occur, by not allowing your defensiveness to hurt you longer. Do not be confused about what must be healed, but tell yourself:

*I have forgotten what I really am,
For I mistook my body for myself.
Sickness is a defense against the truth.
But I am not a body. And my mind
Cannot attack. So I can not be sick.*

The body grows decreasingly persistent in your sight,
and will at length be seen as little more than just a
shadow circling round the good.

The world I see holds nothing that I want.

The world you see holds nothing that you need to offer you; nothing that you can use in any way, nor anything at all that serves to give you joy. Believe this thought, and you are saved from years of misery, from countless disappointments, and from hopes that turn to bitter ashes of despair. No one but must accept this thought as true, if he would leave the world behind and soar beyond its petty scope and little ways.

Each thing you value here is but a chain that binds you to the world, and it will serve no other end but this. For everything must serve the purpose you have given it, until you see a different purpose there. The only purpose worthy of your mind this world contains is that you pass it by, without delaying to perceive some hope where there is none. Be you deceived no more. The world you see holds nothing that you want.

Escape today the chains you place upon your mind when you perceive salvation here. For what you value you make part of you as you perceive yourself. All things you seek to make your value greater in your sight limit you further, hide your worth from you,

and add another bar across the door that leads to true awareness of your Self.

Let nothing that relates to body thoughts delay your progress to salvation, nor permit temptation to believe the world holds anything you want to hold you back. Nothing is here to cherish. Nothing here is worth one instant of delay and pain; one moment of uncertainty and doubt. The worthless offers nothing. Certainty of worth can not be found in worthlessness.

Today we practice letting go all thought of values we have given to the world. We leave it free of purposes we gave its aspects and its phases and its dreams. We hold it purposeless within our minds, and loosen it from all we wish it were. Thus do we lift the chains that bar the door to freedom from the world, and go beyond all little values and diminished goals.

Peace and be still a little while, and see how far you rise above the world, when you release your mind from chains and let it seek the level where it finds itself at home. It will be grateful to be free a while. It knows where it belongs. But free its wings, and it will fly in sureness and in joy to join its holy purpose. Let it rest in its Creator, there to be restored to sanity, to freedom and to love.

Give it ten minutes rest three times today. And when

your eyes are opened afterwards, you will not value anything you see as much as when you looked at it before. Your whole perspective on the world will shift by just a little, every time you let your mind escape its chains. The world is not where it belongs. And you belong where it would be, and where it goes to rest when you release it from the world. Your Guide is sure. Open your mind to Him. Be still and rest.

Protect your mind throughout the day as well. And when you think you see some value in an aspect or an image of the world, refuse to lay this chain upon your mind, but tell yourself with quiet certainty:

This will not tempt me to delay myself.

The world I see holds nothing that I want.

When you let your mind be drawn to bodily concerns, to things you buy, to eminence as valued by the world, you ask for sorrow, not for happiness. This course does not attempt to take from you the little that you have. It does not try to substitute utopian ideas for satisfactions which the world contains. There are no satisfactions in the world.

Is it not strange that you believe to think you made the world you see is arrogance? God made it not. Of this you can be sure. What can He know of the ephemeral, the sinful and the guilty, the afraid, the suffering and lonely, and the mind that lives within a body that must die? You but accuse Him of insanity, to think He made a world where such things seem to have reality. He is not mad. Yet only madness makes a world like this.

To think that God made chaos, contradicts His Will, invented opposites to truth, and suffers death to triumph over life; all this is arrogance. Humility would see at once these things are not of Him. And can you see what God created not? To think you can is merely to believe you can perceive what God willed not to be. And what could be more arrogant than this?

This world is not the Will of God, and so it is not real.

My holy brother, think of this awhile: The world you see does nothing. It has no effects at all. It merely represents your thoughts. And it will change entirely as you elect to change your mind, and choose the joy of God as what you really want. Your Self is radiant in this holy joy, unchanged, unchanging and unchangeable, forever and forever. And would you deny a little corner of your mind its own inheritance, and keep it as a hospital for pain; a sickly place where living things must come at last to die?

The world may seem to cause you pain. And yet the world, as causeless, has no power to cause. As an effect, it cannot make effects. As an illusion, it is what you wish. Your idle wishes represent its pains. Your strange desires bring it evil dreams. Your thoughts of death envelop it in fear, while in your kind forgiveness does it live.

[The world] is the witness to your state of mind, the outside picture of an inward condition. As a man thinketh, so does he perceive. Therefore, seek not to change the world, but choose to change your mind about the world. Perception is a result and not a cause.

The world can give you only what you gave it, for being nothing but your own projection, it has no meaning apart from what you found in it and placed your faith in.

The world but demonstrates an ancient truth; you will believe that others do to you exactly what you think you did to them.

Salvation is no more than a reminder this world is not your home. Its laws are not imposed on you, its values are not yours. And this is seen and understood as each one takes his part in its undoing, as he did in making it.

I loose the world from all I thought it was.

What keeps the world in chains but your beliefs? And what can save the world except your Self? Belief is powerful indeed. The thoughts you hold are mighty, and illusions are as strong in their effects as is the truth. A madman thinks the world he sees is real, and does not doubt it. Nor can he be swayed by questioning his thoughts' effects. It is but when their source is raised to question that the hope of freedom comes to him at last.

Yet is salvation easily achieved, for anyone is free to change his mind, and all his thoughts change with it. Now the source of thought has shifted, for to change your mind means you have changed the source of all ideas you think or ever thought or yet will think. You free the past from what you thought before. You free the future from all ancient thoughts of seeking what you do not want to find.

The present now remains the only time. Here in the present is the world set free. For as you let the past be lifted and release the future from your ancient fears, you find escape and give it to the world. You have enslaved the world with all your fears, your doubts and miseries, your pain and tears, and all your sor-

rows press on it, and keep the world a prisoner to your beliefs. Death strikes it everywhere because you hold the bitter thoughts of death within your mind.

The world is nothing in itself. Your mind must give it meaning. And what you behold upon it are your wishes, acted out so you can look on them and think them real. Perhaps you think you did not make the world, but came unwillingly to what was made already, hardly waiting for your thoughts to give it meaning. Yet in truth you found exactly what you looked for when you came.

There is no world apart from what you wish, and herein lies your ultimate release. Change but your mind on what you want to see, and all the world must change accordingly. Ideas leave not their source. This central theme is often stated in the text, and must be borne in mind if you would understand the lesson for today. It is not pride which tells you that you made the world you see, and that it changes as you change your mind.

But it is pride that argues you have come into a world quite separate from yourself, impervious to what you think, and quite apart from what you chance to think it is. There is no world! This is the central thought the course attempts to teach. Not everyone is ready to accept it, and each one must go as far as he can let

himself be led along the road to truth. He will return and go still farther, or perhaps step back a while and then return again.

But healing is the gift of those who are prepared to learn there is no world, and can accept the lesson now. Their readiness will bring the lesson to them in some form which they can understand and recognize. Some see it suddenly on point of death, and rise to teach it. Others find it in experience that is not of this world, which shows them that the world does not exist because what they behold must be the truth, and yet it clearly contradicts the world.

