

Thank you for your interest in *A Course of Love*.

It is astonishing but true. For almost three years Mari Perron heard an inner voice, as if dictating. She transcribed what she heard. The result, unedited, is *A Course of Love*. It explicitly states that it is a “continuation” of *A Course in Miracles*, although there is no formal connection between the two courses. Both courses were received in an identical manner. In both courses Jesus is entirely forthright about his identity as the Source.

He says:

Where the original Course in Miracles was a course in thought reversal and mind training, a course to point out the insanity of the identity crisis and dislodge the ego’s hold, this is a course to establish your identity and to end the reign of the ego. (C:P.8)

A rapidly growing community of interest is developing around ACOL. You are invited to explore the many resources available at <http://www.acourseoflove.com>. The book is available in paperback as well as a handsome hardback edition, and also as an e-book. The first section (Book One) is also available as an audiobook.

Near the end of ACOL Jesus says:

This Course requires no thought and no effort. There is no prolonged study and the few specific exercises are not required. This Course has succeeded in ways you do not yet understand and have no need to understand. These words have entered your heart and sealed the rift between your mind and heart. (C:32.4)

What follows is a selection of twenty-four chapters from each of the sections of the book.

A Course of Love



COMBINED VOLUME

THE COURSE

THE TREATISES

THE DIALOGUES

Mari Perron, First Receiver

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The union of which this Course speaks inspired the cover emblem, which is modeled after the Angel's Trumpet, a large flower with five petals that spiral as they unfurl. It hangs downward, facing the earth. By day its beauty is fully displayed, but it is at night that its exquisite, delicate perfume is released. This act of creation, equally embracing both light and dark, suggests the joining of heaven and earth.

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You are, as you read these words, as much a “receiver” of this dialogue as she who first hears these words and transfers them to paper. Is a piece of music not received by you even when you may be one of thousands or millions who hear it? Does it matter who is first to hear the music? This is, in truth, a dialogue between me and you. Wish not that the “way” of the transcriber of these words were the way for everyone, and think not that to hear “directly” from the Source is different than what you do here. (D:1.19–20)

Mari Perron was, in Jesus’s words, the “first receiver” of this Course. (C:12.7, 11) Accordingly that term has been adopted for this Combined Volume.

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A COURSE OF LOVE

BOOK ONE

CHAPTER 1

A Course of Love

- 1.1 Every living being has a heart. Let us define heart as the center of being, that place from which all feeling arises. All true feeling is love. All love praises God. All love is recognition of the glory of God and all God created. Love is the only pure response of the created for the Creator, the only response of the Creator to the created. Your recognition of what love is will return you to God and your Self.
- 1.2 You learned in *A Course in Miracles* that all knowledge is generalizable. So is all feeling. All feeling results from love or lack of love. There are no other reasons for the feelings that you experience. All feelings are generated by the heart and have nothing to do with the body. The heart of the body is the altar at which all your offerings to God are made. All offerings are love or lack of love. Lack of love is nothing. Thus, all offerings made from a place other than love are nothing. All offerings made from a place of fear or guilt are nothing.
- 1.3 Love is the condition of your reality. In your human form your heart must beat for the life of your self to take place. This is the nature of your reality. Love is as essential to your being as the heart to the body. You would not exist without love. It is there even if you are as unaware of it as you are of the beating of your heart. A baby is no less alive because it does not realize its heart is beating. You are no less your Self even though you do not realize that without love you would not exist.
- 1.4 God's only thought is love. It is a thought without limit, endlessly creating. Because of the extension of God's thought of love, you exist. I exist with you in this selfsame thought. You do not understand this only because you do not understand the nature of your own thoughts. You have placed them inside your body, conceptualizing them in a form that makes no sense.
- 1.5 Yet when you apply your thought to learning you learn. Let this encourage you. This is an ability we can use together to learn anew.

- 1.6 You should be in a hurry only to hear the truth. And of course all of the ways that you act when you want to hurry are backward to what you would achieve. Let your worries come and let your worries go. Remember always that they simply do not matter except in terms of time, and that you will save time by letting them go. Remember that your worries affect nothing. You think if your worries affect time this is an effect, but time is an illusion. It too does not matter. Remind yourself of this as well. This is part of letting go of the old world to make way for the new. Realize these things do not matter and will not be carried with you to the new world. So you might as well let them go now.
- 1.7 It is as if you have carried your heavy luggage with you everywhere just in case you might need something. Now you are beginning to trust that you will not need these things you have carried. Ah, no heavy coat. For you trust the sun will shine, that warmth will surround you. You are an immigrant coming to a New World with all your possessions in hand. But as you glimpse what was once a distant shore and now is near, you realize none of what you formerly possessed and called your treasures are needed. How silly you feel to have carted them from one place to the next. What a waste of time and energy to have been slowed down by such a heavy burden. What a relief to realize that you need carry it no more. How you wish you would have believed they were not needed when you began. How happy you are to leave them behind.
- 1.8 You do not realize as yet how heavy was your burden. Had you literally carried a heavy and useless trunk from one world to another when you had been told by someone wiser that it would not be needed, you would upon realizing the truth ask yourself what else you had been told and disregarded. You might try one more thing and then another that you previously would not have tried when you were so convinced that you were right and the other wrong. And as each new step is tried and found to work, your confidence in the wisdom of this teacher would continue to grow. You might consider that you could still learn from your mistakes and find the learning in the end to be the same, and this you surely might do from time to time. But eventually you would realize that it would be quicker and easier to learn without mistakes, and eventually you would realize also that the wisdom of your teacher had become your own.

- 1.9 The urge to test another's wisdom is the urge to find your own way and have it be a better way. It is the urge not to trust the teacher in all things but only in certain things. It is the desire to find your way on your own so that you can take pride in your accomplishment, as if by following another's map the sense of accomplishment in your arrival would be diminished. This wanting to do things on your own is a trick of the ego, your pride a gift the ego demands. These are the magic thoughts that oppose miracle-mindedness. These are the thoughts that say *on my own* I am everything, rather than *on my own* I am nothing. A true leader follows until she is ready to lead. She does not strike out on her own at the beginning, before she knows the way. There is no shame in learning. No shame in following the course another has put forth. Each true course changes in application. Fifty students may sit in a classroom being taught the same lessons and not one will learn in exactly the same way as another. This is true with the teaching and learning of information, and true with the teaching and learning of the truth as well. The only way that you can fail to learn the truth is to demand to learn it on your own. For on your own it is impossible to learn.
- 1.10 Resign as your own teacher. Accept me as your teacher and accept that I will teach you the truth. Find no shame in this. You cannot learn what I would teach you without me. You have tried in countless ways and can try still again. But you will not succeed. Not because you are not smart enough. Not because you will not try hard enough. But because it is impossible. It is impossible to learn anything on your own. Your determination to do so only blocks your learning. It is only through union with me that you learn because it is only in union with me that you are your Self. All your effort is based on disbelief of this truth, and your attempts to prove that this truth is not the truth. All that this effort brings you is frustration. All your seeming success from this effort brings you is pride to offer to your ego. This gift your ego demands is not worth the price you pay. The price of this gift is everything.
- 1.11 A teacher always has a role in the learning of the student. This does not diminish the student's achievement. You must realize it is your desire to make of yourself your own creator that has caused all your problems. This is the authority problem. It is pervasive in the life of your physical form and in the life of your mind. It is only your heart that does not consider this an issue of concern. This is another reason we appeal to the heart.

- 1.12 The heart cares not where love comes from, only that it comes. This is useful to us in several ways. By this I do not mean that there are not particular objects of your affection. This is not the love of which we speak. The heart yearns for what is like itself. Thus love yearns for love. To think of achieving love “on one’s own” is ludicrous. This is why love is your greatest teacher. To yearn for what is like yourself is to yearn for your Creator and, when perception is healed, to create like your Creator. This yearning exists naturally within you and cannot be diminished or satiated.
- 1.13 Those who are seen as loveless and alone in the world are those you find to be the objects of your pity. Yet you do not realize that this is the state your ego has you endlessly striving to achieve. Your ego would have you believe that only when you need no one to achieve all you desire, only when you are satisfied with what you are and with what you can do *on your own*, only then will your autonomy and your learning be complete, for this is all your learning has been for. The goal of this world is for you to stand on your own, complete within yourself. This goal will never be reached, and only when you give up trying to reach it can you begin to learn anything of value. You are complete only within God, where you endlessly abide. Striving to be that which you can never be is the hell you have created.
- 1.14 Lack of striving is seen as a settling for less. This would be true if what you were striving for had value. To strive mightily for nothing is still to have nothing and to end up with nothing. Striving, however, must be distinguished from struggle. To strive for that which has value is what this Course is about. It has nothing to do with struggle. You think also that to leave struggle behind, to disengage from the conflict of this world that causes it, is to turn your back on the real world and all that has meaning in it. In this you think correctly. And yet you do not choose this option, thinking that to do so you turn your back on responsibility and on duty, thus counting this action as a noble one. This desire to engage in struggle has nothing to do with what you are responsible for. It is merely your ego’s attempt to involve you in distractions that keep you from your real responsibility. Think again about your attraction to struggle. It is your attraction to the game, a game you hope to win, another chance to show your stamina and your strength, your quick wits and your cunning mind. It is another chance to prevail against the odds so stacked against you that you can once again convince

yourself that you alone have succeeded against mighty adversaries. It is the only way you see to prove your power and control over a world of chaos. To not engage in the chaos at all is seen not as desirable, but as a sort of abdication, a loss through failure to engage. Although you are well aware you will not win the game you play here, you see the effort to do so, no matter how futile, as being that which makes up your life. To not engage is to not prove your own existence.

1.15 This is what you have made this world for: to prove your separate existence in a world apart from your Creator. This world does not exist. And you do not exist apart from your Creator. Your yearning for love is what tells you this is so. It is the proof you do not recognize.

1.16 What could cause you to yearn for love in a loveless world? By what means do you continue to recognize that love is at the heart of all things even while it is not valued here? Here is a fine example that means and end are the same. For love is what you are as well as what you strive for. Love is means and end.

1.17 All the symbols of your physical life reflect a deeper meaning that, while hidden to you, you still know exists. The union of two bodies joined in love create a child, the union of man and woman joined in marriage create oneness.

1.18 Love is at the heart of all things. How you feel but reflects your decision to accept love or to reject it and choose fear. Both cannot be chosen. All feelings you label joyous or compassionate are of love. All feelings you label painful or angry are of fear. This is all there is. This is the world you make. Love or fear is your reality by your choice. A choice for love creates love. A choice for fear creates fear. What choice do you think has been made to create the world you call your home? This world was created by your choice, and a new world can be created by a new choice. But you must realize that this is all there is. Love or lack of love. Love is all that is real. A choice for love is a choice for heaven. A choice of fear is hell. Neither are a place. They are a further reflection of means and end being the same. They are but a further reflection of your power.

CHAPTER 2

What Love Is

- 2.1 What love is cannot be taught. It cannot be learned. But it can be recognized. Can you pass love by and not know that it is there? Oh, yes. You do it constantly by choosing to see illusion rather than the truth. You cannot be taught love but you can be taught to see love where it already exists. The body's eyes are not the eyes with which love can be recognized. Christ's vision is. For only Christ's vision beholds the face of God.
- 2.2 While you look for a God with a physical form you will not recognize God. Everything real is of God. Nothing unreal exists. Each person passing from this life to the next learns no great secret. They simply realize love is all there is. Nothing unreal exists. Think for yourself: If you were going to die tomorrow what would you today find meaningful? Only love. This is salvation's key.
- 2.3 Because love has no physical form you cannot believe that love could be what you are, what you strive to be, what you seek to return to. Thus you believe you are something other than love and separate from love. You label love a feeling, and one of many. Yet you have been told there are but two from which you choose: love and fear. Because you have chosen fear so many times and labeled it so many things you no longer recognize it as fear. The same is true of love.
- 2.4 Love is the name you give to much you fear. You think that it is possible to choose it as a means to buy your safety and security. You thus have defined love as a reaction to fear. This is why you can understand love as fear's opposite. This is true enough. But because you have not properly recognized fear as nothing, you have not properly recognized love as everything. It is because of the attributes you have given fear that love has been given attributes. Only separate things have attributes and qualities that seem to complement or oppose. Love has no attributes, which is why it cannot be taught.

- 2.5 If love cannot be taught but only recognized, how is this recognition made possible? Through love's effects. For cause and effect are one. Creation is love's effect, as are you.
- 2.6 To believe that you are able to act in love in one instance and act in anger in another, and that both actions originate from the same place, is an error of enormous proportions. You again label love a "sometimes" component and think that to act in love more frequently is an achievement. You label acting from love "good" and acting out of anger "bad." You feel you are capable of loving acts of heroic proportions and fearful actions of horrific consequence, acts of bravery and acts of cowardice, acts of passion you call love and acts of passion you call violence. You feel unable to control the most extreme of these actions that arise from these extremes of feeling. Both "ends" of feelings are considered dangerous and a middle ground is sought. It is said that one can love too much and too little but never enough. Love is not something you do. It is what you are. To continue to identify love incorrectly is to continue to be unable to identify your Self.
- 2.7 To continue to identify love incorrectly is to continue to live in hell. As much as highs and lows of intense feeling are sought by some to be avoided, it is in the in-between of passionless living that hell is solidified and becomes quite real. You can label joy heaven and pain hell and seek the middle ground for your reality thinking there are more than these two choices. A life of little joy and little pain is seen as a successful life, for a life of joy is seen as nothing more than a daydream, a life of pain a nightmare.
- 2.8 Into this confusion of love's reality you add the contents of your history, the learned facts and the assumed theories of your existence. Although your purpose here remains obscure, you identify some things you call progress and others that you call evolution and you hope you have some miniscule role to play in advancing the status of humankind. This is the most you have any hope of doing, and few of you believe you will succeed. Others refuse to think of life in terms of purpose and thereby condemn themselves to purposeless lives, convinced one person among billions makes no difference and is of no consequence. Still others put on blinders to the world and seek only to make their corner of it more safe and secure. Some shift from one option to the next, giving up on one and hoping that the other will bring them some peace. To think that these are the only options available to creatures of a loving God

is insane. Yet you believe that to think the opposite is true insanity. Given even your limited view of who you are, could this really be true?

- 2.9 The insanity of your thought process and the world you perceive must be made known to you before you are willing to give it up. You do know this, and yet you constantly *forget*. This forgetting is the work of your ego. Your true Self does not want to forget, and cannot for even the tiniest fraction of a second. It is precisely the inability of your true Self to forget that gives you hope of learning to recognize love, and, with that recognition, of ending the insanity you now perceive.
- 2.10 Your real Self is the Christ in you. How could it be anything but love, or see with eyes other than those of love? Would you expect any decent human being to look on a loveless world, on misery and despair, and not be moved? Think not that those who seem to add to the world's misery are any exception. There is not a soul that walks this earth that does not weep at what it sees. Yet the Christ in you does not weep, for the Christ in you sees with eyes of love. The difference is the eyes of love see not the misery or despair. They are not there! This is the miracle. The miracle is true seeing. Think not that love can look on misery and see love there. Love looks not on misery at all.
- 2.11 Compassion is not what you have made of it. The Bible instructs you to be compassionate as God is compassionate. You have defined it unlike the compassion of God. To believe God looks upon misery and responds with sympathy and concern and does not end the misery is to believe in a God who is compassionate as you are compassionate. You think you would end misery if you could, beginning with your own, and yet you could no more end misery by making it real than could God. There is no magic here of turning misery into delight and pain into joy. These acts would indeed be magic, an illusion on top of an illusion. You have but accepted illusion as the truth, and so seek other illusions to change what never was into something that never will be.
- 2.12 To be compassionate as God is compassionate is to see as God sees. Again, I stress to you, this is not about looking upon misery and saying to yourself you see it not. I am not an advocate of heartlessness but wholeheartedness. If you believe even the tiniest fraction of what is true, if you but believe you are a small part of God no bigger than a pinprick of light in a daunting sun, you still cannot believe in the reality of misery and despair.

If you do, you believe this is the state of God as well. And if this were true, what hope would there be for misery's end? What light would there be in the universe that could end the darkness?

- 2.13 Reverse this thought and see if it makes any more sense than it did before. In this scenario a benevolent and loving God who has extended His being into the creation of the universe has somehow managed to extend what is not of Him, to create what is unlike to His being in every way. Would even you attempt such folly? Would you conceive of the inconceivable?
- 2.14 What answer then is left but that you do not see reality for what it is? What benefit is left to you in seeing incorrectly? What risk in attempting to see anew? What would a world without misery be but heaven?
- 2.15 Look not to figures from the past to show you the way beyond illusions to the present. Look within to the one in you who knows the way. Christ is within you and you rest within God. I vowed to never leave you and to never leave you comfortless. The Holy Spirit has brought what comfort you would accept to your troubled mind. Now turn to me to comfort your troubled heart.
- 2.16 You have not sufficiently reversed your thinking, or your heart would not still be troubled. The reversal has not occurred because you separate mind and heart and think you can involve one without involving the other. You believe that to know with your mind is a learning process that stands apart from all else that you are. Thus you can know without that knowing being who you are. You think you can love without love being who you are. Nothing stands apart from your being. Nothing stands alone. All your attempts to keep things separate are but a re-enactment of the original separation made to convince yourself that the separation actually occurred.
- 2.17 You do not stand separate and alone. At these words your heart rejoices and your mind rebels. Your mind rebels because it is the stronghold of the ego. Your thought system is what has made the world you see, the ego its constant companion in its construction.
- 2.18 Yet your mind too rejoiced in the learning of all the teachings that have brought you here, congratulating itself on a feat that brought it rest. It is from this rest that the heart begins to be heard.
- 2.19 Just as the Holy Spirit can use what the ego has made, the ego can use what the mind has learned but has not integrated. Until you are what you

have learned, you leave room for the ego's machinations. Once you are what you have learned, there is no room in which the ego can exist and, banished from the home you made for it, it slowly dies. Until this happens, the ego takes pride in what the mind has acquired, even unto the greater peace and contentment offered by your learning. It can and does see itself as better and stronger and more capable of worldly success. It would use all you have learned for its own motivations and pat you on the back for your new abilities. Without your vigilance it may even seem to have become stronger than before and fiercer in its criticism. It pretends to hold you to new standards, only to use what you have learned to increase your guilt. Thus it wins in daily battles and works for your final abdication, the day that you give up and admit defeat. It challenges your right to happiness and love and miracles, and seeks only to have you claim that living with such fantasies does not work and will not ever be possible here.

2.20 Into this battlefield you have bravely marched. The war rages by day and by night and you have grown weary. Your heart cries out for solace and does not go unheard. Help is here.

2.21 Do not believe that all that you have learned will not do what it was given you to do. Do not believe in your failure or the ego's success. All you have learned is still with you regardless of your perception of the outcome of your learning. Your perception of an outcome within your control is all that needs to change. Remember that cause and effect are one. What you want to learn you cannot fail to learn.

2.22 We will begin by working on a state of neutrality in which the war is no longer fought, the daily battles cease. Who wins and who loses is not of concern to us here. Peace has not yet come. But the white flag of surrender has been waved and dropped upon a hallowed ground where neutrality will for a short time reign before peace breaks out with glad rejoicing.

2.23 There are no plunders to be treasured. No victors of this war. All that has been learned and learned again is that this is what you do not want. Freedom to return home, away from cries of agony, defeat, and vainglory is all that now is sought. A state of neutrality is where the return begins. Armies may not yet be marching home, but their preparation is underway.