And some will find it in this course, and in the exercises that we do today. Today's idea is true because the world does not exist. And if it is indeed your own imagining, then you can loose it from all things you ever thought it was by merely changing all the thoughts that gave it these appearances. The sick are healed as you let go all thoughts of sickness, and the dead arise when you let thoughts of life replace all thoughts you ever held of death.

A lesson earlier repeated once must now be stressed again, for it contains the firm foundation for today's idea. You are as God created you. There is no place where you can suffer, and no time that can bring change to your eternal state. How can a world of

time and place exist, if you remain as God created you?

What is the lesson for today except another way of saying that to know your Self is the salvation of the world? To free the world from every kind of pain is but to change your mind about yourself. There is no world apart from your ideas because ideas leave not their source, and you maintain the world within your mind in thought.

Yet if you are as God created you, you cannot think apart from Him, nor make what does not share His timelessness and Love. Are these inherent in the world you see? Does it create like Him? Unless it does, it is not real, and cannot be at all. If you are real the world you see is false, for God's creation is unlike the world in every way. And as it was His Thought by which you were created, so it is your thoughts which made it and must set it free, that you may know the Thoughts you share with God.

Release the world! Your real creations wait for this release to give you fatherhood, not of illusions, but as God in truth. God shares His Fatherhood with you who are His Son, for He makes no distinctions in what is Himself and what is still Himself. What He creates is not apart from Him, and nowhere does the Father end, the Son begin as something separate

from Him.

There is no world because it is a thought apart from God, and made to separate the Father and the Son, and break away a part of God Himself and thus destroy His Wholeness. Can a world which comes from this idea be real? Can it be anywhere? Deny illusions, but accept the truth. Deny you are a shadow briefly laid upon a dying world. Release your mind, and you will look upon a world released.

Today our purpose is to free the world from all the idle thoughts we ever held about it, and about all living things we see upon it. They can not be there. No more can we. For we are in the home our Father set for us, along with them. And we who are as He created us would loose the world this day from every one of our illusions, that we may be free.

Begin the fifteen minute periods in which we practice twice today with this:

*I who remain as God created me
Would loose the world from all I thought it was.
For I am real because the world is not,
And I would know my own reality.*

Then merely rest, alert but with no strain, and let your mind in quietness be changed so that the world is freed, along with you.

You need not realize that healing comes to many brothers far across the world, as well as to the ones you see nearby, as you send out these thoughts to bless the world. But you will sense your own release, although you may not fully understand as yet that you could never be released alone.

Throughout the day, increase the freedom sent through your ideas to all the world, and say whenever you are tempted to deny the power of your simple change of mind:

*I loose the world from all I thought it was,
And choose my own reality instead.*

Forgiveness is the key to happiness.

Here is the answer to your search for peace. Here is the key to meaning in a world that seems to make no sense. Here is the way to safety in apparent dangers that appear to threaten you at every turn, and bring uncertainty to all your hopes of ever finding quietness and peace. Here are all questions answered; here the end of all uncertainty ensured at last.

The unforgiving mind is full of fear, and offers love no room to be itself; no place where it can spread its wings in peace and soar above the turmoil of the world. The unforgiving mind is sad, without the hope of respite and release from pain. It suffers and abides in misery, peering about in darkness, seeing not, yet certain of the danger lurking there.

The unforgiving mind is torn with doubt, confused about itself and all it sees; afraid and angry, weak and blustering, afraid to go ahead, afraid to stay, afraid to waken or to go to sleep, afraid of every sound, yet more afraid of stillness; terrified of darkness, yet more terrified at the approach of light. What can the unforgiving mind perceive but its damnation? What can it behold except the proof that all its sins are real?

The unforgiving mind sees no mistakes, but only

sins. It looks upon the world with sightless eyes, and shrieks as it beholds its own projections rising to attack its miserable parody of life. It wants to live, yet wishes it were dead. It wants forgiveness, yet it sees no hope. It wants escape, yet can conceive of none because it sees the sinful everywhere.

The unforgiving mind is in despair, without the prospect of a future which can offer anything but more despair. Yet it regards its judgment of the world as irreversible, and does not see it has condemned itself to this despair. It thinks it cannot change, for what it sees bears witness that its judgment is correct. It does not ask, because it thinks it knows. It does not question, certain it is right.

Forgiveness is acquired. It is not inherent in the mind, which cannot sin. As sin is an idea you taught yourself, forgiveness must be learned by you as well, but from a Teacher other than yourself, Who represents the other Self in you. Through Him you learn how to forgive the self you think you made, and let it disappear. Thus you return your mind as one to Him Who is your Self, and Who can never sin.

Each unforgiving mind presents you with an opportunity to teach your own how to forgive itself. Each one awaits release from hell through you, and turns to you imploringly for Heaven here and now. It has

no hope, but you become its hope. And as its hope, do you become your own. The unforgiving mind must learn through your forgiveness that it has been saved from hell. And as you teach salvation, you will learn. Yet all your teaching and your learning will be not of you, but of the Teacher Who was given you to show the way to you.

Today we practice learning to forgive. If you are willing, you can learn today to take the key to happiness, and use it on your own behalf. We will devote ten minutes in the morning, and at night another ten, to learning how to give forgiveness and receive forgiveness, too.

The unforgiving mind does not believe that giving and receiving are the same. Yet we will try to learn today that they are one through practicing forgiveness toward one whom you think of as an enemy, and one whom you consider as a friend. And as you learn to see them both as one, we will extend the lesson to yourself, and see that their escape included yours.

Begin the longer practice periods by thinking of someone you do not like, who seems to irritate you, or to cause regret in you if you should meet him; one you actively despise, or merely try to overlook. It does not matter what the form your anger takes. You probably have chosen him already. He will do.

Now close your eyes and see him in your mind, and look at him a while. Try to perceive some light in him somewhere; a little gleam which you had never noticed. Try to find some little spark of brightness shining through the ugly picture that you hold of him. Look at this picture till you see a light somewhere within it, and then try to let this light extend until it covers him, and makes the picture beautiful and good.

Look at this changed perception for a while, and turn your mind to one you call a friend. Try to transfer the light you learned to see around your former “enemy” to him. Perceive him now as more than friend to you, for in that light his holiness shows you your savior, saved and saving, healed and whole.

Then let him offer you the light you see in him, and let your “enemy” and friend unite in blessing you with what you gave. Now are you one with them, and they with you. Now have you been forgiven by yourself. Do not forget, throughout the day, the role forgiveness plays in bringing happiness to every unforgiving mind, with yours among them. Every hour tell yourself:

*Forgiveness is the key to happiness.
I will awaken from the dream that I
Am mortal, fallible and full of sin,
And know I am the perfect Son of God.*

The major difficulty that you find in genuine forgiveness on your part is that you still believe you must forgive the truth, and not illusions. You conceive of pardon as a vain attempt to look past what is there; to overlook the truth, in an unfounded effort to deceive yourself by making an illusion true. This twisted viewpoint but reflects the hold that the idea of sin retains as yet upon your mind, as you regard yourself.

Forgiveness must be practiced, for the world cannot perceive its meaning, nor provide a guide to teach you its beneficence. There is no thought in all the world that leads to any understanding of the laws it follows, nor the Thought that it reflects. It is as alien to the world as is your own reality. And yet it joins your mind with the reality in you.

To all that speaks of terror, answer thus:

I will forgive, and this will disappear.

To every apprehension, every care and every form of suffering, repeat these selfsame words.

Forgiveness is the only function meaningful in time.

When you condemn a brother you are saying, “I who was guilty choose to remain so.”



See no one, then, as guilty, and you will affirm the truth of guiltlessness unto yourself.

There is a simple way to find the door to true forgiveness, and perceive that it is open wide in welcome. When you feel that you are tempted to accuse someone of sin in any form, do not allow your mind to dwell on what you think he did, for that is self-deception. Ask instead, “Would I accuse myself of doing this?”

It is sin's unreality that makes forgiveness natural and wholly sane, a deep relief to those who offer it; a quiet blessing where it is received. It does not countenance illusions, but collects them lightly, with a little laugh, and gently lays them at the feet of truth. And there they disappear entirely.

Forgiveness is the only thing that stands for truth in the illusions of the world. It sees their nothingness, and looks straight through the thousand forms in which they may appear. It looks on lies, but it is not deceived. It does not heed the self-accusing shrieks of sinners mad with guilt. It looks on them with quiet eyes, and merely says to them, "My brother, what you think is not the truth."

Salvation of the world depends on you who can forgive. Such is your function here.

Forgiveness offers everything I want.

What could you want forgiveness cannot give? Do you want peace? Forgiveness offers it. Do you want happiness, a quiet mind, a certainty of purpose, and a sense of worth and beauty that transcends the world? Do you want care and safety, and the warmth of sure protection always? Do you want a quietness that cannot be disturbed, a gentleness that never can be hurt, a deep, abiding comfort, and a rest so perfect it can never be upset?

All this forgiveness offers you, and more. It sparkles on your eyes as you awake, and gives you joy with which to meet the day. It soothes your forehead while you sleep, and rests upon your eyelids so you see no dreams of fear and evil, malice and attack. And when you wake again, it offers you another day of happiness and peace. All this forgiveness offers you, and more.

Forgiveness lets the veil be lifted up that hides the face of Christ from those who look with unforgiving eyes upon the world. It lets you recognize the Son of God, and clears your memory of all dead thoughts so that remembrance of your Father can arise across the threshold of your mind. What would you want

forgiveness cannot give? What gifts but these are worthy to be sought? What fancied value, trivial effect or transient promise, never to be kept, can hold more hope than what forgiveness brings?

Why would you seek an answer other than the answer that will answer everything? Here is the perfect answer, given to imperfect questions, meaningless requests, half-hearted willingness to hear, and less than halfway diligence and partial trust. Here is the answer! Seek for it no more. You will not find another one instead.

God's plan for your salvation cannot change, nor can it fail. Be thankful it remains exactly as He planned it. Changelessly it stands before you like an open door, with warmth and welcome calling from beyond the doorway, bidding you to enter in and make yourself at home, where you belong.

Here is the answer! Would you stand outside while all of Heaven waits for you within? Forgive and be forgiven. As you give you will receive. There is no plan but this for the salvation of the Son of God. Let us today rejoice that this is so, for here we have an answer, clear and plain, beyond deceit in its simplicity. All the complexities the world has spun of fragile cobwebs disappear before the power and the majesty of this extremely simple statement of the truth.

Here is the answer! Do not turn away in aimless wandering again. Accept salvation now. It is the gift of God, and not the world. The world can give no gifts of any value to a mind that has received what God has given as its own. God wills salvation be received today, and that the intricacies of your dreams no longer hide their nothingness from you.

Open your eyes today and look upon a happy world of safety and of peace. Forgiveness is the means by which it comes to take the place of hell. In quietness it rises up to greet your open eyes, and fill your heart with deep tranquillity as ancient truths, forever newly-born, arise in your awareness. What you will remember then can never be described. Yet your forgiveness offers it to you.

Remembering the gifts forgiveness gives, we undertake our practicing today with hope and faith that this will be the day salvation will be ours. Earnestly and gladly will we seek for it today, aware we hold the key within our hands, accepting Heaven's answer to the hell we made, but where we would remain no more.

Morning and evening do we gladly give a quarter of an hour to the search in which the end of hell is guaranteed. Begin in hopefulness, for we have reached the turning point at which the road becomes far easier.

And now the way is short that yet we travel. We are close indeed to the appointed ending of the dream.

Sink into happiness as you begin these practice periods, for they hold out the sure rewards of questions answered and what your acceptance of the answer brings. Today it will be given you to feel the peace forgiveness offers, and the joy the lifting of the veil holds out to you.

Before the light you will receive today the world will fade until it disappears, and you will see another world arise you have no words to picture. Now we walk directly into light, and we receive the gifts that have been held in store for us since time began, kept waiting for today.

Forgiveness offers everything you want. Today all things you want are given you. Let not your gifts recede throughout the day, as you return again to meet a world of shifting change and bleak appearances. Retain your gifts in clear awareness as you see the changeless in the heart of change; the light of truth behind appearances.

Be tempted not to let your gifts slip by and drift into forgetfulness, but hold them firmly in your mind by your attempts to think of them at least a minute as each quarter of an hour passes by. Remind yourself how precious are these gifts with this reminder,

which has power to hold your gifts in your awareness through the day:

Forgiveness offers everything I want.

Today I have accepted this as true.

Today I have received the gifts of God.

I Need Do Nothing

You still have too much faith in the body as a source of strength. What plans do you make that do not involve its comfort or protection or enjoyment in some way? This makes the body an end and not a means in your interpretation, and this always means you still find sin attractive. No one accepts Atonement for himself who still accepts sin as his goal. You have thus not met your *one* responsibility. Atonement is not welcomed by those who prefer pain and destruction.

There is one thing that you have never done; you have not utterly forgotten the body. It has perhaps faded at times from your sight, but it has not yet completely disappeared. You are not asked to let this happen for more than an instant, yet it is in this instant that the miracle of Atonement happens. Afterwards you will see the body again, but never quite the same. And every instant that you spend without awareness of it gives you a different view of it when you return.

At no single instant does the body exist at all. It is always remembered or anticipated, but never experienced just *now*. Only its past and future make it seem real. Time controls it entirely, for sin is never wholly in the present. In any single instant the attraction of

guilt would be experienced as pain and nothing else, and would be avoided. It has no attraction *now*. Its whole attraction is imaginary, and therefore must be thought of in the past or in the future.

It is impossible to accept the holy instant without reservation unless, just for an instant, you are willing to see no past or future. You cannot prepare for it without placing it in the future. Release is given you the instant you desire it. Many have spent a lifetime in preparation, and have indeed achieved their instants of success. This course does not attempt to teach more than they learned in time, but it does aim at saving time. You may be attempting to follow a very long road to the goal you have accepted. It is extremely difficult to reach Atonement by fighting against sin. Nor is a lifetime of contemplation and long periods of meditation aimed at detachment from the body necessary. All such attempts will ultimately succeed because of their purpose. Yet the means are tedious and very time consuming, for all of them look to the future for release from a state of present unworthiness and inadequacy.