CHAPTER 3

The First Lesson

- 3.1 Love is. It teaches by being what it is. It does not do anything. It does not strive. It neither succeeds nor fails. It is neither alive nor dead. And thus it always was and always will be. It is not particular to you as human beings. It *is* in relationship to everything. All to all.
- 3.2 Just as true knowledge cannot be learned, love cannot be learned and you cannot be learned. All that you desire and cannot learn is already accomplished. It is accomplished in you. It is you. Imagine the ocean or the cheetah, the sun or the moon or God Himself, attempting to learn what they are. They are the same as you. All exist within you. You are the universe itself.
- 3.3 It is a shared universe with no divisions. There are no sections, no parts, no inside and no outside, no dreams and no illusions that can escape or hide, disappear, or cease to be. There is no human condition that does not exist in all humans. It is completely impossible for one to have what another does not have. All is shared. This has always been true and is endlessly true. Truth is truth. There are no degrees of truth.
- 3.4 You are not form, nor is your real world. You seek the face of God in form as you seek for love in form. Both love and God are there, but they are not the form that your body's eyes see. Just as these words you see upon this page are symbols only of meaning far beyond what the symbols can suggest, so too is everything and everyone around you, those you see and those you only can imagine. To seek the "face" of God, even in the form of Christ, is to seek for what is forever without form. To truly see is to begin to see the formless. To begin to see the formless is to begin to understand what you are.
- 3.5 All that you now see are but symbols of what is really there before you, in glory beyond your deepest imaginings. Yet you persist in wanting only what your eyes can see and hands can hold. You call these things real and all else unreal. You can close your eyes and believe that you are in the dark, but

you will not believe that you are no longer real. Close your eyes on all that you have become accustomed to seeing. And you will see the light.

3.6 In the light that comes only to eyes that no longer see, you will find the Christ who abides in you. In Jesus Christ, the Son of God became the son of man. He walked the world with a face much like your own, a body with two legs and two arms, ten fingers and ten toes. And yet you know this was not Jesus, nor is this a picture of the Christ. Jesus gave a face to love, as you do here as well. But love did not attach itself to form and say, "This is what I am." How can anything have a form except in symbols? A family crest, a mother's ring, a wedding band are all the same: They but represent what they symbolize in form.

3.7 There is no form that is not thus. A form is but a representation. You see a thousand forms a day with different names and different functions and you think not that they are all the same. You place values on each one based on usefulness or pleasant appearance, on popularity or on reputation. Each one you place in relationship to yourself, and so you do not even see the form as it is but only as what it will do for you. You imprison form within your meaning, and still your meaning is truer than its form. You give all meaning to everything, and thus you populate your world with angels and with demons, their status determined by who would help you and who would thwart you. Thus do you determine your friends and your enemies, and thus you have friends who become enemies and enemies who become friends. While a pencil may essentially remain a pencil in your judgment, at least as long as it has all the qualities that you have determined that a pencil should have, few people can exhibit the qualities you have predetermined that they should possess at all times and in all places. And so one disappoints and another enthralls, one champions your cause and another denigrates you. In all scenarios you remain the maker of your world, giving it its causes and effects. If this can be so, how can the world be anything but symbolic, with each symbol's meaning chosen by you and for you. Nothing is what it is, but only what it is to you.

3.8 Into this rank confusion is brought a simple statement: *Love is*. Never changing, symbolizing only itself, how can it fail to be everything or to contain all meaning? No form can encompass it for it encompasses all form. Love is the light in which form disappears and all that is, is seen as it is.

- 3.9 You who are looking for help wonder now how this would help you. What is there left to say that has not been said? What are these words but symbols, by my own admission? It is in what they symbolize that help arrives. You do not need to believe in the words nor the potential of the exercises to change your life, for these words enter you as what they are, not the symbols that they represent. An idea of love is planted now, in a garden rich with what will make it grow.
- 3.10 Everything has birth in an idea, a thought, a conception. Everything that has been manifested in your world was first conceived within the mind. While you know this is true, you continue to believe you are the effect and not the cause. This is partially due to your concept of the mind. What you conceive it to be, it will be to you. While many teachings have attempted to dislodge this concept that you hold so dear, because you use the mind to deal in concepts, you have been unable to let new learning have its effect. This is because you believe your mind is in control of what it thinks. You believe in a process of input and output, all completely human and scientifically provable. The birth of an idea is thus the result of what has come before, of seeing something old as new, of improving on a former idea, of taking various information and collecting it into a new configuration.
- 3.11 What has this meant for learning that is not of this world? It means that you filter it through the same lens. You think of it in the same way. You seek to gather it together so that it will provide an improvement to what has been before. You look for evidence that shows that if you behave in a certain way certain things will happen as a result. Like a child learning not to touch a stove because it is hot and a burn will result, or learning that a warm blanket is comforting, you subject it to a thousand tests dependent on your senses and your judgment. While you believe you know what will hurt you and what you will find comforting, you subject what cannot be compared to the comparable.
- 3.12 Think not that your mind as you conceive of it learns without comparison. Everything is true or false, right or wrong, black or white, hot or cold, based solely on contrast. One chemical reacts one way and one reacts another, and it is only in the study of the two that you believe learning takes place.
- 3.13 You have not given up the idea that you are in control of what you learn, nor have you accepted that you can learn in a way that you have not learned

before. Thus we move from head to heart to take advantage of your concepts of the heart, concepts much more in line with learning that is not of this world.

- 3.14 These words of love do not enter your body through your eyes and take up residence in your brain, there to be distilled into a language that you can understand. As you read, be aware your heart, for this is where this learning enters and will stay. Your heart is now your eyes and ears. Your mind can remain within your concept of the brain, for we bypass it now and send it no information to process, no data for it to compute. The only change in thinking you are asked to make is to realize that you do not need it.
- 3.15 What this will mean to you goes far beyond the learning of this Course. One such concept, given up and not replaced, will free you beyond your deepest imaginings and free your sisters and brothers as well. Once one such concept is felled, others follow quickly. But none is more entrenched than this one, the one we begin today to let fall away.
- 3.16 You who have been unable to separate mind from body, brain from head, and intelligence from knowledge, take heart. We give up trying. We simply learn in a new way and in our learning realize that our light shines from within our heart, our altar to the Lord. Here the Christ in us abides and here we concentrate our energies and our learning, soon to learn that what we would know cannot be computed in the databanks of an over-worked and over-trusted brain, a mind we cannot separate from where we believe it to be.
- 3.17 Our hearts, in contrast, go out to the world, to the suffering, to the weak of body and of mind. Our hearts are not so easily contained within the casing of our flesh and bone. Our hearts take wing with joy and break with sadness. Not so the brain that keeps on registering it all, a silent observer, soon to tell you that the feelings of your heart were foolishness indeed. It is to our hearts that we appeal for guidance, for there resides the one who truly guides.
- 3.18 You who think this idea is rife with sentiment, sure to lead you to abandoning logic, and thereafter certainly to cause your ruin, I say to you again: take heart. Such foolishness as your heart's desires will save you now. Remember it is your heart that yearns for home. Your heart that yearns for love remembered. Your heart that leads the way that, should you follow, will set you certainly on the path for home.

- 3.19 What pain has your heart endured that it has failed to treasure for its source? Its source is love, and what greater proof need you of love's strength? Such pain as has your heart endured would surely be a knife to cut through tissue, a blow that to the brain would stop all functioning, an attack upon the cells far greater than any cancer. The pain of love, so treasured that it cannot be let go, can and does indeed attack the tissue, brain, and cells. And then you call it illness and allow the body to let you down, still and always holding love unto yourself.
- 3.20 Must pain accompany love and loss? Is this the price you pay, you ask, for opening up your heart? And yet, should you be asked if you would have other than the love you would not answer yes. What else is worth such cost, such suffering, so many tears? What else would you not let go when pain comes near, as a hand would drop a burning ember? What other pain would you hold closely, a grief not to be given up? What other pain would you be so unwilling to sacrifice?
- 3.21 Think not that these are senseless questions, made to bring love and pain together and there to leave you unaided and unhelped, for pain and love kept together in this way makes no sense, and yet makes the greatest sense of all. These questions merely prove love's value. What else do you value more?
- 3.22 Your thoughts might lead you to a dozen answers now, more for some and less for others, your answers depending on the tenacity of your thoughts, which, led by your ego, would throw logic in love's way. Some others might use their thoughts in yet another manner, claiming to choose love and not pain when what they really choose is safety at love's expense. No one here believes they can have one without the other and so they live in fear of love, all the while desiring it above all else.
- 3.23 Think you not that love can be kept apart from life in any way. But we begin now to take life's judgment from it, the judgments gained by your experience, judgment based on how much love you have received and how much love has been withheld from you. We begin by simply accepting the proof we have been given of love's strength. For this we will return to again and again as we learn to recognize what love is.

CHAPTER 4

Love's Equity

- 4.1 Do you have to love God to know what love is? When you love purely, you know God whether you realize it or not. What does it mean to love purely? It means to love for love's sake. To simply love. To have no false idols.
- 4.2 False idols must be brought to light and there seen as the nothing that they are before you can love for love's sake. What is a false idol? What you think love will get you. You are entitled to all that love would give but not to what you think love will provide for you through its acquisition. This is a classic example of not recognizing that *love is*.
- 4.3 Love and longing are so intimately attached because they joined together at the moment of separation when a choice to go away from love and a choice to return were birthed in unison. Love was thus not ever lost but shadowed over by longing that, placed between you and your Source, both obscured Its light and alerted you of Its eternal presence. Longing is your proof of love's existence, for even here you would not long for what is not remembered.
- 4.4 All your long search for proof of God's existence ends here when you recognize what love is. And with this proof is proof of your existence established as well. For in your longing for love, you recognize as well your longing for your Self. Why would you wonder who you are and what your purpose here is all about, if not for your recognition, given witness by your longing, of what you fear you are not, but surely are?
- 4.5 All fear ends when proof of your existence is established. All fear is based on your inability to recognize love and thus who you are and who God is. How could you not have been fearful with doubt as powerful as this? How can you not rejoice when doubt is gone and love fills all the space that doubt once occupied? No shadows linger when doubt is gone. Nothing stands between the child of God and the child's own Source. There remain no clouds to block the sun, and night gives way to day.

- 4.6 Child of God, you are alien here but need not be alien to your Self. In your knowledge of your Self, all threat of time and space and place dissolves. You may still walk an alien land, but not in a fog of amnesia that obscures what would be a brief adventure and replaces it with dreams of terror and confusion so rampant that no toehold of security is possible, and day turns endlessly into night in a long march toward death. Recognize who you are and God's light goes before you, illuminating every path and shining away the fog of dreams from which you waken undisturbed.
- 4.7 Love alone has the power to turn this dream of death into a waking awareness of life eternal.
- 4.8 Yearning, learning, seeking, acquiring, the need to own, the need to keep, the grasping call, the driving force, the chosen passion—all these things that you have made to replace what you already have will lead you back as surely as they can lead you astray. Where what you have made will lead rests only on your decision. Your decision, couched in many forms, is simply this: to proceed toward love or to withdraw from it, to believe it is given or withheld.
- 4.9 Love is all that follows the law of God in your world. All else assumes that what one has is denied another. While love cannot be learned nor practiced, there is a practice we must do in order to recognize love's presence. We practice living by the law of love, a law of gain not loss, a law that says the more you give the more you gain.
- 4.10 There are no losers and no winners under God's law. Not one is given more than another. God cannot love you more than your neighbor, nor can you earn more of God's love than you have, or a better place in Heaven. The mind, under the ego's direction, has thrived on winners and on losers, on striving for and earning a better place. The heart knows not these distinctions, and those who think their hearts have learned them by being battered and abused by their experience here, rejoice in knowing that it is not so. This seeming illusion is believed in because your mind has made it so. Your thoughts have reviewed and reviewed again all the pain that love has brought. It dwells on those occasions when love has failed because it does not recognize that love cannot fail.
- 4.11 Your expectations and false perceptions of your brothers and sisters are what have caused you to believe that love can fail, be lost, withdrawn, or

turned to hate. Your false perception of your Father is what has caused all other perceptions to be false, including the one you hold of your own Self.

4.12 When you think of acting out of love, your thoughts of love are based on sentiment and must be challenged. Love is not being nice when you are feeling surly. Love is not doing good deeds of charity and service. Love is not throwing logic to the wind and acting in foolish ways that pass as gaiety but cannot masquerade as joy. You each have an image in your mind of someone you believe knows what love is. This is perhaps an elderly person who is always kind and gentle, with no cross word for anyone, and no concern for his or her own self. This is perhaps a mother whose love is blind and self-sacrificing. Still others of you might imagine a couple long married in which each person is devoted to the other's happiness, or a father whose love is unconditional, or a priest or minister who guides unfailingly. For each or any one of these that you admire, you give attributes that you do not have and that you might one day acquire when the time is right. For that kind and gentle stance you do not believe will serve you now, that blindness and self-sacrifice is something to be gained at too high a price, that devotion you might think is fine for one whose partner is more loving than your own, that unconditional love is great, but must it not be tempered by good judgment? And surely that ability to guide others must be earned through the acquisition of wisdom not within your reach.

4.13 Thus, your image of love is based upon comparison. You have chosen one who demonstrates that which in you is most lacking and you use that image to chastise yourself while saying this is what you want.

4.14 Your ideas of being in love are quite another category all together. In this context love is not only full of sentiment but of romance. This stage of love is seldom seen as lasting or as something that can be maintained. It is the purview of the young, and the daydream of the aging. It is synonymous with passion and an overflow of feelings that defy all common sense. To be in love is to be vulnerable, for once common sense has failed to keep you acting as expected, you might forget to guard your heart or to keep your real Self in hiding. How dangerous indeed is such an act in a world where trust can turn to treachery.

4.15 Each one of you has held an ideal of what the perfect mate would mean, an ideal that changed over time. Those most bound by the ego might think

of stature and of wealth, of physical beauty and the trappings of good upbringing. Those most insecure will believe in a partner who would shower him or her with praise and gifts, with attention never wavering. Another who prizes independence seeks a partner in good health, not too demanding, a companion and a lover who will be convenient within a busy life.

4.16 You believe you can fall in love with the wrong person and make a better choice based upon criteria more important than love. You thus believe love is a choice, something to be given to some and not to others. You hope to be a winner in this game you play, a chosen one who will have each ounce of love that is given returned in kind. This is a balancing act you play with God's most holy gift, resenting giving love that gains you little in return. And yet in this resentment you recognize the truth of what love is.

4.17 In no other area of life do you expect such fairness, such exchange of equal value. You give your mind to an idea, your body to a job, your days to activities that do not interest or fulfill you. You accept what you are paid within certain boundaries you have set; you expect that a certain amount of prestige will follow certain accomplishments; you accept that some tasks have to be done for survival's sake. You hope there will be some fairness here in what you give and what you are given back. You hope your hard work will produce results, the dinner you prepared be eaten with delight, your ideas greeted as inspired. But this you do not expect. You often, in fact, expect the reverse to be the case, and are grateful for each acknowledgment the world gives you for the ways in which you spend your days. For spend your days you do, and soon that spending will deplete the limited number of days in store for you and you will die. Life is not fair, nor meant to be, you claim. But love is something else.

4.18 In this you are correct, for love is nothing like your image of your life and has no resemblance to how you spend your days or the way your days will end. Love is all that is set apart in your perception from what you do here. You think this setting apart gives love little relevance to other areas of your life. Love is seen as personal, something another gives in a special way to you alone, and you to him or her. Your love life has nothing to do with your work life, your issues of survival here, your ability to achieve success, or the state of your health and general welfare.

- 4.19 Even you who do not recognize what love is protect what you call love from the illusions you have made.
- 4.20 A thing set apart from the madness of the world is useful now. It may not be what love is, but what love is has guided you in choosing to set love apart from what you call the *real world*, from that which is, in fact, the sum total of what you have made. The world you struggle so to navigate is what you have made it, a place where love fits not and enters not in truth. But love has entered you and leaves you not, and so you too must have no place in this world that you have made but must have another where you are at home and can abide within love's presence.
- 4.21 The lucky ones among you have made a place resembling home within your world. It is where you keep love locked away behind closed doors. It is where you return after your forays into the world that you have made and upon entering believe you leave the world's madness outside your door. Here you feel safe and gather those you love around you. Here you share your day's adventures, making sense of what you can and leaving out the rest, and here you gain the strength you need to walk outside those doors again another day. You spend your life intent upon retiring to this safe place you have made of love in a world of madness, and hope that you will live to see the day when you can leave the madness behind, and that you will still find love behind the doors you have passed through so many times in a journey spent earning your right to leave it no more.
- 4.22 Some would call such a life selfish and wonder how the occupants of this semi-happy dream have earned the right to turn their backs upon the world even for the scanty hours that they make believe they can do so. Full-scale interaction with the world of madness is all that some are willing to accept of others or themselves. These are the angry ones who would demand that others bring what love they have into the madness to take responsibility for the mess that has been made, to attempt to restore order to chaos, anything so that the angry ones feel less alone with what their anger shows them. Love, they say, cannot be set apart, and so they feel love not, nor see it either. Yet they too recognize love for what it is when they scream, "You cannot have it while all of these do not. You cannot hoard it to yourself when so many are in need."
- 4.23 Everywhere you look is proof of love's difference found. This difference

is your salvation. Love is not like anything or everything else that goes on here. And so your places to worship love have been built, your sacraments protect love's holiness, your homes host those you love most dearly.

4.24 Thus has your perception of love prepared you for what love is. For within you is the altar for your worship, within you has love's holiness been protected, within you abides the Host who loves all dearly. Within you is the light that will show you what love is and keep it not set apart from life any longer. Love cannot be brought to the world of madness, nor the world of madness brought to love. But love can allow a new world to be seen, a world that will allow you to abide within love's presence.

4.25 Take all the images of love set apart that you have made and extend them outside love's doors. What difference would a world of love make to those who lock their doors upon the world? How vast the reaches where their world of love could extend once love joined the world. How little need for the angry ones to retain their anger when love has joined the world. For love does join the world, and it is within this joining that love abides, holy as itself.

4.26 The world is but a reflection of your inner life, the reality unseen and unprepared for by all your strategy and defenses. You prepare for everything that goes on outside yourself and nothing that occurs within. Yet it is a joining that occurs within that brings about the joining of all the world for all the world to see. This joining of the world within is but your recognition of what love is, safe and secure within you and your brother, as you join together in truth. Think you not that this joining is a metaphor, a string of pleasant words that will bring you comfort if you heed them, one more sentiment in a world where lovely words replace what they would mean. This joining is the goal you seek, the only goal worthy of love's call.

4.27 This goal is set apart from all others as love is here, a goal that touches not on what you perceive to be a loveless world. It has no relation to the world outside of you, but every relation to the world within, where in love's presence both outer and inner worlds become as one and leave beyond your vision the world that you have seen and called your home. This foreign world where you have been so lonely and afraid will linger for a while where it can terrify you no longer, until finally it will fade away into the nothingness from which it came as a new world rises up to take its place.

CHAPTER 5

Relationship

- 5.1 The Christ in you is wholly human and wholly divine. As the wholly divine, nothing is unknown. As the wholly human, everything has been forgotten. Thus we begin to relearn the known as the One who already possesses all. It is this joining of the human and divine that ushers in love's presence, as all that caused you fear and pain falls away and you recognize again what love is. It is this joining of the human and divine that is your purpose here, the only purpose worthy of your thought.
- 5.2 You who have so filled your mind with senseless wanderings and thoughts that think of nothing that is real, rejoice that there is a way to end this chaos. The world you see is chaos and nothing in it, including your thoughts, are trustworthy. This is why your thoughts must be newly dedicated, dedicated to the only purpose worthy of your thought: the purpose of joining with your real Self, the Christ in you.
- 5.3 I said earlier, it is only through union with me that you learn, because it is only in union with me that you are your Self. Now we must expand your understanding of union and of relationship as well as your understanding of me.
- 5.4 Union is impossible without God. God is union. Is this not like saying God is Love? Love is impossible without union. The same is true of relationship. God creates all relationship. When you think of relationship, you think of one relationship and then another. The one you share with this friend or that, with husband or wife, with child or employer or parent. In thinking in these specific terms you lost the meaning of the holy relationship. Relationship itself is holy.
- 5.5 Relationship exists apart from particulars. This is what you can't conceive of and what your heart must newly learn. All truth is generalizable because truth is not concerned with any of the specific details or forms of your world. You think relationship exists between one body and another,

and while you think this is so, you will not understand relationship or union or come to recognize love as what it is.

5.6 Relationship is what exists between one thing and another. It is not one thing or another thing. It is not a third thing in terms of being a third object, but it is something separate, a third something. You realize that a relationship exists between your hand and a pencil when you go to write something down, but it is a relationship you take so completely for granted that you have forgotten that it exists. All truth lies in relationship, even one so simple as this. The pencil is not real, nor the hand that grasps it. Yet the relationship between the two is quite real. "When two or more are joined together" is not an injunction for bodies to unite. It is a statement that describes the truly real, the only reality that exists. It is the joining that is real and that causes all creation to sing a song of gladness. No one thing exists without another. Cause and effect are one. Thus, one thing cannot cause another without their being one or joined in truth.

5.7 We are beginning now to paint you a new picture, a picture of things unseen before but visible to your heart if not your eyes. Your heart knows love without a vision of it. You give it form and say, "I love this one" or "I love that," yet you know that love exists apart from the object of your affection. Love is set apart in a frame not of this world. You hold objects up to capture it, to put a frame around love's vision and say, "This is it." Yet once you have it captured and hanging for all to look at and behold, you realize this is not love at all. You then begin your building of defenses, your evidence to cite to say, "Yes indeed, this is love and I have it here. It hangs upon my wall and I gaze upon it. It is mine to own and keep and cherish. As long as it is where I can look upon it, it is real to me and I am safe."

5.8 "Ah," you think when you find love, "now my heart is singing; now I know what love is all about." And you attach the love you have found to the one in whom you found it and seek immediately to preserve it. There are millions of museums to love, far more than there are altars. Yet your museums cannot preserve love. You have become collectors rather than gatherers. Your fear has grown so mighty that all that would combat it is collected for safekeeping. Like the frame of love upon your wall, the collections that fill your shelves, whether they are of ideas or money or things to look at, are your desperate attempts to keep something for yourself away from all the rest. In setting love

apart, you recognized it had no place here; but you went on to set yourself apart and all else that you could find to define as valuable. You build your banks as well as your museums as palaces to your love and no longer see the golden calves hiding within the palace walls.

- 5.9 This urge to preserve things is but your urge to leave a mark upon the world, a mark that says, "I have acquired much in my time here. These things I love are what I leave the world, what I pass down; they declare that I was here." Again you have the right idea, yet it is so sadly displaced as to make a mockery of who you are. Love does mark your place—but in eternity, not here. What you leave behind is never real.
- 5.10 Love gathered together is a celebration. Love collected is but a mockery of love. This difference must be recognized and understood, as must the urge to set love apart from all the rest, for with understanding, these urges can be made to make sense. With understanding they can begin to bring sanity to an insane world.
- 5.11 You do not yet believe nor understand that the urges that you feel are real, and neither good nor bad. Your feelings in truth come from love, your response to them is what is guided by fear. Even feelings of destruction and violence come from love. You are not bad, and you have no feelings that can be labeled so. Yet you are misguided concerning what your feelings mean and how they would bring love to you and you to love.
- 5.12 It is in understanding the relationship that exists between what you feel and what you do that love's lessons are learned. Each feeling requires that you enter into a relationship with it, for it is there you will find love. It is in every joining, every entering into, that love exists. Every joining, every entering into, is preceded by a suspension of judgment. Thus what is judged cannot be joined nor entered into where it can be understood. What is judged remains outside of you, and it is what remains outside that calls you to do what love would call you not to do. What remains outside is all that has not joined with you. What has joined with you becomes real in the joining, and what is real is only love.
- 5.13 Do you see the practicality of this lesson? What terror can be caused by an urge to violence that, once joined with love, becomes something else? An urge to violence may mean many things, but always lurking behind it is an overwhelming desire for peace. Peace may mean destruction of the old, and

love can facilitate the rise and fall of many armies. What armies of destruction will rock the world when they are brought to love?

- 5.14 Within you is all the world safe, sure, and secure. No terror reigns. No nightmares rule the night. Let me give you once again the difference between what is within and what is without: Within is all that has joined with you. Without is all that you would keep separate. Within you is every relationship you have ever had with anything. Outside of you is all that you have kept apart, labeled, judged, and collected on your shelves.
- 5.15 This is all the two worlds are made up of. The one you see as real is the one you keep outside of yourself, making it possible to look upon it with your body's eyes. The one you do not see and do not believe in is the one you cannot look outward to see, but is the one that nonetheless is truly real. To look inward at the real world requires another kind of vision: the vision of your heart, the vision of love, the vision of the Christ in you.
- 5.16 You look outside the doors of your home and, whether you see suburban streets bathed in lamplight, streets that steam with garbage and crime, or cornfields growing, you say that is the real world. It is the world you go out into in order to earn your living, receive your education, find your mate. But the home in which you stand, much like your inner world, is where you live the life that makes the most sense. It is where your values are formed, your decisions are made, your safety found. This comparison is not idly drawn. Your home is within and it is real, as real as the home you have made within the world seems to be. You can say the real world is somewhere outside yourself, as you picture the real world being beyond your doors, but saying this cannot make it so.
- 5.17 It is your continuing desire to have a relationship only with the world without that causes such a world to remain. This is because your definition of relationship is not one of joining. What you join with becomes real. As you take it into your Self you thereby make it real because you make it one with your real Self. This is reality. All you do not join with remains outside and is illusion, for what is not one with you does not exist.
- 5.18 You thus become a body moving through a world of illusion where nothing is real and nothing is happening in truth. This illusionary world is full of things you have told yourself and been instructed that you have to do, but that you do not want to do. The more your life consists of such things,

the smaller your reality becomes. All that would join with you and become part of the real world of your creation remains beyond your reach.

- 5.19 There is nothing in your world that cannot be made holy through relationship with you, for you are holiness itself. You do not know this only because you fill your mind and leave your heart empty. Your heart becomes full only through relationship or union. A full heart can overshadow a full mind, leaving no room for senseless thoughts but only for what is truly real.
- 5.20 The first and only exercise for your mind within this Course has already been stated: Dedicate your thought to union. When senseless thoughts fill your mind, when resentments arise, when worry comes, repeat the thought that comes to open your heart and clear your mind: "I dedicate all thought to union." As often as you need to replace senseless thoughts, think of this and say it to yourself not once but a hundred times a day if needed. You do not need to worry about what to replace your senseless thoughts with, as your heart will intercede by fulfilling its longing for union as soon as you have expressed your willingness to let it do so.
- 5.21 You do not yet understand the strength of your resistance to the union that would turn hell into heaven, insanity to peace. You do not yet understand your ability to choose that which you make real in your creation of the world. The only meaning possible for free will is this: what you choose to join with you, and what you choose to leave outside of yourself.
- 5.22 Your desire to be separate is the most insane desire of which you have conceived. Over all your longing for union you place this desire to be separate and alone. Your entire resistance to God is based on this. You think you have chosen to be separate from God so that you can make it on your own, and while you long to return to God and the heaven that is your home, you do not want to admit that you cannot get there on your own. You thus have made of life a test, believing that you can pass or fail through your own effort. Yet the more you struggle to do so on your own, the more you realize the futility of your efforts, even though you do not want to admit that your efforts are futile. You cling to effort as if it is the way to God, not wanting to believe all effort is in vain or that a simple solution exists. A simple solution within your world, a solution that requires no exertion on your part, is seen to be of little value. The individual, you reason, is made through all this effort and struggle and without it would not be. In this you are correct,

for as you make of yourself an individual, you deny yourself your union with all others.

5.23 All your efforts to be an individual are concentrated on the life of your body. Your concentration on the life of your body is meant to keep your body separate. "Overcoming" is your catch phrase here as you struggle to overcome all the adversity and obstacles that would keep you from having what you think you want to have. This is your definition of life, and while it remains it defines the life you see as real. It presents you with a thousand choices to make, not once but many times, until you believe that your power of choice is a fantasy and that you are powerless indeed. You thus narrow what you want and go after it with single-minded determination, believing the only choice within your control is what to work hard to obtain. If you let all the world recede and concentrate on this one choice, you reason that you are bound to eventually succeed. This is the extent of your faith in your own ability to maneuver this world that you have made; and if you finally do succeed, your faith is seen as justified. The cost is not examined nor acknowledged, yet when this faith is realized the cost becomes quite real. Rather than feeling as if you have gained, feelings of loss will now be what you fight to overcome. What have you done wrong, you wonder? Why are you not satisfied with all you have achieved?

5.24 This *getting what you want* that drives your life is proven time and time again to not be what you want once you have achieved it. Yet you think when this occurs that you have simply chosen the wrong thing and so choose another and another, not stopping to realize that you choose among illusions. You are so surprised that you have not found happiness in what you seek! You continue living life as a test, driving yourself to follow one accomplishment with another, sure that the next one or the next will be the one to do the trick.

5.25 A trick this is indeed, for what has once failed to work will surely fail again. Stop now and give up what you think you want.

5.26 Stop now and realize your reaction to these words, the strength of your resistance. Give up what you want? This is surely what you have expected God to ask of you and what you have spent your lifetime guarding against. Why should you make this sacrifice? What then would your life be for? You want so little really. How can you be asked to give this up?

- 5.27 You do want little, and only when you realize this can you proceed to claiming everything that is yours.
- 5.28 For every joining, every union that you enter into, your real world is increased and what is left to terrify you decreased. This is the only loss that union generates, and it is a loss of what was merely illusion. As union begins to look more attractive to you, you are beginning to wonder how it comes about. There must be some secret you do not know. What is the difference, you ask, between setting a goal and achieving it and joining with something?
- 5.29 These do not have to be two separate things, but are made so by your choice, the choice to achieve what you will on your own. This is all the difference there is between union and separation. Separation is all you perceive on your own. Union is all that you invite me into and share with God. You cannot be alone nor without your Father, yet your invitation is necessary for your awareness of this presence. As I once was, you are both human and divine. What your human self has forgotten, your real Self retains for you, waiting only for your welcome to make it known to you once more.
- 5.30 God is known to you within relationships, as this is all that is real here. God cannot be seen in illusion nor known to those who fear him. All fear is fear of relationships and thus fear of God. You can accept terror that reigns in another part of the world because you feel no relationship to it. It is only in relationship that anything becomes real. This you realize and so you strive to keep far from you all that in relationship with you would add to your discomfort and your pain. To think that any relationship can cause terror, discomfort, or pain is where you err in thinking of relationship.
- 5.31 You think that to come in contact with violence is to have a relationship with it. This is not so. If this were so, you would be joined to all you come in contact with and the world would be heaven indeed, as all you see became blessed by your holiness. That you move through your world without relating to it in any way is what causes your alienation from the heaven it can be.
- 5.32 Remember now one lovely day, for each of you has had at least one that was a shining light in a world of darkness. A day in which the sun shone on your world and you felt part of everything. Every tree and every flower welcomed you. Every drop of water seemed to refresh your soul, every breeze to carry you to heaven. Every smile seemed meant for you, and your feet hardly seemed to touch the soft ground on which you walked. This is

what awaits you as you join with what you see. This awaits you as you place no judgment on the world, and in so doing join with everything and extend your holiness across a world of grief, causing it to become a world of joy.

CHAPTER 9

The Prodigal's Return

- 9.1 You wonder how it can be said that your heart is not deceived when it seems so often to deceive you. It seems as fickle as your mind, telling you one thing one day and one thing the next. Even more so than your mind it seems to lead you astray, forcing you to walk through paths full of danger and treachery into the deepest darkness instead of toward the light. It is your emotions rather than your heart that would do this to you.
- 9.2 Emotions speak the language of your separated self rather than the language of your heart. They are the forward guard of your defense system, always on the lookout for what might hurt or slight the *little you* that they deem under their protection, or the other little selves you deem under yours. But remember now how like to creation in form if not in substance what you have made is. Creation needs no protection. It is only your belief in the need for protection that has caused what you feel to become so clouded by illusion. If you felt no need to protect your heart, or any of those bodies that you love, your feelings would retain their innocence and could not hurt you in any way.
- 9.3 The desire to protect is a desire that arises from distrust and is based totally on fear. If there were no fear, what would there be to protect? Thus, all of your love—the love that you imagine you keep within yourself, and the love that you imagine you receive and give—is tainted by your fear and cannot be real love. It is because you remember love as that which kept you safe, that which kept you happy, that which bound all those you love to you, that you attempt to use love here. This is a real memory of creation that you have distorted. Your faulty memory has caused you to believe love can be used to keep you safe, to make you happy and bind to you those you choose to love. This is not the case, for love cannot be used.
- 9.4 This is how you have distorted all relationship as well, making of it something that only becomes real in its use by you or to you. In your memory of

creation you have remembered that all things exist in relationship, and that all things happen in relationship. Thus you have chosen to use relationship to prove your existence and to make things happen. This use of relationship will never provide the proof or the action you seek, because relationship cannot be used.

9.5 Look around the room in which you sit and take away the usefulness from each thing you see in it. How many items would you keep that you now look upon? Your body too was created for its usefulness. It sets you apart, just as each item in your room is set apart by what it is useful for. Ask yourself now: To whom is your body useful? This question does not apply to those for whom you cook or clean, those whose bodies you would repair or minds improve. The question is, really, who might have seen a use for a body such as yours before it was created? What kind of creator would create it and for what purpose?

9.6 You did not create your Self, but your body you did create. It was created for its usefulness just like every other object that shares the space you occupy. Think for a moment of what the creator of such a body would have intended the body to be. The body is a finite entity, created to be self-contained but also to self-destruct. It was created with a need for constant maintenance, a maintenance that requires toil and struggle. Every inch of its surface is a receiver and transmitter of information yet it carries additional tools such as eyes and ears to enhance its communication and to control what goes in and what goes out. It is as susceptible to pain as to pleasure. It contains the means for joining, but for joining that is of a temporary nature. It is as capable of violence as gentleness. It is born and dies in a state of helplessness.

9.7 The body could not help but be thus, as it was made with dual purposes in mind. It was made to make real and then glorify a separated self, and it was made to punish that separated self for the separation. Its creator had in mind what is reflected in the body: self-aggrandizement and self-effacement, pleasure and pain, violence and gentleness. A desire to know everything but only through its own effort, a desire to see everything but only through its own eyes, a desire to be known but only through what it would choose to share. Alongside these desires it is easy to see how a world such as that of the body developed. Alongside the desire to know was the desire not to know. Alongside the desire to see was the desire not to see. Alongside the desire to

share was the desire to be hidden. Alongside the desire to live was the desire to live no more.

- 9.8 You have always been as you were created, but this is what you chose to make from that with which you started. In other words, you took what you are and made this of yourself. You did not create something from nothing and you did not usurp the power of God. You took what God created and turned it into an illusion so powerful that you believe it is what you are, rather than believing in the truth. But just as you have done this, you can undo this. This is the choice set before you—to go on believing in the illusion you have made, or to begin to see the truth.
- 9.9 Now you seek to know how to escape what you have made. To do so you must withdraw all faith from it. This you are not ready yet to do, but this is what your heart will now prepare you for. As you are prepared, you walk alongside he who has waited for you with a single purpose instead of alongside the conflicting desires you chose to let lead you to this strange world. You travel lightly now where before you walked in chains. You travel now with a companion who knows you as you are and would show your Self to you.
- 9.10 Look upon your body now as you earlier looked upon the space you occupy. Take away the body's usefulness. Would you keep that which you now look upon? As you stand back and observe your body, always with the vision of your heart, think about just what it is that you would use it for. What God created cannot be used, but what you have made can, for its only purpose is your use. Choose to use it now to return you to your real Self, and the new purpose you establish will change its conditions as well as its usefulness to you.
- 9.11 All use is predicated on the simple idea that you do not have what you need. You will continue to believe this while your allegiance remains split. Until you have withdrawn all faith in what you have made, you will believe that what you made remains useful to you. Since this is the case, and since it cannot be changed without your total willingness to change it—a willingness not yet complete—we will, instead of trying to ignore what you have made, use it in a new way. Keep in mind, however, that we are merely saving time, and that your real Self has no need to use anything at all.
- 9.12 As stated before, what is most useful to us now is your perception of your heart. Your illusions concerning it, when undone, will quickly reveal to

you the truth because your misperceptions concerning your heart remain closer to the truth than any that you hold. The memories of your heart are the strongest and purest that exist, and their remembrance will help to still your mind and reveal the rest.

9.13 We thus return to your perception of your emotions and all that causes you to feel. In your feelings, especially those you cannot name, lies your connection to all that is. This is useful because what you have named and classified is harder to dislodge and bring to light. Even those feelings you attempt to name and keep cleverly in a box that you have labeled this or that often are not content to stay where you would place them. They seem to betray you, when it is you who betray them by not allowing them to be what they are. This could be used as a capsule definition of your entire problem: You do not allow anything that exists in your world, including yourself, to be what it is.

9.14 Feelings that on their own seem to rebel against this insane situation are guided by memories trying to reveal the truth to you. They call to you from a place that you know not. The difficulty is that the only self that is listening to this call is your separated self. It is in the attempts of the separated self to interpret what feelings would say that they become as distorted as all the rest. It is the separated self that feels impelled to label feelings good and bad, some worthy of acknowledgment and the rest worthy only of denial or contempt. It is your language that gives emotion its place, one step behind fear, in your battle to control or protect what you have made.

9.15 Fear always lies one step beneath the surface of a situation because it lies one step beneath the surface of your self. Peel back the first level of what your eyes allow you to observe and you will find fear lurking there. The next level, depending on your disposition, is either the desire to control or the desire to protect. They are really the same but they wear different faces to the world. If, for the purposes of our discussion, the body is the surface aspect of your self, and if beneath that surface what is first encountered is fear, it is from fear that all the rest proceeds. Surely it is easy to see that neither the desire to control nor to protect would exist without the layer of fear that comes before it.

9.16 Fear, like all the rest of your emotions, comes in many guises and is given many names, but there are really only two emotions: one is fear, the

other love. Fear is thus the source of all illusion, love the source of truth.

9.17 How could one separated off from all the rest not be fearful? It matters not at all that all whom you observe seem to be separate as well. No one really believes another to be as separate as he is. It always seems as if others have what you lack and what you are looking for. You seem to be alone in your frailty, loneliness, and lack of love. Others misunderstand you and know you not, and neither can you make any sense of them.

9.18 This need not be, for you are not separate! The relationships you seek to end your loneliness can do so if you but learn to see relationship differently. As with all your problems in perception, fear is what blocks the vision of your heart, the light the Christ in you would shine upon the darkness. Can you not see that when you chose to make yourself separate and alone you also made the choice for fear? Fear is nothing but a choice, and it can be replaced by choice of another kind.

9.19 It has been said often that cause and effect are one in truth. The world you see is the effect of fear. Each one of you would have compassion for a child tormented by nightmares. Each parent's most fervent wish would be to tell a child truthfully there is no cause for fear. Age has not taken fear from any of you nor made your dream of life any less of a nightmare. Yet you spare few moments of compassion for yourself, and when such chance occurrences come about you quickly override compassion with practicality. While it makes sense to you to attempt to dispel a child's nightmare, you see no way to dispel your own. You hide fear beneath the surface, and behind each alternative label you would give it, in a desperate attempt to see it not. To live in fear is, indeed, a curse, and one that you would try to tell yourself is not present in your life. You look to others to feel compassion for, to those living in countries torn by war or neighborhoods steeped in violence. There is cause for fear, you say. But not here.