Your way will be different, not in purpose but in means. A holy relationship is a means of saving time. One instant spent together restores the universe to both of you. You *are* prepared. Now you need but to remember you need do nothing. It would be far

more profitable now merely to concentrate on this than to consider what you should do. When peace comes at last to those who wrestle with temptation and fight against the giving in to sin; when the light comes at last into the mind given to contemplation; or when the goal is finally achieved by anyone, it always comes with just one happy realization; "*I need do nothing.*"

Here is the ultimate release which everyone will one day find in his own way, at his own time. You do not need this time. Time has been saved for you because you and your brother are together. This is the special means this course is using to save you time. You are not making use of the course if you insist on using means which have served others well, neglecting what was made for *you*. Save time for me by only this one preparation, and practice doing nothing else. "I need do nothing" is a statement of allegiance, a truly undivided loyalty. Believe it for just one instant, and you will accomplish more than is given to a century of contemplation, or of struggle against temptation.

To do anything involves the body. And if you recognize you need do nothing, you have withdrawn the body's value from your mind. Here is the quick and open door through which you slip past centuries of effort, and escape from time. This is the way in which sin loses all attraction *right now*. For here is time de-

nied, and past and future gone. Who needs do nothing has no need for time. To do nothing is to rest, and make a place within you where the activity of the body ceases to demand attention. Into this place the Holy Spirit comes, and there abides. He will remain when you forget, and the body's activities return to occupy your conscious mind.

Yet there will always be this place of rest to which you can return. And you will be more aware of this quiet center of the storm than all its raging activity. This quiet center, in which you do nothing, will remain with you, giving you rest in the midst of every busy doing on which you are sent. For from this center will you be directed how to use the body sinlessly. It is this center, from which the body is absent, that will keep it so in your awareness of it.

Your part is to be happy. Only this is asked of you or anyone who wants to take his place among God's messengers.

“Give up what you do not want, and keep what you do.” How simple is the obvious! And how easy to do!

God's Will for you is perfect happiness. Why should you choose to go against His Will? The part that He has saved for you to take in working out His plan is given you that you might be restored to what He wills. This part is as essential to His plan as to your happiness. Your joy must be complete to let His plan be understood by those to whom He sends you. They will see their function in your shining face, and hear God calling to them in your happy laugh.

You are indeed essential to God's plan. Without your joy, His joy is incomplete. Without your smile, the world cannot be saved. While you are sad, the light that God Himself appointed as the means to save the world is dim and lustreless, and no one laughs because all laughter can but echo yours.

You are indeed essential to God's plan. Just as your light increases every light that shines in Heaven, so your joy on earth calls to all minds to let their sorrows go, and take their place beside you in God's plan. God's messengers are joyous, and their joy heals sorrow and despair. They are the proof that God wills perfect happiness for all who will accept their Father's gifts as theirs.

[The teacher of God] must learn to lay all judgment aside, and ask only what he really wants in every circumstance.

Your mission is very simple. You are asked to live so as to demonstrate that you are not an ego.

I am here only to be truly helpful.

I am here to represent Him Who sent me.

I do not have to worry about what to say or what to do, because He Who sent me will direct me.

I am content to be wherever He wishes, knowing He goes there with me.

I will be healed as I let Him teach me to heal.

While in time, there is still much to do. And each must do what is allotted him, for on his part does all the plan depend.

Be still a moment, and in silence think how holy is your purpose, how secure you rest, untouchable within its light. God's ministers have chosen that the truth be with them. Who is holier than they? Who could be surer that his happiness is fully guaranteed? And who could be more mightily protected? What defense could possibly be needed by the ones who are among the chosen ones of God, by His election and their own as well?

Salvation can be thought of as a game that happy children play. It was designed by One Who loves His children, and Who would replace their fearful toys with joyous games, which teach them that the game of fear is gone. His game instructs in happiness because there is no loser. Everyone who plays must win, and in his winning is the gain to everyone ensured. The game of fear is gladly laid aside, when children come to see the benefits salvation brings.

You who have played that you are lost to hope, abandoned by your Father, left alone in terror in a fearful world made mad by sin and guilt; be happy now. That game is over. Now a quiet time has come, in which we put away the toys of guilt, and lock our quaint and childish thoughts of sin forever from the pure and holy minds of Heaven's children and the Son of God.

We pause but for a moment more, to play our final, happy game upon this earth. And then we go to take our rightful place where truth abides and games are meaningless. So is the story ended. Let this day bring the last chapter closer to the world, that everyone may learn the tale he reads of terrifying destiny, defeat of all his hopes, his pitiful defense against a vengeance he can not escape, is but his own deluded fantasy. God's ministers have come to waken him from the dark dreams this story has evoked in his

confused, bewildered memory of this distorted tale.
God's Son can smile at last, on learning that it is not
true.

The functions which the world esteems are so uncertain that they change ten times an hour at their most secure. What hope of gain can rest on goals like this?

In lovely contrast, certain as the sun's return each morning to dispel the night, your truly given function stands out clear and wholly unambiguous.

To everyone I offer quietness.

To everyone I offer peace of mind.

To everyone I offer gentleness.

I am the holy Son of God Himself.

Here is your declaration of release from bondage of the world. And here as well is all the world released. You do not see what you have done by giving to the world the role of jailer to the Son of God. What could it be but vicious and afraid, fearful of shadows, punitive and wild, lacking all reason, blind, insane with hate?

What have you done that this should be your world? What have you done that this is what you see? Deny your own Identity, and this is what remains. You look on chaos and proclaim it is yourself. There is no sight that fails to witness this to you. There is no sound that does not speak of frailty within you and without; no breath you draw that does not seem to bring you nearer death; no hope you hold but will dissolve in tears.

Deny your own Identity, and you will not escape the madness which induced this weird, unnatural and ghostly thought that mocks creation and that laughs at God. Deny your own Identity, and you assail the universe alone, without a friend, a tiny particle of dust against the legions of your enemies. Deny your own Identity, and look on evil, sin and death, and

watch despair snatch from your fingers every scrap of hope, leaving you nothing but the wish to die.

Yet what is it except a game you play in which identity can be denied? You are as God created you. All else but this one thing is folly to believe. In this one thought is everyone set free. In this one truth are all illusions gone. In this one fact is sinlessness proclaimed to be forever part of everything, the central core of its existence and its guarantee of immortality.

But let today's idea find a place among your thoughts and you have risen far above the world, and all the worldly thoughts that hold it prisoner. And from this place of safety and escape, you will return and set it free. For he who can accept his true Identity is truly saved. And his salvation is the gift he gives to everyone, in gratitude to Him Who pointed out the way to happiness that changed his whole perspective of the world.

One holy thought like this, and you are free: You are the holy Son of God Himself. And with this holy thought you learn as well that you have freed the world. You have no need to use it cruelly, and then perceive this savage need in it. You set it free of your imprisonment. You will not see a devastating image of yourself walking the world in terror, with the world twisting in agony because your fears have

laid the mark of death upon its heart.

Be glad today how very easily is hell undone. You need but tell yourself:

*I am the holy Son of God Himself.
I cannot suffer, cannot be in pain;
I cannot suffer loss, nor fail to do
All that salvation asks.*

And in that thought is everything you look on wholly changed.