9.20 This is the only way you have been able to see to bring relief to the nightmare of a life of fear. You project fear outward and away from yourself, seeing not that you keep that which you would project. Seeing not that outward signs of fear are but reflections of what you keep within.

9.21 Think now of one of those you have identified as living the life of fear you deny yourself. And imagine that you could bring this one in from that dark and dangerous place. She is cold, and you prepare a fire and give her a

warm blanket for her knees. He is hungry and you prepare a feast for him fit to serve a king. This one exists in the violence you would keep outside your doors, and from your inner sanctum you give this one a respite from the war that rages beyond it. All of your behavior and even your fantasies testify that you believe an absence of cold makes for warmth. That the absence of hunger is fullness. The absence of violence peace. You think that if you but provide these things that are opposite to what you would not want to have, you have accomplished much. But a warm fire will only provide warmth as long as it is stoked. A meal will provide fullness only until the next is needed. Your closed door only keeps you safe while its boundary is respected. To replace the temporary with the temporary is not an answer.

9.22 You may be thinking now that what I have just told you is not an answer is precisely what the Bible has instructed you to do. I am recorded as telling you to feed the hungry, to quench the thirst of the thirsty, to welcome and give rest to the stranger. I have said when you do this unto others you do this to me. Do you think that I am in need of a meal, a cup of water, a warm bed? While you are trapped in the illusion of need surely these acts of charity are of some value, but again I tell you that this value is temporary. My words call you to the eternal, to nourishment and rest of the spirit rather than the body. That your sights are set on the care of the body alone is another example of choosing an opposite for replacement.

9.23 Is this not your way of solving all the problems that you face? You see what you do not want and try to replace it with its opposite. Your life is thus spent in struggling against what you have for what you have not. Only one example is needed to clarify the predicament in which you have placed yourself. You feel lacking and so you want. You want and want and want. You truly believe you do not have what you need, and so make yourself continuously needy. You thus spend your life trying to fulfill your needs. For most of you, this trying takes on the form of work and you spend your entire life working to meet your needs and those of the ones you love. What would you do with your life if you had no needs to meet? What would you do with your life if you had no fear? These questions are the same.

9.24 The only replacement that can occur that will accomplish what you seek is the replacement of illusion with the truth, the replacement of fear with love, the replacement of your separated self with your real Self, the

Self that rests in unity. It is your knowledge that this must occur that leads you to attempt every other kind of replacement. You can continue on in this fashion, always hoping that the next replacement will be the one that succeeds in bringing you what you desire, or you can choose instead the only replacement that will work.

9.25 All that you are asked to give up is your insane notion that you are alone. We speak much of your body here only because it is your proof of this insane idea's validity. It is your proof as well that a life of fear is warranted. How could you not fear for the safety of a home as fragile as the body? How could you fail to provide the next meal for yourself and those within your care? You do not see all that these distractions of meeting needs would keep you from.

9.26 And yet the very reality that you have set up—the reality of not being able to succeed in what you must constantly strive to do—is a situation set up to provide relationship. Like everything else you have remembered of creation and made in its image, so too is this. While making yourself separate and alone you have also made it necessary to be in relationship to survive. Without relationship your *species* itself would cease to be, in fact, all life would end. Of course you must help your sister and brother, for they are yourself, and they are your only means to grasp eternity even within this false reality you have made.

9.27 Let us return to the example of feeding your sister's hunger and quenching your brother's thirst. This is not only a lesson in feeding and quenching spiritual hunger and thirst, but a lesson in relationship as well. It is the relationship inherent in meeting another's need that makes the meeting of the need a thing of lasting value. It is your willingness to say, "Brother, you are not alone" that is the benefit of such situations, not only to your brother but also to you. It is in saying, "Sister, you are not alone" that spiritual hunger and thirst is met with the fullness of unity. It is in realizing that you are not alone that you realize your unity with me and begin to turn from fear toward love.

9.28 You are not your own creator. This is your salvation. You did not create something from nothing, and what you started with is what God created and remains as God created it. You do not have to ask yourself to stretch your belief beyond these simple statements. Are they really so implausible as to be beyond your acceptance? Is it so impossible to imagine that what God

created was distorted by your desire to have your reality be other than what it is? Have you not seen this kind of distortion take place within the reality you do see? Is this not the story of the gifted son or daughter who squanders all the gifts he or she possesses by seeing them not or by sadly distorting what they might be useful for?

9.29 You are the prodigal sons and daughters welcomed constantly to return home to your Father's safe embrace.

9.30 Think of your automobile or computer or any other *thing* you use. Without a user, would it have any function at all? Would it be anything? An automobile abandoned and without a user might become the home to a family of mice. A computer might be covered with a cloth, a flowerpot placed on top of it. Someone not knowing what it is for would make of it what he or she would have it be, but never would the user seek to exchange roles with it. When an accident happens, an automobile cannot be seen to be at fault for mistakes made by its user. Yet in a way this exchange of roles is similar to what you have attempted to do and it is like placing the blame for a car accident on the automobile. You have attempted to change places with the body, claiming that it is using you rather than that you are using it. You do so out of guilt in an attempt to place your guilt outside yourself. "My body made me do it" is like the cry of the child with an imaginary friend. With his claim of an imaginary friend, the child announces that his body is not within his control. What is your ego but an imaginary friend to you?

9.31 Child of God, you need no imaginary friend when you have beside you he who is your friend always and would show you that you have no needs at all. What you truly are cannot be used, not even by God. See you not that it is only in illusion that you can use others who are like yourself?

9.32 You learn your concept of using others from the reality you have made in which you use the body that you call your home and identify as your own self. How can the user and the object of use be one and the same? This insanity makes the purpose of your life seem to be one of usefulness. The more your body can be of use to others and to yourself, the more worthwhile you see it as being. Ages have passed since creation began, and still you have not learned the lesson of the birds of the air or the flowers of the field. Two thousand years have passed since you were told to observe this lesson. The

lilies of the field neither sow nor reap and yet they are provided for. The birds of the air live to sing a song of gladness. So do you.

9.33 God's will for you is happiness, and never has it been otherwise. God's creation is for eternity and has no use for time. Time too is of your making, an idea of use gone mad, as once again you have taken something made for your own use and allowed it to become the user. With your own two hands you give away all your happiness and power to that which you have made! It matters little now that in so doing you once again imitated what your faulty memory would tell you that your Creator did. God alone can give free will. In giving your power to things like your body and to ideas like time your imitation of the gift of free will is so falsely placed in illusion that you cannot see this madness for what it truly is. Your body has no use for your power, and time was not made for happiness.

9.34 The free will that God gave you is what has allowed you to make of yourself and your world what you will. Now you look upon this world with guilt and see it as evidence of your evil nature. It reinforces your belief that you have changed too much from what you were to ever again be worthy of your true inheritance. You fear that this, too, you would squander and lay to ruin. The only thing that might succeed in proving your place as that of royal inheritor would be if you could fix yourself and the world, restoring it to a previous condition that you imagine you know. In this scenario God is like unto your banker rather than your Father. You would prove to God that you can "make a go of it" before you would ask Him for His help.

9.35 As long as you do not want to be forgiven you will not feel the gentle touch of forgiveness upon you and your world. While there is no need in truth for this forgiveness, as there is no truth to this big change that you believe you have undergone, your desire to be forgiven is a first step away from your belief that you can fix things by yourself and in so doing earn your way back into your Father's home. Being willing to be forgiven is the precursor of atonement, the state in which you allow your errors to be corrected for you. These errors are not the sins you hold against yourself, but merely your errors in perception. Correction, or atonement, returns you to your natural state where true vision lies and error and sin disappear.

9.36 Your natural state is one of union, and each joining that you do in holy relationship returns a little of the memory of union to you. This memory of

your divinity is what you seek in truth from each special relationship you enter into, but your true quest is hidden by the concept of use that gets in its way. While your heart seeks for union, your separated self seeks for what it can use to fill the emptiness and ease the terror of its separation. What your heart seeks in love it attains, but your separated self would keep this attainment from you by turning every situation into a means to serve its ends. As long as union is seen as a means only to keep loneliness from you it is not seen for what it truly is.

9.37 You have placed limits on all things in your world, and it is these limits of usefulness that would block your memory's return. A love relationship, while seen as the ultimate achievement in terms of the closeness you can acquire with a brother or sister, is still limited by what you would have it do. Its purpose, simply stated, is to supply a lack. This is your definition of completion. What is missing in you is found in another and together a sense of wholeness is achieved.

9.38 Again this is but a distortion of creation. You remember that wholeness is achieved through union, but not how to accomplish it. You have forgotten that only you can be accomplished. You believe that by putting various parts together a whole can be achieved. You speak of balance, and try to find something for one part of yourself in one place and something for another somewhere else. This one fulfills your need for friendship and that one for intellectual stimulation. In one activity you express your creativity and in another your prayerfulness. Like a diversified investment portfolio, you think this parceling out of different aspects of yourself protects your assets. You fear "putting all your eggs in one basket." You seek to balance the things you label drudgery and the things you label exciting. In doing so you see yourself as "spending your time" wisely, and you call yourself a "well-rounded individual." As long as more than this is not sought, more than this will not be realized.

9.39 Seeking what you have lost in other people, places, and things is but a sign that you do not understand that what you have lost still belongs to you. What you have lost is missing, not gone. What you have lost is hidden to you but has not disappeared nor ceased to be. What you have lost is valuable indeed, and this you know. But you know not what this valuable something is. One thing alone is sure: When you have found it you will know that it has

been found. This is what will bring you happiness and peace, contentment and a sense of belonging. This is what will cause you to feel as if your time here has not been in vain. You know that whatever else your life seems to be for, if on your deathbed you have not found what you have sought, you will not leave in deepest peace but in dark despair and fear. You will have no hope for what lies *beyond* life, for you will have found no hope *in* life.

9.40 Your quest for what is missing thus becomes the race you run against death. You seek it here, you seek it there, and scurry on to the next thing and the next. Each person runs this race alone, with hope only of victory for himself. You realize not that if you were to stop and take your brother's hand, the racecourse would become a valley full of lilies, and you would find yourself on the other side of the finish line, able at last to rest.

9.41 The injunction to rest in peace is for the living, not the dead. But while you run the race you will know it not. Competition that leads to individual achievement has become the idol you would glorify, and you need not look far for evidence that this is so. This idolatry tells you that glory is for the few, and so you take your place in line at the starting gate and make your bid for glory. You run the race as long as you can and, win or lose, your participation in the race was but the required offering to the idol you have made. And at some point, when you can run the race no more, you bow down to those who have achieved glory; they become your idols and you become their subjects, watching what they do with envy and with awe. To these you make your sacrifices and pay your homage. To these you say, "I would be like you." To these you look for a vicarious fulfillment, having given up any hope for real fulfillment. Here you are entertained, shocked, excited, or repelled. Here you watch the gladiators kill one another for your amusement. Here is your notion of use displayed in all its most horrific detail.

9.42 What is this but a demonstration, on a larger scale, of what you live each day? This is all that anything larger than yourself demonstrates to you. All society, groups, teams, and organizations are but a collective portrayal of individual desire. Slaves and masters but use one another and the same laws bind both. Who is master and who is slave in this body you would call your home? What freedom would you have without the demands your body places upon you? The same question can be asked of this world you see as home to the body. Which is master and which is slave when both are held

in bondage? The glory you give idols is but bondage as well. Without your idolatry their glory would be no more, and so they live in fear no less than that of those who idolize them.

9.43 Use, in any form, leads to bondage, and so to perceive a world based on use is to see a world where freedom is impossible. What you think you need your sister for is thus based upon this insane premise that freedom can be purchased and that master is freer than slave. Although this is illusion, it is the illusion that is sought. The purchase price is usefulness. And so each joining is seen as a bartering in which you trade your usefulness for that of another. An employer has use for your skills and you have use for the salary and benefits the employer offers. A spouse is useful in many ways that complement your areas of usefulness. A store provides you with goods that you would use, and you supply a store with capital that its owner will use. If you are gifted with beauty or athletic or artistic talent that can be used, how lucky you think you are. A beautiful face and a fit body can be traded for so much. It is no secret that you live in a world of supply and demand. From the simple concept of individuals needing to be in relationship to survive has grown this complex web of use and abuse.

9.44 Abuse is but improper use—use on a scale that makes the insanity of use obvious to both the user and the usee, and so has its proper place in our discussion here. Look at patterns of abuse, in everything from drugs and alcohol to physical or emotional mistreatment. These, like the larger examples of your daily life gone awry, are but demonstrations of internal desires taken to a greater extreme; only these, rather than being reflected by the group, are reflected within the individual. The individual with issues of abuse would do a service to the world if the people in it were to understand what that abuse is a reflection of. Like any extreme, it merely points out what in less extreme instances is still the same: Use is improper.

9.45 It is its purpose that makes use improper. The Holy Spirit can guide you to use the things that you have made in ways that benefit the whole, and this is the distinction between proper and improper use, or use and abuse. You would use for the benefit of the separated self. When magnified, the destructive force of such abuse is easily apparent. Again you would place the blame outside yourself and label drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gambling, and even food as destructive forces. Like the automobile you would blame for an

accident, user and usee have become confused. All such confusion stems from the initial confusion of the use you think your body would put you to. All such confusion stems from your displacement of yourself and your abdication of your power to the things that you have made.

- 9.46 Let me say again that this is your misguided attempt to follow in creation's way. God gave all power to his creations, and you would choose to do this as well. Your intent is not evil, but guided by the guilt and false remembering of the separated self. As much as you have desired anonymity and autonomy from God, still you blame God for creating a situation in which you think you have been allowed to hurt yourself. How could God allow all this suffering, you ask? Why does He tempt you with such destructive forces? Forces beyond your control? Why did not God create a world benign and unable to harm you?
- 9.47 Such is the world that God did create: A world so lovely and so peaceful that when you see it once again you will cry with joy and forget your sadness in an instant. There will be no long remembering of regrets, no feeling badly for all the years in which you saw this not. There will merely be a glad "Aha!" as what was long forgotten is returned to you. You will but smile at the childish games you played, and have no more regrets than you would have for your childhood. Your innocence will stand out clearly here, and never again will you doubt that the world that God created belongs to you and you to it.
- 9.48 All your vast wanderings will be seen for what they are. All that you desired will be revealed as only two desires, the desire to love and the desire to be loved. Why wait to see that these desires are all that call you to the strange behavior you display? Those who give in to abuse are merely calling louder for the selfsame love that all are in search of. Judgment is not due them, for all here are abusers—starting with their own selves.
- 9.49 Attempts to modify the behavior of abuse are near to useless in a world based on use. The foundation of the world must change, and the stimulus for this change lies within you. All use ends with joining, for use is what you have traded joining for. Instead of recognizing your union, a state in which you are whole and complete because you are joined with all, you have determined to stand separate and use the rest to support your separate stance. See you the difference in these two positions? In what way is your

way better than the way God created for you, a way that is completely free of conflict? Despite your bravest attempts to remain separate, you must use your brothers and sisters in order to even maintain the illusion of your separation. Would it not simply be better to end this charade? To admit that you were not created for separation but for union? To begin to let go of your fear of joining, and as you do let go of use as well?

9.50 How different would the world be if you would but attempt for one day to replace use with union! Before you can begin, however, we must expand on the lessons you are learning by observing your own self. Now we seek to uncover the illusion that you can be used by your body, for your own seeming use by such as this leads to all other ideas of use.

CHAPTER 12

Origin of Separation

- 12.1 The word *love* is part of your problem with this Course. If I were to take the word love and change it to some sophisticated-sounding technical term, and say this is the stuff that binds the world together in unity, it would be easier for you to accept. If I were to say you know not of this sophisticated term and this is why you have believed in your separation rather than in your unity with all things, you would be far more likely to nod your head and say, “I was but ignorant of this, as was everyone else.” If a scientist were to tell you that a benign energy had been found that proved your connection to everything in the universe, and gave it some fancy name, you would say, “A new discovery has been found and I am willing to believe it may be true, especially if others are also going to believe it to be true.”
- 12.2 You feel a little duped at being told love is the answer. You feel a little chastised to be told you know love not. You feel a little deceived to think that love may not be limited to what you have thought it to be. You think it is typical of a spiritual text to tell you love is the answer, as if it has not been said before. This message was preached long ago and still the world remains the same. How could this be the correct answer when this is so? Life is too complicated to be solved by love.
- 12.3 How quickly you would return to cynicism and to believing you have already tried and failed. For all of you believe that you have tried this idea called love, and all of you believe you have evidence that it is not the answer at all. What is your evidence? Your own failure to be happy and the unhappiness of the world you see.
- 12.4 We have said before the only meaning possible for your free will is your choice of what to join with and your choice of what to leave outside of yourself. Yet you must understand that nothing that is not part of God is worthy of joining, nor *can* join with you. What you have sought to join with is the reason for your unhappiness. For you seek to join with what cannot be

joined, and you seek separation from all that could be joined with you and all that would fill your dark and lonely places with the happiness you seek.

12.5 This Course may seem to have come far astray from what you would have it do, for you are looking for something specific from it, though you know it not. You are looking for the rest and quiet joy that only comes from love. You are looking for the safety and security of a loving home, even if it is one only of philosophy. You look for the soft assurance of certainty, not of your mind but of your heart. There is a part of you that thinks, *“If I could just be sure...”* and stops there, for you are not even sure of what it is you seek assurance. And yet you know what tires you most is your inability to be certain of anything. And you are tired indeed.

12.6 God’s will for you is happiness, and of this you can be certain. To align your will with God’s is but to make this certain state your home. This is but a wish come true, and when it is all you wish for it will come to be. And in the granting of this wish will come your rest and the laying down of every heavy burden you have carried.

12.7 Admit now your desire to rest, a desire that could make you weep and make you wish to sleep an endless sleep. If you but understood the energy required to keep the world of your illusion in its place, you would understand the rest that will simply come of giving up your need to do so. Your desire for certainty is part of your resistance to any ideas that seem to be about change. What little that you think you know you would strive to keep, and yet deep down you realize that you know nothing with the certainty you seek.

12.8 Uncertainty of any kind is doubt about your self. This is why this Course aims to establish your identity, for from it all the rest will come. As such, this Course seems to ask for change at every level, and yet from one change alone will all the others follow—and through no effort on your part at all. And even this one change is not a change at all, for it merely seeks to remove all the changes you but think that you have made to God’s creation. This change seeks but to restore you to your Self.

12.9 Your Self rests totally unchanged within the Christ in you. Re-establishing your relationship with your brother is what will show your Self to you. You have one brother who wears but many faces in your perception of who he is, and while you know him not you cannot know your Self. This one brother can unite you with all whom you perceive as others, for all others

are one with him as well as you. This is the one joining that needs to occur to bring about all the rest.

- 12.10 This is the one disjoining that your choice for separation brought about, and it is but a separation from your Self. This is the most difficult point to get across, because in it lies a contradiction, the one contradiction that has created the world you see and the life you live. Although it is impossible for something to have gone wrong in God's creation, something has gone wrong! All you need do is look about you to know that this is so—and, rather than be discouraged by this news, you breathe a sigh of relief because you knew this to be true and yet have felt as if this is the secret that has been kept from you. It is as if you are told endlessly "everything is fine" while you know this is not true. And if "everything" is fine, it must just be you who are all wrong.
- 12.11 All of creation seems to hum along in perfect harmony. The stars light up the sky, the sun and moon do what they were appointed to do, the animals of the sea, ground, and air are but what their Creator bade them be, the mountains stand in all their majesty, rivers flow and desert sands countless in number are blown endlessly about. Everything seems to be what it is and what it has always been, but for, perhaps, the mark of man upon it. Yet the moon remains the moon despite man's landing on it. The earth remains the earth despite your highways, roads and bridges. And somewhere you know not, peace remains peace despite your wars, and happiness remains happiness despite your despair.
- 12.12 Yet what of you? You, too, seem to have remained the same for countless ages. Perhaps you believe that long ago you evolved from a form different than that which you inhabit now; but certainly within the laws of evolution, you have changed as little as the birds of the air or fish of the sea. Yet somehow you know that in all of creation, it is humanity alone that somehow is not what it was meant to be. On a lovely day and in a lovely place you can see that creation's paradise still exists, but nowhere can you find the being God created in His image.
- 12.13 Does it make any sense at all that this would come to be? Or that once upon a time there walked upon the earth those who did reveal God's image, and that when they ceased to be seen here God's image was lost to earth forever? Could even one have come and gone and left this void forever more unfilled? A gaping hole within the universe itself?

12.14 But one was needed to end the separation, and in this one are all the rest joined. For what alone in all creation could be affected by your free will but your own self? But one was needed to, of his own free will, join his will with his Father's for it to be done for all. This is all correction or atonement means, and all that is in need of your acceptance. Join your brother who made this choice for all, and you are reunited with the Christ in you.

12.15 Joined minds cannot think separately and have no hidden thoughts. They are, in fact, not minds in the plural at all, but all-one-mind. What this Course is saying is that at some point that does not exist in time, God's son made the choice for separation. Whether God's son had one form or many at that time matters not, for one form or many, there was still one mind, the mind of God's son joined in unity with that of his Father. Many of you have been taught this mystery of faith. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are One. If you had indeed learned what you were taught, the separation would be no more.

12.16 These words, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, like the word *love*, are but symbols representing ideas that represent what is. That you have made of the Father a singular figure, somehow greater than the Son, and accepted the Holy Spirit as something largely not within your understanding, only exemplifies the nature of the error in need of correction. While words, as symbols, cannot fully explain what cannot be symbolized, a beginning is made that must be completed through the memories of your heart. So we continue, realizing that these words can express the truth only within their ability as symbols, and that farther than where these symbols can take you, the truth lies within your Self.

12.17 You have all seen the way a thought that seems to arise out of nowhere can affect you. An idea, birthed one day, does not seem to have been there the day before. Perhaps it is the idea of taking a trip or having a baby, of returning to school, or quitting a job. This idea, newly birthed, may seem to come and go, or may grow into an obsession, but either way, it leaves not its source. And without the birth of the idea, the results of the idea would not come to be. You may have a thousand ideas one day and ten thousand the next, so many that you could never keep track of them all, and yet they still exist within you and do not splinter off and become something on their own apart from you. Imagine this occurring and you will see how senseless this situation would be. Could a trip happen on its own? To whom would it happen?

- 12.18 You may very well say, however, that an idea seemed to take on a life of its own and compel you to do things you might have never dreamed of doing. People often look back upon their lives and wonder how they got from here to there, and some may see that one idea took root and changed what seemed to be a destiny already written.
- 12.19 As near as words can describe the separation, this is what occurred: An idea of separation entered the mind of God's son. Like any idea of yours, this idea did not leave its Source nor change the essence of its Source in any way. While the idea of taking an adventurous vacation when brought to fruition might reshape the life of the one participating in it, it would not change who that person was, or who his father was, or the nature of the family he was born into. All that would change would be the shape of his life, the things that would happen within it, perhaps the places in which it would occur or the people that would be part of it. In short, the external aspects of the life.
- 12.20 From the idea of separation came the idea of an external aspect of life. Before the idea of the separation, there was no such thing—and there still is no such thing except as an extension of the original idea. Just as we discussed your desire to protect or to control proceeding from the concept of fear, and realized that without fear they would not exist, so too is it with the external aspect of life. Without the original idea of separation, the external aspect of life would not exist. Just as fear is not real although it seems to be, separation is not real although it seems to be.
- 12.21 The Father did not prevent the idea of separation from taking place, and could not any more than you could prevent an idea from occurring to you. Just as an idea of yours, once born, continues to exist, so too, did this idea of separation. But just as your ideas do not take on a life of their own even though they at times seem to, this idea as well had no ability to be more than what it was, *except* for as the son chose to participate in it.
- 12.22 Thus, the son's participation in the idea of separation seemed to bring about a completely reshaped life, a destiny different than that which had already been written. Yet this participation could not but proceed from the original idea and could not proceed in reality but only in the external aspect of life that preceded it. The idea of separation changed nothing in reality, but became a drama acted out upon a stage so real that it seemed to be reality.

- 12.23 Separation is painful only to those who believe it can occur in truth. What would a child's rejection or a parent's death mean to those who did not believe in separation? Do you believe that God believes in separation? He knows it not, and because He knows it not, it does not exist. Because He knows it not, He has not been hurt by it. He knows no rejection and no death. He knows no pain or sorrow. His son remains with him in his eternal home, joined with him as always in eternal completion.
- 12.24 Yet while the son's extension into an external world is quite real, it is all that is truly real within it. The son could not create unlike the Father who created everything by extension of Himself. Neither the Father's extension, nor the Son's, lessened Father or Son in any way. Replace the word Father with the word Creation and see if this does not help to make this concept clear. Could Creation's continuing extension of itself, its continuing creation, make less of it than what it started out to be? What we call Father is but creation's heavenly face, a personification of what cannot truly be personified. You find it hard to believe Creation itself can be benevolent and kind, or just another name for love, but such it is. God is but creation's starting point, the creator of creation and yet Creation itself. The Son and Holy Spirit, like unto Creation, proceeded from the starting point of God. God is the Son and Holy Spirit's starting point as well, the Creator of the Son and Holy Spirit, yet He also *is* the Son and Holy Spirit.
- 12.25 Now, carry this pattern forward, for the pattern of God's extension is the pattern of creation and thus the pattern of the universe. The Son extended himself into creation, and you are that extension and as holy as is he. The idea of separation only seems to have made God's son susceptible to division, and these word symbols are all that seem to separate Father, Son, and Holy Spirit from Creation or from each other.

CHAPTER 14

Special Relationships, Earthly and Human

- 14.1 The purpose of the life you share here with your brothers and your sisters has been to challenge God's creation. Now your united purpose must change to that of remembering who you are *within* God's creation, rather than in the world that you have made. Think but a minute of this, and you will begin to see the enormity of the difference in these two purposes.
- 14.2 Is it not true that you have made an enemy of creation? Do you feel part of it and at one with all within it? If not, you have made yourself creation's enemy. You seek to be different from all the rest, and in this seeking proclaim that one part of creation is better than another part. You thus seek to fragment creation as you have fragmented your own self. And from the vantage point you have established in which you view yourself as the epitome of God's creation, you see the rest of creation as being meant to serve your ends. And since your *end* or goal is that of separation and being different from all the rest, this is the goal you ask creation to bow down to, a goal that never can be achieved any more than can your separation from what you think is unlike you.
- 14.3 You cannot have feelings of superiority and not an enemy make. The same occurs when you would make yourself inferior, and you are always making for yourself a place at one of these extremes. And all this effort and conflict arises simply from your insistence upon being separate. He who is your enemy you cannot help but be at war with. Where there is war there can be no peace. War is not simply the existence of external activity. External activity is but the effect of a cause that remains internal, and all war is but war upon yourself.
- 14.4 Do you not see how your notion of heaven being an attainment you can reach only after death fits your goal of separation? If your belief in heaven

were true, your challenge to creation would be real and only your death would prove the victor. For if after death your creator God provided you with a paradise not of this world, a separate place to honor your specialness and separation from all else that He created, then would you be vindicated and the purpose of your war made holy. You would be proven right and creation wrong.

- 14.5 Would this make sense? What creator would create a world in which the highest achievement of the life upon it would be to leave it in order to gain life? What creator would create a world not meant to exist in harmony? Harmony is life. What creator would create a temporary life and hold eternal life as a reward for death?
- 14.6 If you can see the senselessness of a creator and a creation such as this and still believe in it, then you must believe in a god who is insane. You—who pride yourself on reason and practicality—think if a creation such as this could contain any reason whatsoever. Why then do you believe in it?
- 14.7 You who have made a god of reason and of intellect, think carefully now of what your reason and your intellect have made for you. How terrible would it really be to realize that although you have tried mightily, a creation such as this cannot be made to make any sense at all? Those who have turned their backs on God and refused to believe in such nonsense have simply refused to make reason try to fit the unfitable without seeing that an alternative exists.
- 14.8 You are not asked to believe the unbelievable, or to disregard all that reason would say to you. Only the opposite is true. You are asked rather to give up the laws of chaos for the laws of reason. The laws of illusion for the laws of truth.
- 14.9 Think you not that reason opposes love, for love gives reason its foundation. The foundation of your insane world is fear. The foundation of Heaven, your true home, is love. The same world based upon these different foundations could not help but look quite different.
- 14.10 Your ideas of love, however, fit your goal of separation as neatly and conveniently as does your idea of heaven. For what you require of love is that it set you apart and make you special. Much more is demanded of those you love than of any of your other brothers and sisters. The *more* that is required is all to feed your idea of your own specialness. You look for constant verifi-

cation that this one you love loves you in return, and if this attention is not provided you feel you have cause for claiming wounds that cannot be healed and reparations that cannot be paid. You thus hold the one you love the most in the greatest bondage, and call that bondage a relationship.

14.11 This can be most clearly seen in relationships that were once “everything” to you and have since failed you. This can be a memory of any relationship, and each of you has one. It can be of parent and child, of best friends, of a marriage or a partnership, or even that of a mentor or student. Whatever the relationship’s configuration, it was one that truly brought you joy. Within it you were happy and felt as if you needed nothing more than this. It was a relationship so intense that at its peak you would have begun to see its continuation without change as the major goal of your life. Without it, life would not be worth living, and so it was necessary to retain it at all cost.

14.12 This is a classic example that reveals much to you about yourself and the world you have made if you are but willing to look at it with eyes that truly see. It is the magnifying glass that will allow you to see your world in all its mad confusion. For what caused you such great joy seemed to come at the cost of pain and to leave you more alone and comfortless than before. How could this be said of love? And how could it have failed you so? And how, if it were real—as it surely felt as if it was—could it prove anything but that love is no answer, and surely not for you?

14.13 We must begin with what is obvious, a simple point that some of you have denied and that some of you could not. What makes this relationship stand out in your mind and feel so painful in your memory of it is that it was quite real in a way that is different from your relationships before or since. No other relationship affected you in such a way. Never were you more sure of a relationship’s value to you. Anything that could make you feel so joyous, so safe and warm and loved, could not help but hold a value quite beyond compare. In this you were correct. It was no illusion that caused you to feel this way. This was not the love that passes for love in this world, but something else entirely. For at least one brief moment, this was true love, for nothing but love can be the cause of joy, nor offer a haven of safety in an insane world.

14.14 It is your response to love that concerns us now, for the return of love is coming and you do not want to make the same response again.

- 14.15 Everything that you consider valuable you want to keep. This makes perfect sense to you because the foundation of your world is fear. Were the foundation of your world love, everything that you consider valuable you could not wait to share. Perhaps you think the desire to keep things for yourself stems from something other than fear. You might call this desire pride or security, or even accept that it is vanity, before you would call it fear. But fear is what it is.
- 14.16 Only fear breeds the feelings of lack that stand with it, the cornerstone of the foundation of your separate world. You do not realize that you have created a universe for yourself, a universe that you are required to maintain, and that without your effort would dissolve. This universe is yourself and you are everything in it. Do you not believe that were you to perish something quite unique would be lost to the world? You are alone and irreplaceable: one of a kind. Within you lie all that you would hope to contribute and create. Within the actions and interactions of your lifetime lie all the effects you would hope to have on what remains here. Without you, the people and the events that you would influence, would behave quite differently and bring about different results than are somehow meant to occur. Although you know not your purpose, at least a part of you believes that this is true, for there must be some reason for your existence—although you cannot quite imagine what that reason might be. You must be meant to be because you are, and you cannot fathom that you would exist at all if there were not a reason for you to do so.
- 14.17 Is this not a description of a universe? What is a universe but itself and everything in it? Nothing would seem to exist outside of it, and so it must be unique. Everything that would happen within the universe would depend upon it.
- 14.18 You think that you are quite aware of your small space within the universe, and that it is foolishness to say that you think otherwise. Yet, since only what you know is part of your universe, do you not see that it depends on you, and if it depends on you that it is you? Only what you are aware of exists in the universe that is you. Only what happens to you affects your universe. Your universe is completely different than anyone else's and completely self-contained. The laws of your universe are for the maintenance of your body, because without it you would not exist. And when you

cease to exist, so does your universe. The lights will be turned out upon it and it will be no more.

14.19 What a big job you have assigned yourself! It is no small wonder that you live in fear when so much is dependent upon you. And no wonder that when you find a respite, a place of rest and beauty and of love, you want to claim it for your own lest it get away! It too must be maintained within your universe, or you will know it not and its benefits will escape and be lost to you. You wish that you could join with it and make it one with you, but since you know not that this can be done or how to do it, you try to accomplish the “next best thing” and keep it close to you, a twin universe still existing separately, but close enough that you can gaze upon it and feel the benefit of its warmth because of its proximity. More than this you cannot do, but still you try. With chains you would bind this separate universe to your own, for as long as it maintains its autonomy, which it must, even its nearness is not enough. And so what you attempt next is an exchange of sorts. Like two countries, one rich in oil, another in grain, you set up dependencies that will keep you linked. Some of you do this quite obviously, and over years and years create a web of intricate design, a snare or trap that seems impossible to dismantle because of its interconnections. Others experience this plan of entrapment solely in their mind as they plot and plan for what they never have the opportunity to put into place. Still others are more coy in their design, and dress it up to look like sacrifice and gifts given, but all with the same purpose in mind. What none realize is that fear has replaced love.

14.20 Some may realize that they are afraid of losing love, and even speak of it and try to alleviate the fear with official commitments, pledges and promises made. Others may deny their fear, and say they trust in what they have and the faithfulness of the one they love. Fewer than these are those who do not need to voice their faith and trust, for their feelings remain strong despite their fear. For even those who fear no deception must remain afraid of the great deceiver. Whether they call it life or death, it is still the same. It is the chance that cannot be foreseen but is always there: death may take their loved one prematurely, and if not prematurely certainly eventually.

14.21 And all of these, those who would admit to fear, and those who would not, would still believe that love exists despite fear’s claim upon it, and think that they are lucky to have found a love to shield them for a little while from

all the other things they fear. And yet the greatest fear of all is that of loss of love. You who have given everything to be alone and separate fear most of all that which you have given everything to attain. For what is loss of love but confirmation of your separate state? What is loss of love but being left alone?

14.22 Loss of love comes from only one source. Call it fear or call it separation but it is still the same. For in your separated state you ask that love make you special to someone else, and that one special to you. You think this is what love is for, and so you make of it something it is not and only call it love.

14.23 Heaven can only be made to seem to fit your goal of separation, and the same is true of love. You cannot change what love is or what heaven is. All that seems to make it change is the function or purpose you would give it. It is but you who gave heaven the purpose of giving you something to look forward to, a reward for a life lived according to your own rules, a reward to be gained by some and not by others, a pinnacle of achievement that will prove your rightness and your success after you are gone. Love you give the same purpose, but bid it do the job of rewarding you here and now. It, like heaven, is your proof that you are good and worthy, special and to be rewarded for your specialness.

14.24 You have thus placed love and heaven together in a parody of creation's meaning of each. Yes, they go together, and this you know; but the purpose of neither is what you have ascribed it to be. The purpose you give each thing within your world is what makes it what it is to you. And as each purpose you have ascribed to anything proceeds from the foundation of fear that built your world, each purpose is as senseless and as reversed from the truth as is the next.

14.25 This is why this Course cannot just talk of love and bring you any closer to it than you are. While you realize not the purpose of anything in truth, you cannot know love or your own Self.

14.26 While your purpose remains to make yourself and others special, you will not put an end to the separation. And you cannot just let go of your own specialness. For as long as you hold on to the specialness of others you hold on to your own. There is no reason to hold on to another's specialness unless you hold onto your own. And what you give to others you keep for yourself. Give another specialness, and you keep it for yourself as well as see it in them instead of seeing their glory. Specialness keeps them separate,

and therefore susceptible to loss. How can you lose what is one with you? You cannot. You can only lose that which is separate. And specialness does make separate.

14.27 This is the problem compounded in your “special” love relationships of having experienced real specialness, which is not specialness at all but glory. Your joining caused this, for each joining brings you in touch with your brother. Each joining returns you to your holy relationship with your brother, which is the only one you have in truth. Only this relationship is real, and in it are included all others. One does not discard or replace the other. What is real is all-inclusive. What is unreal is nothing.

14.28 You who do not know how to trade your separated state for that of union have still done so when you have loved freely and without fear. In this state your memory returns to you of who you are, and you are innocent and joyous and one with love itself. That this memory does not last, and these feelings seem unsustainable, is the result only of that which does discard and replace. As we have said before, there are but two emotions. One is love, the other fear. Fear, through your own choice, replaces and discards love. Fear is always strongest when you value something that you feel may be threatened. Love threatens most your specialness. Before your conscious mind has any awareness of what is happening, your memory of love, of innocence and of joy, threatens your specialness, your ego, your separated self who quickly rushes in with love’s replacement. Nothing but fear could take the memory of love from you, or replace so quickly the glory that is your nature with the specialness that is not.

14.29 You think love is what you value most, and so resist any notion that what you view as love is not what you think it is. But as long as you equate love with the special ones on whom you choose to bestow it, you will know love not. What you will know is specialness, raised to the level of the Almighty and set upon His throne in a crown of jewels.

14.30 In your world love has no meaning unless it is attached to a particular thing. And as soon as love is attached to a particular, love’s opposite is brought into existence. While you refuse to look upon this simple fact, you have no hope of change, nor does your world. You who think, “*What harm can come of loving this one above all others?*” think again. For you are choosing not to love but to make special. And you are choosing but to make

love's opposite real to you and those you claim to love, as well as those you claim not to love.

14.31 Let us ask instead how loving all as one can bring harm? If you love all the same, what loss is there to anyone, including the one you would choose to make special? All that is lost is specialness. This is the view of life you cannot imagine bringing about, or bringing joy in its coming. But this is what you must begin to imagine if you desire to accept love's coming instead of to reject it once again. For your refusal to give up specialness is your refusal of the Christ in you and a refusal of love itself.

CHAPTER 18

The Mind Engaged

- 18.1 Many of you believe God's creation included the fall from paradise as described in the biblical story of Adam and Eve and in the creation stories of many cultures and religions. When you accept this, even in non-literal terms, as the story of the separation, you accept separation itself. This story is, rather than a story of an actual event, a story that describes the problem. It is but the story of perception's birth. And your perception of the fall makes of the fall a curse. This interpretation would be inconsistent, however, with a benevolent God and a benevolent universe. This interpretation accepts that separation can occur. It cannot. Belief in the fall is belief in the impossible.
- 18.2 Imagine that you are part of a chain of bodies holding hands and encircling the globe. I am among those whose hand you hold. All are linked, even if each one is not holding the hand of every other one. If one link in the chain were to be removed, the chain would no longer form a circle but would *fall*, each end suspended in space. The chain would now be a line seeming to go from here to there, instead of enclosing and encompassing everything. The separation assumes that you can break the chain. This would be as impossible as it would be for me to let go of your hand.
- 18.3 Now imagine further that this chain is keeping the Earth in its orbit. It is obvious that the Earth falling out of orbit would cause dire consequences of a universal nature. It is simply less obvious that you are part of what has established and keeps a universal order, part of a whole that would be a completely different whole without your presence, just as the universe would be a completely different universe without the presence of the Earth.
- 18.4 Yet this is, in effect, what you think you have done. You think that you have changed the nature of the universe and made it possible for life to exist separately and alone with no relationship, no connection, no unity with the whole. This you have not done. You have not *fallen* from unity. You have not *fallen* from God.