A miracle has lighted up all dark and ancient caverns, where the rites of death echoed since time began. For time has lost its hold upon the world. The Son of God has come in glory to redeem the lost, to save the helpless, and to give the world the gift of his forgiveness. Who could see the world as dark and sinful, when God's Son has come again at last to set it free?

You who perceive yourself as weak and frail, with futile hopes and devastated dreams, born but to die, to weep and suffer pain, hear this: All power is given unto you in earth and Heaven. There is nothing that you cannot do. You play the game of death, of being helpless, pitifully tied to dissolution in a world which shows no mercy to you. Yet when you accord it mercy, will its mercy shine on you.

Then let the Son of God awaken from his sleep, and

opening his holy eyes, return again to bless the world he made. In error it began, but it will end in the reflection of his holiness. And we will sleep no more and dream of death. Then join with me today. Your glory is the light that saves the world. Do not withhold salvation longer. Look about the world, and see the suffering there. Is not your heart willing to bring your weary brothers rest?

They must await your own release. They stay in chains till you are free. They cannot see the mercy of the world until you find it in yourself. They suffer pain until you have denied its hold on you. They die till you accept your own eternal life. You are the holy Son of God Himself. Remember this, and all the world is free. Remember this, and earth and Heaven are one.

Teacher of God, your one assignment could be stated thus: Accept no compromise in which death plays a part. Do not believe in cruelty, nor let attack conceal the truth from you. What seems to die has but been misperceived and carried to illusion. Now it becomes your task to let the illusion be carried to the truth. Be steadfast but in this; be not deceived by the “reality” of any changing form. Truth neither moves nor wavers nor sinks down to death and dissolution. And what is the end of death? Nothing but this; the realization that the Son of God is guiltless now and forever. Nothing but this. But do not let yourself forget it is not less than this.

I am under no laws but God's.

We have observed before how many senseless things have seemed to you to be salvation. Each has imprisoned you with laws as senseless as itself. You are not bound by them. Yet to understand that this is so, you must first realize salvation lies not there. While you would seek for it in things that have no meaning, you bind yourself to laws that make no sense. Thus do you seek to prove salvation is where it is not.

Today we will be glad you cannot prove it. For if you could, you would forever seek salvation where it is not, and never find it. The idea for today tells you once again how simple is salvation. Look for it where it waits for you, and there it will be found. Look nowhere else, for it is nowhere else.

Think of the freedom in the recognition that you are not bound by all the strange and twisted laws you have set up to save you. You really think that you would starve unless you have stacks of green paper strips and piles of metal discs. You really think a small round pellet or some fluid pushed into your veins through a sharpened needle will ward off disease and death. You really think you are alone unless another body is with you.

It is insanity that thinks these things. You call them laws, and put them under different names in a long catalogue of rituals that have no use and serve no purpose. You think you must obey the “laws” of medicine, of economics and of health. Protect the body, and you will be saved.

These are not laws, but madness. The body is endangered by the mind that hurts itself. The body suffers just in order that the mind will fail to see it is the victim of itself. The body’s suffering is a mask the mind holds up to hide what really suffers. It would not understand it is its own enemy; that it attacks itself and wants to die. It is from this your “laws” would save the body. It is for this you think you are a body.

There are no laws except the laws of God. This needs repeating, over and over, until you realize it applies to everything that you have made in opposition to God’s Will. Your magic has no meaning. What it is meant to save does not exist. Only what it is meant to hide will save you.

The laws of God can never be replaced. We will devote today to rejoicing that this is so. It is no longer a truth we would hide. We realize instead it is a truth that keeps us free forever. Magic imprisons, but the laws of God make free. The light has come because there are no laws but His.

We will begin the longer practice periods today with a short review of the different kinds of “laws” we have believed we must obey. These would include, for example, the “laws” of nutrition, of immunisation, of medication, and of the body’s protection in innumerable ways. Think further; you believe in the laws of friendship, of “good” relationships and reciprocity. Perhaps you even think that there are laws which set forth what is God’s and what is yours. Many “religions” have been based on this. They would not save but damn in Heaven’s name. Yet they are no more strange than other “laws” you hold must be obeyed to make you safe.

There are no laws but God’s. Dismiss all foolish magical beliefs today, and hold your mind in silent readiness to hear the Voice that speaks the truth to you. You will be listening to One Who says there is no loss under the laws of God. Payment is neither given nor received. Exchange cannot be made; there are no substitutes; and nothing is replaced by something else. God’s laws forever give and never take.

Hear Him Who tells you this, and realize how foolish are the “laws” you thought upheld the world you thought you saw. Then listen further. He will tell you more. About the Love your Father has for you. About the endless joy He offers you. About His yearning for His only Son, created as His channel for

creation; denied to Him by his belief in hell.

Let us today open God's channels to Him, and let His Will extend through us to Him. Thus is creation endlessly increased. His Voice will speak of this to us, as well as of the joys of Heaven which His laws keep limitless forever. We will repeat today's idea until we have listened and understood there are no laws but God's. Then we will tell ourselves, as a dedication with which the practice period concludes:

I am under no laws but God's.

We will repeat this dedication as often as possible today; at least four or five times an hour, as well as in response to any temptation to experience ourselves as subject to other laws throughout the day. It is our statement of freedom from all danger and all tyranny. It is our acknowledgment that God is our Father, and that His Son is saved.

The secret of salvation is but this: That you are doing this unto yourself. No matter what the form of the attack, this still is true. Whoever takes the role of enemy and of attacker, still is this the truth. Whatever seems to be the cause of any pain and suffering you feel, this is still true. For you could not react at all to figures in a dream you knew that you were dreaming. Let them be as hateful and as vicious as they may, they could have no effect on you unless you failed to recognize it is your dream.

This is the only thing that you need do for vision, happiness, release from pain and the complete escape from sin, all to be given you. Say only this, but mean it with no reservations, for here the power of salvation lies:

*I **am** responsible for what I see.*

I choose the feelings I experience, and I decide upon the goal I would achieve.

And everything that seems to happen to me I ask for, and receive as I have asked.

Deceive yourself no longer that you are helpless in the face of what is done to you. Acknowledge but that you have been mistaken, and all effects of your mistakes will disappear.

It is impossible the Son of God be merely driven by events outside of him. It is impossible that happenings that come to him were not his choice. His power of decision is the determiner of every situation in which he seems to find himself by chance or accident. No accident nor chance is possible within the universe as God created it, outside of which is nothing. Suffer, and you decided sin was your goal. Be happy, and you gave the power of decision to Him Who must decide for God for you. This is the little gift you offer to the Holy Spirit, and even this He gives to you to give yourself. For by this gift is given you the power to release your savior, that he may give salvation unto you.

What you desire, you will see.

It is your thoughts alone that cause you pain. Nothing external to your mind can hurt or injure you in any way. There is no cause beyond yourself that can reach down and bring oppression. No one but yourself affects you. There is nothing in the world that has the power to make you ill or sad, or weak or frail. But it is you who have the power to dominate all things you see by merely recognizing what you are. As you perceive the harmlessness in them, they will accept your holy will as theirs. And what was seen as fearful now becomes a source of innocence and holiness.