- 18.5 This chain I have described helps you to imagine the place I hold for you, as you held mine when I entered the world in physical form. Even if it is just an illustration, it illustrates that none of us leave wholeness or each other.
- 18.6 While you have been taught that you are not your body, it is impossible for you to deny the body here. Yet you can change the function you have ascribed to it, and so its way of functioning. If you do not see it as the result of a fall, as a curse, as a punishment from God, or as your home, a dwelling place that keeps you separate, then you can begin to see it as what it is, a learning device given you by a loving creator. Before the idea of separation, there was no need for learning. But a loving creator creates not that which can have a need go unfulfilled. As soon as the need for learning arose, the perfect means to fulfill that need was established. You have simply failed to see it as such.
- 18.7 This is the error birthed by perception, before which there was no possibility of misinterpretation, because there was no external world to be perceived. A learning device, when not perceived as such, holds not much hope of fulfilling the function it was created to fulfill. But when perception changes and a thing is seen as what it is, then it cannot fail to accomplish what it was created to accomplish.
- 18.8 An external world is but a projection that cannot take you away from the internal world where you exist in wholeness, a link in the chain of creation. Imagine again this chain and your Self among those who comprise it, and imagine the life that you experience now taking place much like that you would see projected on a movie screen. You have not left your place as you view this movie and experience its sights and sounds, joys and sorrows. And yet you are also part of the projection, and this is where your awareness now abides, seemingly trapped upon the screen, viewing everything from the two eyes of the one projected there. Again, this is but what this Course's exercises have attempted to help you see: a world you can observe and learn in and from, for as long as you would choose to learn what the idea of separation would teach you. Making a new choice, a choice to learn from unity, is what this Course prepares you for.
- 18.9 Learning from unity requires an integrated mind and heart, or wholeheartedness. A half-hearted approach to this learning will not work, nor will the attention of a split mind. It cannot be emphasized strongly enough

that you learn what you choose to learn. For proof of this all you need do is look at the world that was created from your wish to learn what the idea of separation would teach you. When you resided in unity, you could not imagine what this world would be like any more than you can now imagine what a united world will be like. You did not understand, from unity's standpoint, what it was that you were asking for, or the extent of involvement this learning would require. In order to learn what the idea of separation would teach you, you needed to believe that you existed in a separated state. Thus, "forgetting" that you actually reside in unity was a requirement of this condition you wished to experience. This condition was thus made available.

18.10 While this explanation makes perfect sense, you find it quite unbelievable on the basis of your perception of yourself and the limited range of power you believe your decision making to have. The only way to make the unbelievable believable is to alter what you experience. The state in which you now exist was not only unbelievable but also inconceivable to you in your natural state. Experience was required in order to alter your belief system and is required now as well.

18.11 The experience of unity will alter your belief system and that of others, for what you learn in unity is shared. Because you are currently learning from separation, however, each must experience unity individually before their belief system can be changed, even when what is learned is shared at another level.

18.12 Perception of levels is a function of time, and thus it seems that great amounts of time are needed before change of a lasting nature can occur. This is why miracles save time, for they integrate all levels, temporarily collapsing time. Time is actually a measurement of learning, or the "time" it takes for learning to pass from one level to another through experience, for here learning is experienced in time.

18.13 In order for your experience base to change from that of learning in separation to that of learning in unity, learning from what unity can teach you must be birthed as an idea. To hear or learn of another's idea is not to give birth to it. You thus must each experience the birth of the idea of learning from unity in order for it to come from within and leave not its source. An idea of mine can only become an idea of yours through your

relationship with it. You need only to experience this idea in your own way, from the desire to know from which all ideas are born, in order to give it life.

- 18.14 Once an idea is born, it exists in relationship to its creator. All that remains now is a choice of participation. In unity, all that you desired was participated in fully by a mind and heart combined in wholeheartedness. You knew your Self to be the creator, and loved all that you created. You did not desire and fear something at the same time, and your desires did not change from moment to moment. What you desired you experienced fully with your whole being, making it one with you. That you keep yourself from desiring anything fully here is what makes this existence so chaotic and erratic. A mind and heart in conflict is what keeps you from desiring anything fully, and thus from creating.
- 18.15 Thus the integration of mind and heart must be our goal in order for you to create the state in which unity can be experienced. Obviously, this is up to you. As you chose to create a state of separation, you must choose to create a state of unity.
- 18.16 It can come as no surprise to you that your mind has ruled your heart. What this Course has thus far attempted to do is to briefly change your orientation from mind to heart. This is a first step in what will seem now like an attempt to balance two separate things, but is really an attempt to unite what you have only perceived as separate. If the heart is the center of your Self, where then is the mind? The center is but the Source in which all exist as one mind. To say this to you before we loosened some of your perceptions about the supremacy of the mind, however, would have been folly. The one mind is not as you have perceived *your* mind. The one mind is but a mind in which love rules, and mind and heart are one. We will proceed by calling this wholeheartedness rather than mind or heart.
- 18.17 A wandering mind is seen as quite the norm, and thoughts that dart about in a chaotic fashion are as acceptable and seemingly as inevitable to you as breathing. A split mind is seen as not much less normal although it is recognized that a split mind makes decision making difficult. You were already told that the only exercise for your mind that would be included in this Course of Love is that you dedicate all thought to union. This now must be seen in two dimensions rather than one. In addition to dedicating

thought to unity with the whole, you must dedicate yourself to unifying thought itself.

18.18 You do not realize what a wholehearted choice in regards to experiencing separation did. Wholeheartedness is but a full expression of your power. A full expression of your power is creation. What has been created cannot be uncreated. What has been created can, however, be transformed. Transformation occurs in time. Thus transformation and miracles need to work hand-in-hand.

18.19 The transformation from a state of separation to a state of unity is a miracle indeed, for this transformation requires recognition of a state that you cannot recognize in separation. While this is a paradox, it is not impossible for the simple reason that you never left the state of unity that you do not recognize. Your lack of recognition can thus be overcome by remembering the truth of what you are.

18.20 Unifying thought is more than a matter of focus or single-mindedness, although these are both steps in the right direction. Unifying thought is also a matter of integrating the thought or language of your heart with that which you more naturally perceive as thought, the words and images that “go through” your mind.

18.21 We talked briefly here of emotions, doing so only to differentiate your feelings of love from your feelings of lack of love or fear. What we have as yet talked even less of, however, is what emotion covers up, and the stillness that lies beneath. I have referred to the true language of the heart as communion, or union of the highest level, and of remembrance of who you are being the means by which communion can return to you. So what we speak of now is integrating remembrance and thought.

18.22 While we spoke of what you think of as emotion being reactions of the body to stimulus, we did not speak of this stimulus itself. Before we do so, we must clarify further the function of the body as a learning device. Your body seems to experience both pleasure and pain, yet as a learning device, it is neutral. It does not experience, but only conveys that which can be experienced to you. You then relay a reaction back to it. This circular relationship between you and the body is the perfect relationship for the purpose of learning, since both the experience and the reaction to the experience can then be learned from, and because the learner can choose both. It is not,

however, the perfect relationship when you have misperceived the body as your home rather than as a learning device. Because you have misperceived the body as your home, there is, in a sense, no “you” to which the body can send its signals. And so the body seems to be in charge and to be both the experiencer and the interpreter of experience. In addition, this misperception has allowed the body’s function to go unrecognized. You thus have not recognized the truth of what causes pain nor that you can reject the experience of it. The same is true of pleasure.

18.23 Determination of pleasure and pain is made with the judgment of the separated self who not only believes it is the body, but that it is at the body’s mercy. Yet the body has no mercy to offer the separated self. It is only a learning device. But you have not recognized this and have failed to learn that all you experience as painful is the result of feelings of lack of love, and that all you have experienced as pleasurable are feelings of love. This would seem to contradict what was said earlier about the pain experienced from love and your willingness to cling to it despite the pain you are experiencing. Yet the pain comes not from your feelings of love, but feelings of love lost.

18.24 Having no one to receive and reject feelings of pain and replace them with feelings of love causes all your distress. Think not that you react to pain of any kind with the love from your real Self that would dispel it. The Self you have taken out of the learning loop is the Self of love.

CHAPTER 19

Oneness and Duality

19.1 There was no evil intent in the creation of the body as a learning device, and as a learning device it was perfectly created. The problem lies in what you have, in your forgetfulness, made of the body. Only from thinking of the body as yourself did ideas of glorifying the body arise. To glorify a learning device makes no sense. And yet in creating the perfect device from which you could experience separation, all such problems were anticipated and corrective devices created alongside them. You could not fully experience separation without a sense of self as separate, and you could not fully experience anything without your free will. A separate self with a free will operating in an external world, as well as a spirit self desiring the experience of separation, would naturally lead to a situation where the whole range of experiences available to a separate being would exist.

19.2 The complex set of criteria needed to create a world of separation was, in the instant of creation, anticipated and provided in a form consistent with creation's laws. While this world was created with love, as all of creation was, it was also created to provide the desired experience. Thus was fear born, for a separate self is a fearful self by its nature. How could it not be?

19.3 You who have grown weary of this experience rejoice, for you can choose a new experience. Your free will has not been taken from you, nor has the power of creation abandoned you. Within creation's own laws does the solution rest.

19.4 The solution lies in transformation, and that is why you are still needed here. Beneath the world of illusion that you have made to glorify the separated self lies the world that was created for your learning, and that so exists in truth. It is not the only world by any means, but it is still heaven because heaven must be where you are. A wholehearted choice to abandon all ideas of glorifying the separated self and to let the world be what it is will begin the transformation. This requires the first unification, the

unification of mind and heart, after which unification with God is naturally returned to your awareness, for this unification returns you to the Christ in you and the one mind united with God which you have never left. Creation's power then returns to you to help all the separated ones remember union.

19.5 Although this all may sound like science fiction to you, realize that you accept much in all areas of your life, from that of religion to science itself, that sounds like fiction. You are not, however, expected to believe all I have told you on faith alone. Experience is needed to change your beliefs and to place your faith securely in them. The first step in leading you to experience of another kind is your willingness to accept that you are here to learn, and that your body can provide the means.

19.6 Your saving grace is that even a separated self yearns for union and knowledge of its Creator. Thus along with this yearning was a means provided for its fulfillment, and with this fulfillment lies the end of the separation.

19.7 I was part of this means, but only part. Fulfillment can be provided by each and every one of your brothers and sisters, for in each is the Christ available to be seen and experienced as it was from me. It is in your holy relationships that union can be found and experienced, and thus from these that you fuel your desire for union with all and for knowledge of your Creator. This yearning must but be a pure yearning—untainted by fear and judgment and approached with wholeheartedness—for it to be fulfilled. It is not the means that are lacking but the wholehearted desire.

19.8 Let me speak briefly of the role I played so that you can better understand the role that waits for you. I came in the fulfillment of scripture. All this really means is that a certain community had been led to expect my arrival. They awaited me with expectation and so found in me what they hoped to find. What my brothers and sisters saw in me allowed me to be who I was, even while in human form. I tell you truly if you were to see any of your brothers and sisters today as those who awaited my birth saw me, they too would remember who they are. This is the role I ask you to accept so that you can provide for others what was provided for me.

19.9 Each one of your brothers and sisters is as holy as I and as beloved to God. Can you not witness to their belovedness as those long ago witnessed to mine? You have not been able to do this thus far because you have desired

specialness for yourself and a few others rather than belovedness for all. But now, perhaps, you are ready.

19.10 The separated self cannot relearn unity except through union. Here, union is achieved in relationship. To see your brothers and sisters as those of long ago saw me is the way to achieve relationship of the highest order and relearn communion, the language of the heart. This is why you have been asked to experience the spirit of your brothers and sisters rather than simply relating to their bodies as you always have. I was not seen as a body by those who believed in me, although I had a body to help me learn just as you do.

19.11 My testimony witnessed to your arrival just as the scriptures witnessed to mine. Even while some of my words were distorted or misinterpreted, you can still revisit them and see that this is so. I did not proclaim myself to be above or different from the rest, but called each of you brother and sister and reminded you of our Father's love and of our union with Him.

19.12 Your belief in your brothers and sisters will not be total, however, without the reunion of mind and heart that produces the state of wholeheartedness. This state was not achieved at all times by all those who believed in me—and perfection is not asked of you. As can be clearly seen from the records left to you, the apostles did not, in fact, achieve this state during my lifetime, for they looked at me as different and looked to me for power. Only after my resurrection did the Holy Spirit come upon them and reveal their own power to them by uniting mind and heart with belief. They were then reunited with me as they were united with the Christ. You thus must learn to see yourself as you see your brothers and sisters, and place your belief not in differences but in sameness.

19.13 In order to do this there is still one more layer to the unification of thought, and this brings up another reason for our reliance on the heart. Thought, as you know it, is an aspect of duality. It cannot be otherwise in your separated state. You must think in terms of "I" and "them," "death and life," "good and evil." This *is* thought. Thought occurs in words, and words separate. It is only in combining mind and heart with a focus on letting the heart lead that love can be combined with thought in such a way as to actually transcend thought as you know it. This transcendence is a function of wholeheartedness.

19.14 This is, in essence, why the greatest thinkers have not been able to decipher the riddle, the mystery, of the divine, and why they conclude that God is

unknowable. God *is* knowable from within the mystery of non-duality itself. It would be impossible for you to be a being that can yearn for knowledge of your Creator without this knowledge being available. In creation, all needs are fulfilled the instant they become needs, which is why there are no needs. If everything you need has been provided, having needs makes no sense.

19.15 Philosophy applies thought to mystery and that is why philosophy becomes such a muddle of words. It is difficult for you to accept that what you most need to know cannot be achieved through the same methods you have used in order to know about other things. And, increasingly, you are willing to exchange experience for second-hand knowledge and to believe you can come to know through the experiences of others. Yet, in the case of coming to know what lies before you now—coming to know your own Self—it is obvious that another’s experience will not bring this knowledge to you, not even my experience. If this were so, all of those who read of my life and words would have learned what I learned from my experience. While many have learned much of others, this type of learning is but a starting point, a gateway to experience.

19.16 To think without thought or know without words are ideas quite foreign to you, and truly, while you remain here, even experiences beyond thoughts and words you will apply word and thought to. Yet love has often brought you close to a “thought-less” and “word-less” state of being, and it can do so again. As you join with your own Self in unity, all that in love you have created and received returns to its home in you, and leaves you in a state of love in which the wordless and formless is very near.

19.17 Your only concept of oneness is of a single form, a single entity. There is either one chair or two. One table or four. Your emphasis has been on quantity, and one is seen as less than any other number. Yet, on the other hand, when only one of anything exists it is highly prized. God is thus “God” due, at least in part, to what you view as His singularity. You view those who worship many gods as primitive, although those who believe in a god synonymous with creation are closer to a true picture of God than those who view God as a solitary figure. Still, oneness and unity go together, the unity of creation being part of the oneness of God, and the oneness of God part of the unity of creation. A mind trained by separation can have no concept of this, as all concepts are born from the mind’s separate thoughts. Yet this

same mind could still conceive of a creator. A mind that can conceive of a creator combined with a heart that yearns for knowledge of, and union with, that creator, can bypass the need for the separate thoughts of the separated one's thought system. But you must be trained to do this. Thus your training begins. And begins with prayer.

19.18 As was said in the beginning, praying is asking. You but asked for your separated state and it was made so. Now you need to but ask for unity to return for it to be so. The condition or state of being from which you ask is what is in need of adjustment and thus of training before you can be aware of the answer you will receive. It is clear you can ask for what you know not. This is not the problem. The problem is in who is doing the asking. The separated self, while capable of asking, is hardly capable of believing in or accepting the response. It is this non-belief in a response that makes it capable of asking. Now that you are beginning to shed the concept of the separate self and to believe in the possibility of response, you will find yourself more afraid to ask. All your asking or prayer awaits is but your belief in the love without fear that has always responded.

19.19 Out of the deepest, darkest chaos of your mind comes the possibility of light. It is a bit like traveling backward, or the review of life that some experience after death. In order to remember unity you must, in a sense, travel back to it, undoing as you go all you have learned since last you knew it, so all that remains is love. This undoing, or atonement, has begun—and once begun is unstoppable and thus already inevitably accomplished.

19.20 My brothers and sisters in Christ, do not become impatient now. We are on the home stretch and all you long for is nearer than ever before. To talk of going "back" will undoubtedly make you feel impatient, but this is not a going back that will in any way resemble the "going back" that you have tried to do before. While it is, in a sense, a request to review your life, it is the last such review that will be required before letting the past go completely. All your previous attempts to go back have been like attempts to pay a debt that will never go away. This going back will leave you debt free and thus free in truth.

19.21 This going back is the journey without distance. You need not go in search of it, and in truth, cannot, for the past does not abide in you. What you need rather do is strive for a place of stillness from which what needs

review can arise as if it were a reflection arising from a deep pool. Here what is in need of healing will but briefly come to the surface and leave the hidden depths where light could not reach it and healing could not come. What comes forth for healing needs but a nod of love from your heart, a passing glance of compassion, the merest moment of reflection, before it will dissipate and show a new reflection.

19.22 This going back is, in reality, more in the way of reflection than review, although if you were to think of this as a re-viewing of your self, you would be quite accurate. It is like unto the final judgment as it has been described, a sorting of the real from the unreal, of truth from illusion. Despite the similarity between what this will call forth and the description of the final judgment, judgment is not the means or end of this reckoning.

19.23 The loftiest aim of which you are currently capable is that of changing your perception. Although our ultimate goal is to move beyond perception to knowledge, a first step in doing this is changing your means of perception to that of right-mindedness. Your willingness to accept me as your teacher will help you to accept my sight as your own and thus to be right-minded. The way you have perceived of yourself and your world until now has not been right-minded, and you are beginning to realize this. Thus it is now appropriate for the realization to come to you that your mind, and your perception, can be changed. This is necessary before you can look back in a new way and not simply cover the same ground you have covered a million times, seeing causes for recriminations, blame, and guilt. Looking back in judgment is not what is required here. Only the opposite will advance our aim of uniting mind and heart.

19.24 The Holy Spirit exists in your right mind, and is the bridge to exchanging perception for knowledge. Knowledge is light, and the only light in which you can truly see. You will not truly desire to unite your mind and heart in wholeheartedness until you see clearly. One purpose of the distinctions you have made between mind and heart are their ability to keep one part of yourself blameless. Whatever happens, your divided notion of yourself allows you to both protect and conceal. Fault always lies elsewhere. The guiltless part of you is always free to redeem the guilt-filled self. This idea of self-redemption has long been a culprit that has kept union, even with your own Self, undesirable to you. The concept that in oneness there is no need

for blame or guilt or even for redemption is inconceivable to the separate mind. But not to the heart.

CHAPTER 20

The Embrace

- 20.1 Your longing now has reached a fever pitch, a burning in your heart quite different from that which you have felt before. Your heart may even feel as if it is stretching outward, straining heavenward, near to bursting with its desire for union, a desire you do not understand but can surely feel.
- 20.2 This is a call to move now into my embrace and let yourself be comforted. Let the tears fall and the weight of your shoulders rest upon mine. Let me cradle your head against my breast as I stroke your hair and assure you that it will be all right. Realize that this is the whole world, the universe, the all of all in whose embrace you literally exist. Feel the gentleness and the love. Drink in the safety and the rest. Close your eyes and begin to see with an imagination that is beyond thought and words.
- 20.3 You are no longer the object viewing the subjects of the kingdom. You are the heart of the kingdom. The kingdom's beauty revealed. The beloved child suckled at the breast of the queen mother earth, one child of one mother, nameless and beyond naming. No "I" resides here. You have given up the vision of your eyes and the "I" of your ego. You are loosed of bounds, no longer a thing of beauty, but beauty itself.
- 20.4 "Thingness" is over, and your identity no longer stands in form but flows from life itself. Your beauty is the gathering of the atoms, the order in chaos, the silence in solitude, the grace of the cosmos. Our heart is the light of the world.
- 20.5 We are one heart.
- 20.6 We are one mind. One creative force gathering the atoms, establishing the order, blessing the silence, gracing the cosmos, manifesting the light of the heart. Here we live as one body, experiencing communion, the soul's delight, rather than otherness. It is a seamless world, a tapestry where each thread is vibrant and strong. A canticle where each tone is pure and indivisible.

- 20.7 We have returned to the embrace. And now your arms cradle me as well, for an embrace, although it may begin with one reaching out to another, concludes with mutuality, shared touch, a melding of one into another. The embrace makes one of two.
- 20.8 And now we begin to see with the eyes of our heart. We are no longer looking *out* but looking *in*. All landscapes and horizons form within the embrace. All beauty resides there. All light is fused and infused within the embrace. Within the embrace our sight clears and what we see is known rather than understood.
- 20.9 Here, rest comes to weariness and gently lays it aside. Time has ended and there is nothing you must do. Being replaces identity and you say, *I am*. *I am*, and there is nothing outside of me. Nothing outside of the embrace.
- 20.10 From here your life becomes imaginal, a dream that requires you not to leave your home, your place of safety and of rest. You are cradled gently while your spirit soars, dreaming happy dreams at last. With love surrounding you in arms that hold you close, you feel the heartbeat of the world just beneath your resting head. It thunders in your ears and moves through you until there is no distinction. We are the heartbeat of the world.
- 20.11 This is creation. This is God. This is our home.
- 20.12 We exist in the embrace of love like the layers of light that form a rainbow, indivisible and curved inward upon each other. Love grows from within as a child grows within its mother's womb. Inward, inward, into the embrace, the source of all beginnings, the kernel and the wholeness of all life. The whole exists untroubled by what it will be. It is.
- 20.13 The time of parables has ended. A new time of no time awaits. Nothing is like unto anything else. Likeness, like thingness, has been overcome with oneness. Oneness prevails. The reign of Christ is at hand.
- 20.14 I am alive and you do believe this or you would not be here. Yet you think not of me living and imagine it not. Christ reigns in the kingdom in which I live just as Christ reigned within me on earth. In the cave on this earth where my dead body was laid, the Christ in me returned me to the embrace. The singular heartbeat of the man Jesus no longer sounded. My heartbeat was the heartbeat of the world.
- 20.15 Imagine a body in a cave, a cave in the earth, the earth in the planet, the planet in the universe. Each cradles the other. None are passive. None are

dead. All share the heartbeat of the world and are at rest within each other, within each other's embrace and the embrace of God's love, God's creation, God's heartbeat. God's heartbeat is the Source of the world, the Soul of the world, the Sound of the world in harmony, existence with no beginning and no end. One embrace. All in all. None lesser and none greater for all is all. One is one.

- 20.16 There is no longer cause for alienation, nor for the feeling of abandonment so many of you have felt. You are now within the embrace where all such hurts are healed.
- 20.17 The world does not exist apart from you, and so you must realize your compassionate connection. The world is not a collection of cement buildings and paved streets nor of cold, heartless people who would as soon do you harm as good. It is but the place of your interaction with all that lives within you, sharing the one heartbeat. The heartbeat of the world does not exist apart from God. The heartbeat of the world is thus alive and part of you. This heart connection is what we seek to return you to. This realization that the world is not a *thing*, as you are not a *thing*. Your identity is shared and one in Christ. A shared identity is a quality of oneness. A shared identity is one identity. When you identify with Christ you identify with the one identity. When you realize the oneness of your identity you will be one with Christ. Christ is synonymous with oneness.
- 20.18 Who could be left out of the embrace? And who from within the embrace could be separate and alone?
- 20.19 Have you never felt as if you would wrap your arms around the world and bring it comfort if you could? This you can do. Not with physical arms, but with the arms of love. Have you never cried for the state of the world as you would for one small child in need of love? Has the world then not lost its thingness? And has it not as well lost its personalness? Are your tears not shed for what lives and breathes and exists along with you? And is the you who shed such tears a personal being? A thing? A mass of flesh and bone? Or are you, like the world you cry for, devoid of thingness and a personal self? And when you have leapt for joy at the world's beauty, has it not leapt with you, returning grace for grace?
- 20.20 Is it possible to have a concept of wholeness, of *all*, and for it not to exist? And how could it exist apart from you? Oneness with Christ, dear brother

- and sister, is nothing more than this concept realized. And also nothing less.
- 20.21 This lesson is only as complicated as the most complex among you needs it to be. But for some it can be simple, as simple as realizing the oneness of the embrace. Within the embrace you can let all thought go. Within the embrace, you can quit thinking even of holy things, holy men and women, and even divine beings, even the one God. Is not the embrace itself holy? Is not the sunrise and sunset? Is not the least of the birds of the air as holy as the mighty eagle? The blade of grass, the fleck of sand, the wind and air, the ocean and her surf, all live by the universal heartbeat and exist within the embrace. Is not all you can imagine holy when you imagine with love? Is not all you cannot imagine holier still?
- 20.22 Sanctity is all that exists within the embrace. How could you be less than sacred? You exist in holiness.
- 20.23 The first step in remembering this holiness is forgetting. Let yourself forget that you do not feel holy and that the world does not appear to be sacred. Let your heart remember that you are holy and that the world is sacred. A thousand things can pull you from your remembrance. Forgetting “things” can free you to remember.
- 20.24 Forget yourself and memory will return to you. Beyond your personal self and the identity you have given your personal self is your being. This is the face of Christ where all being resides. This is your true identity.
- 20.25 Thankfulness is the nature of your being. It could not be otherwise when awe and magnificence encompass you in the embrace. Your heart sings in gratitude for the all that you are. You are the beauty of the world and peace abides within you.
- 20.26 Peace is the foundation of your being. Not a peace that implies an absence but a peace that implies a fullness. Wholeness is peaceful. Only separation creates conflict.
- 20.27 Love is the source of your being. You flow from love, an outpouring without end. You are thus eternal. You are pure and innocent because you flow from love. What flows from love is changeless and boundless. You are without limit.
- 20.28 Power is the expression of who you are. Because you are changeless and boundless, you are all-powerful. Only lack of expression leads to powerlessness. No true expression is possible until you know who you are. To

know who you are and not to express who you are with your full power is the result of fear. To know the safety and love of the embrace is to know no cause for fear, and thus to come into your true power. True power is the power of miracles.

20.29 Miracles are expressions of love. You might think of them as acts of cooperation. Holiness cannot be contained, and it is not within your power to limit it. To feel the holiness of the embrace is to release its power. While expression and action are not the same, understanding their relationship to each other is essential.

20.30 Expressions of love are as innumerable as the stars in the universe, as bountiful as beauty, as many-faceted as the gems of the earth. I say again that sameness is not a sentence to mediocrity or uniformity. You are a unique expression of the selfsame love that exists in all creation. Thus your expression of love is as unique as your Self. It is in the cooperation between unique expressions of love that creation continues and miracles become natural occurrences.

20.31 This cooperation is natural when fear has been rejected. You have long embraced fear and rejected love. Now the reverse is true. This reversal of truth has changed the nature of your universe and the laws by which it operates. The laws of fear were laws of struggle, limits, danger, and competitiveness. The laws of love are laws of peace, abundance, safety, and cooperation. Your actions and the results of your actions in a universe of love will naturally be different from your actions and the results of your actions in a universe of fear. You set the laws of the universe when you chose fear. The laws of the universe of love are God-given.

20.32 Acceptance of your true power is acceptance of your God-given authority via your free will. When I beseeched my Father, saying, "*They know not what they do,*" I was expressing the nature of my brothers and sisters as caused by fear. To accept your power and your God-given authority is to know what you do. Let the fear be taken from this area of your thought so that you can see the application of cooperative action. As long as you fear your own ability to know what you do, you cannot be fully cooperative.

20.33 The rest of the universe, existing in a state of compassionate free will devoid of fear, knows what it does. There are no opposing forces that are not in agreement about their opposing force. No atoms do battle. No molecules

compete for dominance. The universe is a dance of cooperation. You are but asked to rejoin the dance.

20.34 The embrace has returned you to attunement with the heartbeat, the music of the dance. You have not known what you do or what to do only because of fear, only because you have been out of accord with the one heartbeat. The world, the universe, is your partner—and only now do you hear the music that brings grace to all your movements, all your actions, all your expressions of love. While this may seem to be metaphorical language it is not. Listen and you will hear. Hear, and you cannot help but rejoice in the dance.

20.35 You have not before now been able to even imagine knowing what you do. You hope to have moments of clarity concerning what you are doing in a given moment, what you have done, what you hope to do in the future. But even these moments of clarity are fractional. They seldom have any relation to the whole. Knowing what you do comes from existing within the embrace. You know you do the will of God because you are at one with that will.

20.36 Bitterness and uncertainty are replaced by hope. Hope is the condition of the initiate, new to the realization of having a home within the embrace. It is the response that says to all you have just read, “Ah, if only it were true. If only it could be true.” Notice the complete change in this “if only” from those we have spoken of earlier—the “if onlys” of fear. If you put half as much faith in these “if onlys” as you have in the “if onlys” of fear, all the certainty I have spoken of will be yours.

20.37 Knowing what you do is a present moment knowing. It is not about plans. It is about moment-by-moment knowing exactly who you are and acting out of that loving identity, and it is about knowing that as you do so you are in accord and enjoying the full cooperation of the entire universe.

20.38 Hope is a manner of acting as if the best possible outcome you can imagine could truly occur. Hope is a willingness to accept love and the grace and cooperation that flow from love. Hope is a willingness to ask for help, believing it will come. Hope is the reason and the outcome for which we pray. Hope acknowledges the kindness of the universe and has no use for things. The inanimate as well as the animate is called upon, depended upon for service. All use is replaced with service, and appreciation replaces the callousness with which use once occurred.

- 20.39 All service is cooperative and depends on a belief in mutuality. All fear that what is good for one may not be good for the whole is replaced by an understanding that each one is worthy of his or her desires. *Eachness* replaces *thingness* but not oneness. All fear that what one gets means that less is available for another is replaced with an understanding of abundance. Receiving replaces all notions of taking or getting. All that is received is for the mutual benefit of all and takes nothing away from anyone. There is no limit to love and so there are no limits to anything that flows from love. What one benefits from everyone benefits from.
- 20.40 Receiving is an act of mutuality. It stems from a basic law of the universe expressed in the saying that the sun shines and the rain falls on the good and evil alike. All gifts of God are given equally and distributed equally. It is your belief that this is not so that causes judgment. All who believe they have “more” fall prey to righteousness. All who believe they have “less” fall victim to envy. Both “fall” from grace and limit their ability to receive. No gifts are received when all gifts are judged. While the gift is still given, the judgment changes the nature of the gift by limiting its ability to be of service. A gift one feels one cannot “use” is discarded. Thus have many of your treasures lain fallow.
- 20.41 What you each have been given is that which will serve your purpose. You could have no more perfect gifts, for your gifts are expressions of your Father’s perfect love for you. Look deep inside and feel your heart’s gladness. Your construction was no mistake. You are not flawed. You are not wanting. You would not be other than you are except when you give in to making judgments. Look deeply and you will see that what you would call your imperfections are as chosen and as dear to you as all the rest.
- 20.42 You would not be other than who you are. You may know that this is true or you may dwell in fantasies, desiring what another has or some success, fame, or riches that seem impossible for you to attain. And yet, whether you know it is true or not, it is true: You would not be other than who you are. Herein lie your peace and your perfection. If you would not be other than you are, then you must be perfect. This is a conclusion both logical to the mind and believable to the heart, and its acceptance is a step toward wholeheartedness.
- 20.43 To believe in your perfection and the equality of your gifts is peaceful because it releases you from trying to acquire that which you previously

believed you were lacking. It releases you from judgment because you know that your brothers and sisters are also beings of perfection. When you begin to see them as such, what you will receive from them is far grander than anything you would before have wished to take from them.

20.44 Your thinking will begin to change to reflect your recognition of reception. Reception and welcome are highly linked. You will find you are welcome to all the gifts you recognize in your brothers and sisters just as you freely will offer yours to serve them. To serve rather than to use is an enormous change in thinking, feeling, and acting. It will immediately make the world a kinder, gentler place. And it is only a beginning.

20.45 To serve is different from your ideas of service, however. Your ideas of service are bound to your ideas of charity. Your idea of charity is based on some having more and some having less. Thus, you must remain cognizant of this distinction between serving and service. It will be helpful if you keep in mind that the idea of *to serve* is being used to replace the idea of *to use* and is its opposite. It replaces the thought of *taking* with the thought of *receiving*. It implies that you are welcome to all the gifts of the universe and that they can be given, through you, to others as well. It implies willingness rather than resistance. To change your thinking and your feelings from expecting resistance to expecting willingness is another key change that will lead toward wholeheartedness. When you change your actions from those of resistance and use to those of being willing to serve and be served, it will assist not only you and your peacefulness, but will bring peacefulness to the world as well.

20.46 Before you begin to resist the notion that you could have anything to do with world peace, realize that you naturally have reacted with resistance. You must replace your willingness to believe in your inadequacy and smallness with your willingness to believe in your ability and mightiness. Remember not your ego concerns and remember instead the warmth of the embrace. Remember not your personal identity but remember instead your shared identity.

20.47 Your personal concerns are concerns you have been taught to believe you have. They are small concerns and they are among the reasons for your belief in your inability to effect change within your own life and certainly within the greater life of the universe. You must understand that when

you think of your personal life, personal concerns, personal relationships, you are separating yourself from the whole. These concerns are a matter of perception, and are things your mind has been trained to see as being within its scope. It is as if you have cordoned off a little section of life and said, "These are the things that relate to my existence and to me and they are all I need concern myself with." Even when you think of expanding your view, you deem that expansion unrealistic. You cannot do everything. You cannot effect world peace. You can barely keep your personal concerns in order. Your effort to do so is all that stands between you and chaos.

20.48 Your heart has a different scope, a different view. It is the view from within the embrace, the view from love's angle. It is the view of the dying who realize nothing matters but love. This realization is not one of sentiment, regrets, or wishful thinking. It is the view from the embrace, the return to one heartbeat, the return to what is known. This knowing you might call wisdom and think of as an attainable ideal of thought. Yet it is not about thought at all, but is beyond thought. It is not wisdom but the truth. The truth is that which exists. The false is illusion. Love is all that matters because love is all that is.

CHAPTER 26

The Full Life

- 26.1 It is often spoken of with some amazement that I lived a short life, preached for only a small part of it, traveled not very far, had few possessions or influential friends. We have talked before of the tragedy you feel when anyone dies young. You each have some notion of what you believe a full life to be. For some of you it would include marriage and children, for others career, religious commitment, or creative endeavors. Some would think of travel and adventure, friendships, or financial security. Most of you will think of having a long life.
- 26.2 Many of you question the line between fate and accomplishment. Are some chosen for greatness? Others for mediocrity?
- 26.3 Few recognize the tragedy in the *life* of a person, except in instances of great dichotomy, perhaps best expressed in the life of the tragic hero. This observance of tragedy *in life* occurs only when the observation is also made of the greatness, the glory, *in the life*. Without the recognition of the glory of life, there is no recognition of tragedy until the life has ended. In contrast, in the life of the tragic hero, excluding those who are posthumously given such a title, the tragedy is most often considered a fall from greatness. It is seen in the allure of myths where those who associate themselves too closely with the gods are punished for such folly. Such fear of greatness and glory, of the possibility of a fall from greatness and glory, results in many tragedy-less lives. “Nothing ventured, nothing gained,” is an axiom for such lives. Fear of the “fall” is a primal fear, the first fear, the fear behind all such axioms.
- 26.4 Again I offer my life as the example life and reiterate the message expressed in *A Course in Miracles*: The true meaning of the crucifixion is that it was the last and final end to all such fears and myths. All such fears were taken to the cross with me and banished in the resurrection of the glory that is ours.

- 26.5 Do not be afraid. My brothers and sisters in Christ, realize that there is no cause for fear. You cannot fly too closely to the sun. You cannot be deceived any longer by tales of woe or of fallen heroes. Your story is one of glory. Your greatness can no longer be denied, unless *you* deny it.
- 26.6 Do you feel beautiful and prized and worthy? Then so shall you be.
- 26.7 No fear is greater than the fear of meaninglessness. And, as stated before, the quest for meaning is how you have described your purpose here. To have no meaning to attach to your life is the tragedy you see within it and attempt to keep hidden from yourself. This fear goes hand in hand with your fear of the fall, for if you were to attempt to assign the meaning to your life that you think it should have, a fall would surely await you, at least in your imaginings. You are thus caught in a double bind, living a life you feel is devoid of meaning and letting fear keep you from seeking the meaning you would give it. You feel no inherent sense of purpose, no grace, no meaning beyond what you would give to your own endeavors.
- 26.8 This is what we now leave behind as we seek to become involved with life. I say *we* because I am with you and will not leave your side. I say *we* because your first involvement is involvement with Christ, an involvement that links us in oneness and glory once again. I say *we* because *we are* life. I say *we* because we cannot live love apart from one another.
- 26.9 You do not yet, but will soon realize the happiness that is ours. Your mind can just not accept that happiness as well as meaning is due you through no effort of your own. Scenes of your life play through your mind that “prove” that you are neither inherently happy, nor your life inherently meaningful. Your reliance on these scenes and memories must be broken before my words can reach your mind and begin to replace these scenes with new ones. Until that time is upon you, let my words touch your heart.
- 26.10 You who struggle to understand what these words say and what they might mean, who strive to find the clues to what they ask you to do, will find it difficult to cease your struggle and your striving. You find it almost impossible still to believe effort is not called for—that what your heart but wishes for could simply come true through your acceptance of these words. But I am prepared to make it easy for you.
- 26.11 You who have so sought happiness without finding it, rejoice. It is not lost. It does not require you to define it or put a name to it before it can be

yours. Is this not what you have cried about in frustration? Have you not long sought to put a name on happiness? Have you not long lamented that if you knew what would bring you happiness you would surely pursue it? Have you not long stated that if you knew what would bring meaning to your life you would surely do it? Have you not long wished to know your purpose? To be given a goal that would fulfill the longing in you? Have you not prayed for signs? Read books that have promised you a series of steps to take to get where you want to go, only to realize you know not where that is?

26.12 And have you not become impatient with advice, with teachers and with courses of study? Have you not felt at the limit of your patience with instruction? Have you not felt the call to live growing stronger in you by the day? Are you not anxious to say: *"Tell me what to do and I will do it?"* Are you not ready for certainty above all else? Are you not ready to be done with studying and to begin with living? Have you not become increasingly convinced that you have not been living, and wondered what it is you have been doing? Have you not grown weary of what passes for life in your world? Have you not wished you could throw out all the thoughts and worries that fill your mind and begin anew?