There is a light in you which cannot die; whose presence is so holy that the world is sanctified because of you. All things that live bring gifts to you, and offer them in gratitude and gladness at your feet. The scent of flowers is their gift to you. The waves bow down before you, and the trees extend their arms to shield you from the heat, and lay their leaves before you on the ground that you may walk in softness, while the wind sinks to a whisper round your holy head.

It is impossible that you be hurt except by your own thoughts.

No one can suffer loss unless it be his own decision. No one suffers pain except his choice elects this state for him. No one can grieve nor fear nor think him sick unless these are the outcomes that he wants. And no one dies without his own consent. Nothing occurs but represents your wish, and nothing is omitted that you choose. Here is your world, complete in all details. Here is its whole reality for you. And it is only here salvation is.

There is a silence into which the world can not intrude. There is an ancient peace you carry in your heart and have not lost. There is a sense of holiness in you the thought of sin has never touched. All this today you will remember. Faithfulness in practicing today will bring rewards so great and so completely different from all things you sought before, that you will know that here your treasure is, and here your rest.

I am in danger nowhere in the world.

As God created you, you must remain unchangeable, with transitory states by definition false. And that includes all shifts in feeling, alterations in conditions of the body and the mind; in all awareness and in all response.

Nothing you do or think or wish or make is necessary to establish your worth.

I am sustained by the Love of God.

Here is the answer to every problem that will confront you, today and tomorrow and throughout time. In this world, you believe you are sustained by everything but God. Your faith is placed in the most trivial and insane symbols; pills, money, “protective” clothing, influence, prestige, being liked, knowing the “right” people and an endless list of forms of nothingness that you endow with magical powers.

All these things are your replacements for the Love of God. All these things are cherished to ensure a body identification. They are songs of praise to the ego. Do not put your faith in the worthless. It will not sustain you.

Only the Love of God will protect you in all circumstances. It will lift you out of every trial, and raise you high above all the perceived dangers of this world into a climate of perfect peace and safety. It will transport you into a state of mind that nothing can threaten, nothing can disturb, and where nothing can intrude upon the eternal calm of the Son of God.

Put not your faith in illusions. They will fail you. Put all your faith in the Love of God within you; eternal, changeless and forever unailing. This is the answer

to whatever confronts you today. Through the Love of God within you, you can resolve all seeming difficulties without effort and in sure confidence. Tell yourself this often today. It is a declaration of release from the belief in idols. It is your acknowledgment of the truth about yourself.

For ten minutes, twice today, morning and evening, let the idea for today sink deep into your consciousness. Repeat it, think about it, let related thoughts come to help you recognize its truth, and allow peace to flow over you like a blanket of protection and surety. Let no idle and foolish thoughts enter to disturb the holy mind of the Son of God. Such is the Kingdom of Heaven. Such is the resting place where your Father has placed you forever.

I will step back and let Him lead the way.

There is a way of living in the world that is not here, although it seems to be. You do not change appearance, though you smile more frequently. Your forehead is serene; your eyes are quiet. And the ones who walk the world as you do recognize their own. Yet those who have not yet perceived the way will recognize you also, and believe that you are like them, as you were before.

The world is an illusion. Those who choose to come to it are seeking for a place where they can be illusions, and avoid their own reality. Yet when they find their own reality is even here, then they step back and let it lead the way. What other choice is really theirs to make? To let illusions walk ahead of truth is madness. But to let illusion sink behind the truth and let the truth stand forth as what it is, is merely sanity.

This is the simple choice we make today. The mad illusion will remain awhile in evidence, for those to look upon who chose to come, and have not yet rejoiced to find they were mistaken in their choice. They cannot learn directly from the truth, because they have denied that it is so. And so they need a Teacher Who perceives their madness, but Who still

can look beyond illusion to the simple truth in them.

If truth demanded they give up the world, it would appear to them as if it asked the sacrifice of something that is real. Many have chosen to renounce the world while still believing its reality. And they have suffered from a sense of loss, and have not been released accordingly. Others have chosen nothing but the world, and they have suffered from a sense of loss still deeper, which they did not understand.

Between these paths there is another road that leads away from loss of every kind, for sacrifice and deprivation both are quickly left behind. This is the way appointed for you now. You walk this path as others walk, nor do you seem to be distinct from them, although you are indeed. Thus can you serve them while you serve yourself, and set their footsteps on the way that God has opened up to you, and them through you.

Illusion still appears to cling to you, that you may reach them. Yet it has stepped back. And it is not illusion that they hear you speak of, nor illusion that you bring their eyes to look on and their minds to grasp. Now can the truth, which walks ahead of you, speak to them through illusions, for the road leads past illusion now, while on the way you call to them, that they may follow you.

All roads will lead to this one in the end. For sacrifice and deprivation are paths that lead nowhere, choices for defeat, and aims that will remain impossible. All this steps back as truth comes forth in you, to lead your brothers from the ways of death, and set them on the way to happiness. Their suffering is but illusion. Yet they need a guide to lead them out of it, for they mistake illusion for the truth.

Such is salvation's call, and nothing more. It asks that you accept the truth, and let it go before you, lighting up the path of ransom from illusion. It is not a ransom with a price. There is no cost, but only gain. Illusion can but seem to hold in chains the holy Son of God. It is but from illusions he is saved. As they step back, he finds himself again.

Walk safely now, yet carefully, because this path is new to you. And you may find that you are tempted still to walk ahead of truth, and let illusions be your guide. Your holy brothers have been given you, to follow in your footsteps as you walk with certainty of purpose to the truth. It goes before you now, that they may see something with which they can identify; something they understand to lead the way.

Yet at the journey's ending there will be no gap, no distance between truth and you. And all illusions walking in the way you travelled will be gone from

you as well, with nothing left to keep the truth apart from God's completion, holy as Himself. Step back in faith and let truth lead the way. You know not where you go. But One Who knows goes with you. Let Him lead you with the rest.

When dreams are over, time has closed the door on all the things that pass and miracles are purposeless, the holy Son of God will make no journeys. There will be no wish to be illusion rather than the truth. And we step forth toward this, as we progress along the way that truth points out to us. This is our final journey, which we make for everyone. We must not lose our way. For as truth goes before us, so it goes before our brothers who will follow us.

We walk to God. Pause and reflect on this. Could any way be holier, or more deserving of your effort, of your love and of your full intent? What way could give you more than everything, or offer less and still content the holy Son of God? We walk to God. The truth that walks before us now is one with Him, and leads us to where He has always been. What way but this could be a path that you would choose instead?

Your feet are safely set upon the road that leads the world to God. Look not to ways that seem to lead you elsewhere. Dreams are not a worthy guide for you who are God's Son. Forget not He has placed

His hand in yours, and given you your brothers in His Trust that you are worthy of His Trust in you. He cannot be deceived. His Trust has made your pathway certain and your goal secure. You will not fail your brothers nor your Self.

And now He asks but that you think of Him a while each day, that He may speak to you and tell you of His Love, reminding you how great His Trust; how limitless His Love. In your name and His Own, which are the same, we practice gladly with this thought today:

*I will step back and let Him lead the way,
For I would walk along the road to Him.*

Once you accept His plan as the one function that you would fulfill, there will be nothing else the Holy Spirit will not arrange for you without your effort. He will go before you making straight your path, and leaving in your way no stones to trip on, and no obstacles to bar your way. Nothing you need will be denied you. Not one seeming difficulty but will melt away before you reach it. You need take thought for nothing, careless of everything except the only purpose that you would fulfill.

Say to the Holy Spirit only, "Decide for me," and it is done. For His decisions are reflections of what God knows about you, and in this light, error of any kind becomes impossible. Why would you struggle so frantically to anticipate all you cannot know, when all knowledge lies behind every decision the Holy Spirit makes for you? Learn of His wisdom and His Love, and teach His answer to everyone who struggles in the dark. For you decide for them and for yourself.

Can you imagine what it means to have no cares, no worries, no anxieties, but merely to be perfectly calm and quiet all the time? Yet that is what time is for; to learn just that and nothing more.

When you have learned how to decide with God, all decisions become as easy and as right as breathing. There is no effort, and you will be led as gently as if you were being carried down a quiet path in summer. Only your own volition seems to make deciding hard. The Holy Spirit will not delay in answering your every question what to do. He knows. And He will tell you, and then do it for you. You who are tired will find this is more restful than sleep. For you can bring your guilt into sleeping, but not into this.

Only the Holy Spirit knows what you need. For He will give you all things that do not block the way to light. And what else could you need? In time, He gives you all the things that you need have, and will renew them as long as you have need of them. He will take nothing from you as long as you have any need of it. And yet He knows that everything you need is temporary, and will but last until you step aside from all your needs and realize that all of them have been fulfilled. Therefore He has no investment in the things that He supplies, except to make certain that you will not use them on behalf of lingering in time. He knows that you are not at home there, and He wills no delay to wait upon your joyous homecoming.

Leave, then, your needs to Him. He will supply them with no emphasis at all upon them. What comes to you of Him comes safely, for He will ensure it never can become a dark spot, hidden in your mind and kept to hurt you. Under His guidance you will travel light and journey lightly, for His sight is ever on the journey's end, which is His goal. God's Son is not a traveler through outer worlds. However holy his perception may become, no world outside himself holds his inheritance. Within himself he has no needs, for light needs nothing but to shine in peace, and from itself to let the rays extend in quiet to infinity.

All the help you can accept will be provided, and not one need you have will not be met.

I rest in God.

We ask for rest today, and quietness unshaken by the world's appearances. We ask for peace and stillness, in the midst of all the turmoil born of clashing dreams. We ask for safety and for happiness, although we seem to look on danger and on sorrow. And we have the thought that will answer our asking with what we request.

"I rest in God." This thought will bring to you the rest and quiet, peace and stillness, and the safety and the happiness you seek. "I rest in God." This thought has power to wake the sleeping truth in you, whose vision sees beyond appearances to that same truth in everyone and everything there is. Here is the end of suffering for all the world, and everyone who ever came and yet will come to linger for a while. Here is the thought in which the Son of God is born again, to recognize himself.

"I rest in God." Completely undismayed, this thought will carry you through storms and strife, past misery and pain, past loss and death, and onward to the certainty of God. There is no suffering it cannot heal. There is no problem that it cannot solve. And no appearance but will turn to truth before the eyes of

you who rest in God.

This is the day of peace. You rest in God, and while the world is torn by winds of hate your rest remains completely undisturbed. Yours is the rest of truth. Appearances cannot intrude on you. You call to all to join you in your rest, and they will hear and come to you because you rest in God. They will not hear another voice than yours because you gave your voice to God, and now you rest in Him and let Him speak through you.

In Him you have no cares and no concerns, no burdens, no anxiety, no pain, no fear of future and no past regrets. In timelessness you rest, while time goes by without its touch upon you, for your rest can never change in any way at all. You rest today. And as you close your eyes, sink into stillness. Let these periods of rest and respite reassure your mind that all its frantic fantasies were but the dreams of fever that has passed away. Let it be still and thankfully accept its healing. No more fearful dreams will come, now that you rest in God. Take time today to slip away from dreams and into peace.

Each hour that you take your rest today, a tired mind is suddenly made glad, a bird with broken wings begins to sing, a stream long dry begins to flow again. The world is born again each time you rest, and

hourly remember that you came to bring the peace of God into the world, that it might take its rest along with you.

With each five minutes that you rest today, the world is nearer waking. And the time when rest will be the only thing there is comes closer to all worn and tired minds, too weary now to go their way alone. And they will hear the bird begin to sing and see the stream begin to flow again, with hope reborn and energy restored to walk with lightened steps along the road that suddenly seems easy as they go.

You rest within the peace of God today, and call upon your brothers from your rest to draw them to their rest, along with you. You will be faithful to your trust today, forgetting no one, bringing everyone into the boundless circle of your peace, the holy sanctuary where you rest. Open the temple doors and let them come from far across the world, and near as well; your distant brothers and your closest friends; bid them all enter here and rest with you.

You rest within the peace of God today, quiet and unafraid. Each brother comes to take his rest, and offer it to you. We rest together here, for thus our rest is made complete, and what we give today we have received already. Time is not the guardian of what we give today. We give to those unborn and those

passed by, to every Thought of God, and to the Mind in which these Thoughts were born and where they rest. And we remind them of their resting place each time we tell ourselves, “I rest in God.”

Your passage through time and space is not at random. You cannot but be in the right place at the right time.

It takes great learning to understand that all things, events, encounters and circumstances are helpful.

All things work together for good. There are no exceptions except in the ego's judgment.

The happy dreams the Holy Spirit brings are different from the dreaming of the world, where one can merely dream he is awake. The dreams forgiveness lets the mind perceive do not induce another form of sleep, so that the dreamer dreams another dream. His happy dreams are heralds of the dawn of truth upon the mind. They lead from sleep to gentle waking, so that dreams are gone.

There is no need to learn through pain. And gentle lessons are acquired joyously, and are remembered gladly. What gives you happiness you want to learn and not forget.

Rest in the Holy Spirit, and allow His gentle dreams to take the place of those you dreamed in terror and in fear of death. He brings forgiving dreams, in which the choice is not who is the murderer and who shall be the victim. In the dreams He brings there is no murder and there is no death. The dream of guilt is fading from your sight, although your eyes are closed. A smile has come to lighten up your sleeping face. The sleep is peaceful now, for these are happy dreams.

There is no peace except the peace of God.

Seek you no further. You will not find peace except the peace of God. Accept this fact, and save yourself the agony of yet more bitter disappointments, bleak despair, and sense of icy hopelessness and doubt. Seek you no further. There is nothing else for you to find except the peace of God, unless you seek for misery and pain.

This is the final point to which each one must come at last, to lay aside all hope of finding happiness where there is none; of being saved by what can only hurt; of making peace of chaos, joy of pain, and Heaven out of hell. Attempt no more to win through losing, nor to die to live. You cannot but be asking for defeat.

Yet you can ask as easily for love, for happiness, and for eternal life in peace that has no ending. Ask for this, and you can only win. To ask for what you have already must succeed. To ask that what is false be true can only fail. Forgive yourself for vain imaginings, and seek no longer what you cannot find. For what could be more foolish than to seek and seek and seek again for hell, when you have but to look with open eyes to find that Heaven lies before you, through a door that opens easily to welcome you?

Come home. You have not found your happiness in foreign places and in alien forms that have no meaning to you, though you sought to make them meaningful. This world is not where you belong. You are a stranger here. But it is given you to find the means whereby the world no longer seems to be a prison house or jail for anyone.

Freedom is given you where you beheld but chains and iron doors. But you must change your mind about the purpose of the world, if you would find escape. You will be bound till all the world is seen by you as blessed, and everyone made free of your mistakes and honored as he is. You made him not; no more yourself. And as you free the one, the other is accepted as he is.

What does forgiveness do? In truth it has no function, and does nothing. For it is unknown in Heaven. It is only hell where it is needed, and where it must serve a mighty function. Is not the escape of God's beloved Son from evil dreams that he imagines, yet believes are true, a worthy purpose? Who could hope for more, while there appears to be a choice to make between success and failure; love and fear?

There is no peace except the peace of God, because He has one Son who cannot make a world in opposition to God's Will and to his own, which is the same

as His. What could he hope to find in such a world? It cannot have reality, because it never was created. Is it here that he would seek for peace? Or must he see that, as he looks on it, the world can but deceive? Yet can he learn to look on it another way, and find the peace of God.

Peace is the bridge that everyone will cross, to leave this world behind. But peace begins within the world perceived as different, and leading from this fresh perception to the gate of Heaven and the way beyond. Peace is the answer to conflicting goals, to senseless journeys, frantic, vain pursuits, and meaningless endeavors. Now the way is easy, sloping gently toward the bridge where freedom lies within the peace of God.

Let us not lose our way again today. We go to Heaven, and the path is straight. Only if we attempt to wander can there be delay, and needless wasted time on thorny byways. God alone is sure, and He will guide our footsteps. He will not desert His Son in need, nor let him stray forever from his home. The Father calls; the Son will hear. And that is all there is to what appears to be a world apart from God, where bodies have reality.

Now is there silence. Seek no further. You have come to where the road is carpeted with leaves of false de-

sires, fallen from the trees of hopelessness you sought before. Now are they underfoot. And you look up and on toward Heaven, with the body's eyes but serving for an instant longer now. Peace is already recognized at last, and you can feel its soft embrace surround your heart and mind with comfort and with love.

Today we seek no idols. Peace can not be found in them. The peace of God is ours, and only this will we accept and want. Peace be to us today. For we have found a simple, happy way to leave the world of ambiguity, and to replace our shifting goals and solitary dreams with single purpose and companionship. For peace is union, if it be of God. We seek no further. We are close to home, and draw still nearer every time we say:

*There is no peace except the peace of God,
And I am glad and thankful it is so.*

Forgiving dreams have little need to last. They are not made to separate the mind from what it thinks. They do not seek to prove the dream is being dreamed by someone else. And in these dreams a melody is heard that everyone remembers, though he has not heard it since before all time began. Forgiveness, once complete, brings timelessness so close the song of Heaven can be heard, not with the ears, but with the holiness that never left the altar that abides forever deep within the Son of God. And when he hears this song again, he knows he never heard it not. And where is time, when dreams of judgment have been put away?

Listen,—perhaps you catch a hint of an ancient state not quite forgotten; dim, perhaps, and yet not altogether unfamiliar, like a song whose name is long forgotten, and the circumstances in which you heard completely unremembered. Not the whole song has stayed with you, but just a little wisp of melody, attached not to a person or a place or anything particular. But you remember, from just this little part, how lovely was the song, how wonderful the setting where you heard it, and how you loved those who were there and listened with you.

The notes are nothing. Yet you have kept them with you, not for themselves, but as a soft reminder of what would make you weep if you remembered how dear it was to you. You could remember, yet you are afraid, believing you would lose the world you learned since then. And yet you know that nothing in the world you learned is half so dear as this. Listen, and see if you remember an ancient song you knew so long ago, and held more dear than any melody you taught yourself to cherish since.

Beyond the body, beyond the sun and stars, past everything you see and yet somehow familiar, is an arc of golden light that stretches as you look into a great and shining circle. And all the circle fills with light before your eyes. The edges of the circle disappear, and what is in it is no longer contained at all. The

light expands and covers everything, extending to infinity forever shining and with no break or limit anywhere. Within it everything is joined in perfect continuity. Nor is it possible to imagine that anything could be outside, for there is nowhere that this light is not.

This is the vision of the Son of God, whom you know well. Here is the sight of him who knows his Father. Here is the memory of what you are; a part of this, with all of it within, and joined to all as surely as all is joined in you. Accept the vision that can show you this, and not the body. You know the ancient song, and know it well. Nothing will ever be as dear to you as is this ancient hymn the Son of God sings to his Father still.

I will be still an instant and go home.

This world you seem to live in is not home to you. And somewhere in your mind you know that this is true. A memory of home keeps haunting you, as if there were a place that called you to return, although you do not recognize the voice, nor what it is the voice reminds you of. Yet still you feel an alien here, from somewhere all unknown. Nothing so definite that you could say with certainty you are an exile here. Just a persistent feeling, sometimes not more than a tiny throb, at other times hardly remembered, actively dismissed, but surely to return to mind again.



When you are still an instant, when the world recedes from you, when valueless ideas cease to have value in your restless mind, then will you hear His voice. So poignantly He calls to you that you will not resist Him longer. In that instant He will take you to His home, and you will stay with Him in perfect stillness, silent and at peace, beyond all words, untouched by fear and doubt, sublimely certain that you are at home.

What time but now can truth be recognized? The present is the only time there is. And so today, this instant, now, we come to look upon what is forever there; not in our sight, but in the eyes of Christ. He looks past time, and sees eternity as represented there. He hears the sounds the senseless, busy world engenders, yet He hears them faintly. For beyond them all He hears the song of Heaven, and the Voice for God more clear, more meaningful, more near.

The world fades easily away before His sight. Its sounds grow dim. A melody from far beyond the world increasingly is more and more distinct; an ancient Call to Which He gives an ancient answer.

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

Close your eyes upon the world you see, and in the silent darkness watch the lights that are not of this world light one by one, until where one begins another ends loses all meaning as they blend in one.

Today the lights of Heaven bend to you, to shine upon your eyelids as you rest beyond the world of darkness. Here is light your eyes can not behold. And yet your mind can see it plainly, and can understand.

How instantly the memory of God arises in the mind that has no fear to keep the memory away! Its own remembering has gone. There is no past to keep its fearful image in the way of glad awakening to present peace. The trumpets of eternity resound throughout the stillness, yet disturb it not.

There is a place in you where this whole world has been forgotten; where no memory of sin and of illusion linger still. There is a place in you which time has left, and echoes of eternity are heard. There is a resting place so still no sound except a hymn to Heaven rises up to gladden God the Father and the Son. Where both abide are They remembered, both. And where They are is Heaven and is peace.

Think not that you can change Their dwelling place. For your Identity abides in Them, and where They are, forever must you be. The changelessness of Heaven is in you, so deep within that nothing in this world but passes by, unnoticed and unseen. The still infinity of endless peace surrounds you gently in its soft embrace, so strong and quiet, tranquil in the might of its Creator, nothing can intrude upon the sacred Son of God within.

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