26.13 Are you not simply ready to be done with the way things have been and to begin a new way? Are you not ready to listen to a new voice?

26.14 All this frustration and impatience has been building. This buildup has been necessary. Now, like an explosion waiting to happen, it only needs a trigger to be released. With its release the new can begin.

26.15 This Course is but a trigger. These words the prelude to the explosion. It is as if you have been waiting for someone to whisper: *Now!* The whisper has come. The time is now.

26.16 Can you let the worries of today leave your mind? Can you let the disappointments of yesterday go and be no more? Can you let the planning for the future cease? Can you be still and know your Self?

26.17 This is perhaps disappointing to you, but it is all that is required. If you could truly succeed at doing this for one instant, you would experience all that is holy and be forever new.

26.18 You may experience disappointment at these words, and feel as if you have been waiting to be invited to a party and that the invitation hasn't come. This is because you are ready for the next step, the step of being

engaged with life. The step of living from love. And I assure you, there is no need to sit about and wait for the time of the celebration to come. This is the invitation to the celebration. This is the invitation to greet this day with no worry, disappointment, or planning. This is the invitation to greet your Self and to find your Self within this day.

26.19 It requires no new plans. It asks not that you make any decisions. It asks not that you *do* anything new. This is an invitation from love to love. It asks only that you be open and allow giving and receiving as one to take place. It asks only that you be unoccupied with the old so that the new may arrive. It asks only that you listen to your heart and let your Self be heard.

26.20 I cannot tell you here what you will hear. How can I, when each of you will hear the answer of your heart? The calling of love to love inviolate? The answer that only you can hear. There is no mold, no form, no stock answer. This is why all answers have disappointed you in the past. Your answer is not the same as any other. No matter how filled with wisdom one person's answer may be, it is not yours.

26.21 You are a thought of a God. An idea. This thought, or idea, is what you seek. It can be found only at its source. Its source is love, and its location is your own heart.

26.22 Think a moment of a novel or movie with no plot. This would be the same as saying that there was no idea brought to completion within the pages or on the film. In God's idea of you is all that is known about you. God's idea of you is perfect, and until now your form has been but an imperfect representation of God's idea. In God's idea of you is the pattern of the universe, much as within a novel, movie, piece of music, invention or artistic idea is the completion of the pattern that will make that idea a masterpiece. An idea is irrevocably linked with its source and one with its source. There was no God separate from you to have this idea of you. You were birthed in unison with God's idea of you.

26.23 This does not need to be understood, but only accepted to the extent you can accept it. This is necessary because of your reliance on a God who is "other" than you for the provision of your answers. Acceptance of your birth in unison with God's idea of you is acceptance of your Self as co-creator of the pattern of the universe, acceptance of the idea or the story that is you. Can you not see that you were birthed into a place in the pattern of

God's creation? Or that you not only can know but have always known of this place?

26.24 This is not a place of physical form but a place of holiness, an integral place in the pattern that is oneness with God. It is a place you have never left but that you long for, believing that you know it not. Your life here is much like a search for your story. Where will this chapter lead? What will the end be like? Was one event a mistake and another a blessing in disguise? You seek to know your story's table of contents, or at least a brief outline. Where does your life fit in the larger picture? And yet, you realize that—like reading a story—when the end is reached and all is known, the story is over except in memory and reflection and perhaps in speculation. What might a sequel reveal?

26.25 This viewing of your life as a story is what you do. You spend each day in review or speculation. What has happened and what will happen next? You attempt to rewrite previous chapters and to cast all the parts and plan all the events of the next. This is, in effect, your attempt to control what you do not believe you created, and what you feel deprived of creating. As a being birthed by a thought of God, you grew simultaneously with God's thought. You knew your place in the pattern of creation from the outset. A full life is quite simply a fulfillment of that thought and that pattern. The only way to know it is to think it once again. The only way to think it once again is to be wholehearted, for a split mind and heart do not think clearly.

26.26 Being whole is being present. Being whole is being all you are. Being whole is being present as all you are. When this occurs you are All in All, One in being with your Father.

26.27 I fulfilled my story, my pattern, the idea of me that came from the thought of God. In doing so, I restored unity, oneness with God. I ushered in the new way that you are now longing to adopt. I ushered in a time of being.

**A TREATISE ON
THE ART OF THOUGHT**

THE FIRST TREATISE

CHAPTER 2

The Art of Thought

- 2.1 The closing pages of *A Course of Love* instructed you to think no more. A break in time was needed for you to disengage the ego-mind that produced the type of thinking that needs to come to an end. This ending is but a beginning in truth and has led you to readiness to learn the art of thought.
- 2.2 We identified much for you to leave behind within the pages of *A Course of Love*. These many things which seemed so distinct and separate and which ranged from fear, to struggle, to effort, to control and protection, can all now be seen as the product of the thoughts of your ego-mind.
- 2.3 To experience the truth and apply to that experience the thoughts of the ego-mind, the same thoughts that were applied to former experiences of the truth, would be to respond to love the same way again. The questions you have asked concerning how love could be the answer when it has been preached by so many for so long is answered here. The answer lies in your response to love. To respond is to answer. You have sought your “answer” everywhere, but here is where it lies. It is yours to give and can only be given to love from love. Only in giving is it received.
- 2.4 Thus we have sought to uncover your Source, to provide you access to your heart, from which all responses flow. As your heart is the Source of your true Self, your thoughts, once removed from those of the ego-mind are the expression and extension of your true Self. They are the answer of the Created to the Creator, the answer of the Self to God.
- 2.5 Thoughts that were guarded by the ego-mind were in need of being set free. Appealing to your heart was the means or cause of this freedom being accomplished in you. What was spoken of within *A Course of Love* as unlearning has begun and continues here. What was spoken of within *A Course of Love* as new learning has begun and continues here as well. The difference is that you are now ready to learn a new means of response to this unlearning and learning. That response is the art of thought.

- 2.6 The so-called thinking of the ego-mind was so tyrannical that its use throughout your lifetime deadened many of your feelings. It led you so far from the truth that you no longer trust in it. It confused the smallest issues to such a degree that it left you unable to respond purely to anything. The so-called thinking of the ego-mind could be likened to chitchat, background noise, static. So little meaning did it have that all meaning became muddled.
- 2.7 Your only recourse to this situation in the past was focus. You thus applied your thoughts to learning subjects of a specific nature. Through this focus you believed you accomplished much. You congratulated yourself on having the discipline required to train your mind to focus and to learn, or shamed yourself when you were unable to do so. To those most skilled in this training of the ego-mind worldly rewards have long been given. These people attain degrees and skills and then further apply the discipline that they have learned by using their skills and knowledge in the world for even greater rewards. These rewards have further emphasized the importance of such focused thoughts and thus further entrenched the ego-mind. To think that you could learn the truth of who you are through these same means was the fallacy that the early teaching of *A Course of Love* sought to dispel.
- 2.8 But again, as was stated often throughout *A Course of Love*, an alternative exists. It did not exist when you knew not of it and so your attempts at learning have been valiant and are no cause for anxiety. But now this alternative is being revealed to you, and it does call for a change of thought so extensive that all thought as you once knew it does need to cease.
- 2.9 You have already succeeded in learning in this new way once or you would not be here. This is your proof that you can do so again and again until the new way totally replaces the old and the art of thought leaves behind forever the need for what the ego-mind once but seemed to offer you.
- 2.10 The thoughts of your ego-mind were ruled by the nature of the body. To exist as *creatures* whose only thoughts are of survival of the body is to exist in a lower order. The laws of the body have thus subjected you to conditions that invited the ego-mind to turn its attention to existence in this lower order. It is only *you* who can recognize and invite the higher order or subject *yourself* to its conditions. It is only your attention to the existence of this higher order that will reveal its laws to you. These are the laws of God or the laws of love.

- 2.11 The laws of God or the laws of love can be summarized by the simple statement of giving and receiving being one in truth. The implications of this statement are far broader than at first might seem indicated. All of these implications have been touched upon within *A Course of Love*. The most essential of these implications is that of relationship for giving and receiving cannot occur without relationship.
- 2.12 All relationship is but relationship between Creator and Created. The new means of thinking is referred to here as the “art” of thought in order to call your wholehearted attention to the continual act of creation that is the relationship between Creator and Created. Creation is but a dialogue to which you have not responded. The art of thought will free you to respond.
- 2.13 This response needs to at first be seen in two parts. An example illustrates. To look at a sunset is to see an object, the sun. It is also to see the sky, to see the variety of colors displayed, to see the horizon. It is to see the surrounding area, perhaps to see the play of clouds among the descending rays, perhaps to feel the warmth or chill of an evening. The whole experience might include the sound of birds or traffic, the rhythm of the ocean, or the pounding of your own heart. It might be a shared experience, one in which you share the feeling of awe inspired by this sight with one you love. It might be seen as you walk or drive, rake leaves or gaze from an office window. It might be a deathbed vision or the first sunset of which a young child is aware. It might be a scene taken totally for granted as you go about whatever business calls you at that hour.
- 2.14 The sunset is a gift of God. It is what it is. This is the first part of this example.
- 2.15 The second part is its reception. A gift has been given. What is your response?
- 2.16 The sunset is part of your human experience. In the lower order of that experience it speaks to your survival needs. It may signal many things ranging from a desire to get safely home before it is dark, to a desire to eat an evening meal. It signals change in the natural world around you. Birds and squirrels and flowers too have a reaction to the setting of the sun. They react to what is. This is their response, an altogether lovely response of created to Creator.
- 2.17 Yet to rise above this lower order of experience is to receive and to give back. First the sunset is experienced for what it is. It is acknowledged. It is

a fact of your existence as a human being, a part of the natural world, a gift of the Creator. Secondly, it is experienced relationally. It speaks to you and you to it. It binds you to the natural world and to the present but also to the higher world and the eternal. It binds you to all those who have and will experience the sunset by being a shared experience. It is there not for you alone, but in listening to its call for a response, it becomes a gift for you that is in no way diminished by it being a gift for all.

2.18 Finally, the sunset becomes, through your experience of it, an opportunity to apply the art of thought.

2.19 Thus, these are the basic rules of the art of thought: First, to experience what is and to acknowledge what is, both as a fact of your existence as a human being and as a gift of the Creator. Second, to acknowledge the relationship inherent in the experience, the call for a response, and the nature of all gifts as being given to all.

2.20 While this may seem somewhat elementary in relation to a sunset, its application to all areas of life will at first seem quite demanding. But what is elementary remains elementary once it is learned.

2.21 To experience what is and to acknowledge what is, one must be present, present as human being. To experience what *is* and to acknowledge what *is* as being a gift of God is to be present as a divine being having a human experience. No part of being is negated. All senses and feelings of the human being are called into awareness and yet there is also acknowledgment of the Creator behind the Created.

2.22 To acknowledge the relationship and the nature of the gift is to realize unity. To realize the call for a response is to hear the call to create like unto the Creator. This creating like unto the Creator may be used as a definition for the art of thought.

**A TREATISE ON
THE NATURE OF UNITY
AND ITS RECOGNITION**

THE SECOND TREATISE

CHAPTER 3

To Answer the Call

- 3.1 Your life is already an act of creation. It *was* created. All of it. It exists, fully realized within you. Your work here is to express it. *You* are far more than your life here. *You* created your life here in union with the one mind and one heart, in union, in other words, with God. Everything you have ever wanted to be *is*. Everything you have ever thought or imagined *is* and is reflected in the world you see. The only difference between the life you are living and the life you want lies in your willingness to express who you are.
- 3.2 There would be no need for form if there had been no desire for expression. Life *is* the desire to express outwardly what exists within. What I refer to so often here as being within, as if “within” is a *place* in which something resides, is unity and it is the *place* where being resides. It is the *place* or *realm* of one heart and one mind. It is the place where everything already exists fully realized. It is like a trunk full of treasure. Like a menu of possibilities. All you must do is wholeheartedly recognize the treasure you have already chosen to bring to the world. Your heart speaks to you of this treasure and guides you to open the trunk and release it to the world—to your world—to the human world. As I have said, in the realm of unity where your being resides, this is already accomplished. Your link between the realm of unity and the realm of physicality is your heart. Your heart tells you of the *already accomplished* and bids you to express it with your physicality, thus uniting the two realms through expression.
- 3.3 Your mind exists in unity. Your heart exists *where you think you are*, thus providing the means for union between *where you think you are* and where your being actually resides. Remember always that your heart is where the Christ in you abides and that the Christ is your identity. Remember that it is the Christ in you that learns and raises learning to the holiest of levels. It is the Christ in you that learns to walk the earth as child of God, as who you really are.

- 3.4 This was stated early in *A Course of Love* and is returned to now for a specific reason. While the truth that it is the Christ in you that learns may have been given little attention as you began your learning, it cannot now be ignored. Now *you* have realized your learning. *You* have begun to see the changes that your learning is capable of bringing to your life. *You* have felt the peace and love of the embrace. *You* know that you are experiencing something real and learning something that is of relevance even within the daily life you currently move through. Now you must fully recognize the distinction between the ego-self that previously was the self of learning and experience, and the Christ-Self that is now the Self of learning and experience. You must take on the mantle of your new identity, your new Self.
- 3.5 It is this recognition that you are now acting and living in the world as your Christ-Self rather than as your ego-self that will aid you in expression. Without expression, the return to unity that has been accomplished will not be realized.
- 3.6 If you still balk at the idea that the Christ could be in need of learning, then your idea of the Christ is still based on an old way of thinking, as are your ideas of learning.
- 3.7 Learning and accomplishment are not linear as you have perceived them to be. If we return to the idea of talents this may be easier to explain. If the ability to create beautiful music already exists within you, you do not have to learn what beautiful music is, only how to express it. If you see beauty within, you do not have to learn what beauty is, only how to express it. Expression and creation are not synonymous. Creation is a continuous and on-going expansion of the same thought of love that brought life into existence. The seeds of creation exist in everything and provide for continuing creation. Thus the seeds of all that you can express exist “within” you, in the creation that is you. The power of creation is released through your choice, your willingness to express that aspect of creation. It is quite literally true that the seeds of much of creation lie dormant within you, already accomplished but awaiting expression in this realm of physicality.
- 3.8 In this same way, then, Christ can be seen as the seed of your identity. Christ is the continuous and on-going expansion of the same thought of love that brought life into existence. Christ is your identity in the broadest sense imaginable. Christ is your identity within the unity that is creation.

CHAPTER 4

The Call to Who You Are

- 4.1 Creation is not an aspect of this world alone. Creation is an aspect of the whole, the all of all, the alpha and the omega, eternity and infinity. It is not only life as you know it now, but life in all its aspects. It is life beyond death as well as life before birth and life during your time here. It is all one because it is all from the same Source.
- 4.2 You are not only part of creation, but as has been said many times, a creator, and as such a continuing act of creation. This does not mean that creation is acted out upon you but that you are acted out upon creation. The idea of creation as something static would be completely contrary to the meaning of creation. Yet you continue to think that you stand apart from it and affect it not. This is consistent to the thinking that would tell you that you are at the mercy of fate. Fate and creation are hardly the same thing. You are at the mercy only of your own ego and only until you willingly let it go.
- 4.3 *A Course in Miracles* and *A Course of Love* work hand-in-hand because the change of thinking taught within *A Course in Miracles* was a change of thinking about yourself. It attempted to dislodge the ego-mind that has provided you with an identity that you but *think* you are. *A Course of Love* then followed in order to reveal to you who you truly are. While you continue to act within the world as who you *think* you are rather than as who you are, you have not integrated these two pieces of learning.
- 4.4 This is the stage of learning that you are at and what this Treatise addresses. This Treatise is attempting to show you how to *live* as who you are, how to act within the world as the new Self you have identified. Just like learning how to swim, it is a new way of movement. Just as moving through water is a way of movement quite inconsistent with that of moving on land, so too is the new way of acting out or expressing who you are quite inconsistent with the way in which you have formerly acted out or expressed who you are. This is, of course, because you formerly acted out of a set of

conditions that corresponded to who you *think* you are rather than who you truly are.

- 4.5 You will almost literally continue to “bump in” to who you think you are as you complete the process of unlearning. It might be best explained by continuing with the swimming metaphor. If acting in the world as who you truly are is like swimming, bumping in to who you think you are could be likened to trying to move within water as you would on land. Why, when moving freely through the water would you suddenly try to move as if on land? The explanation could be as simple as forgetting where you are, or as complex as a sudden panic or fear brought on by any number of factors. Either way, the result would always be the same; a sudden change from ease of movement to struggle, from going with the flow to resistance.
- 4.6 A first step then in learning to recognize when you are acting upon notions of who you think you are rather than on who you truly are, is the appearance of struggle or resistance. As a swimmer quickly learns, the only way to return to ease of movement is to cease to struggle or resist. The ability to let go of struggle is a learned ability for the swimmer and is a learned ability for you now as you journey back to your real Self. It requires remembrance, trust, and a wholehearted approach that allows the body, mind and heart to act in unison. This wholehearted approach is the condition from which unity is recognized. The water is not taken for granted but always recognized as the condition of the swimmer’s environment. You are no longer confined to the conditions of separation, my dear brothers and sisters, and this is what it is time for you to learn.
- 4.7 This applies directly to your *reaction* to all that occurs within your life. Let us look now at your reaction to the idea put forth earlier of having a calling.
- 4.8 Despite whatever way you currently have of identifying calling as it relates to you there are few among you who have not reacted to the idea of calling with two sets of feelings and thoughts. One set of thoughts and feelings contain all that one might attribute to the glad acceptance of a gift of high value, or in other words, a treasure. One set of thoughts and feelings contain all that one might attribute to the somewhat onerous onset of yet another responsibility, another obligation. One set of thoughts recognizes that something has been given. The other set recognizes that something has

been asked. The wholehearted response is one that recognizes that giving and receiving are the same in truth.

- 4.9 While two sets of thoughts and feelings exist, the only way to come to peace with them is through an acceptance of ambiguity. While an acceptance of ambiguity might seem preferable to conflict, an acceptance of ambiguity is a rejection of your power. What is required to claim your power is the willingness to move through the conflict of two opposing sets of thoughts and feelings to the place of unity.
- 4.10 Thus a first step in our work with regard to calling is recognizing the dualistic nature of your thoughts and feelings. A second step is willingness to move past both ambiguity and conflict to union.
- 4.11 This requires an examination of your specific notions concerning calling as you apply them to yourself. Whether you feel that you have a specific calling, no calling, or many callings, matters not at this juncture. What matters is that you think it does. You think it matters because you compare and judge rather than accept.
- 4.12 You who have so recently felt the peace of true acceptance are not asked to leave that peace to go in search of calling but are rather asked to listen from within that peace to what you feel called to do. This is not about the past and all those things that at one time or another you thought would bring you fulfillment. This is about recognizing who you are now. This is not a quick fix that calls you to what might have been and tells you that if you had but acted earlier you would have had the life you've dreamed of and maybe it is not too late. This is not about examining where the various calls you responded to previously have led you. All these notions are concerned with who you have thought yourself to be, not with who you are. They do not recognize the difference between thinking and knowing.
- 4.13 Being who you are is what you are called to do. You are here asked to live a life as seamless as that of the birds of the air. You are asked to live a life where there is no division between who you are and what you do. This place of no division is the place of unity.
- 4.14 Now you may feel as if this Treatise has led around in a circle, bringing you back only to contemplate again the acceptance of where you are now. However, to accept where you are is not the same as accepting who you are. Accepting *where* you are, as if it is a static place at which you have arrived, is

not the goal that has been set. Accepting *who* you are includes acceptance of creation. The acceptance of creation is the acceptance of change and growth but neither of these are concepts that you understand truly. Change is not negative and growth does not imply lack.

- 4.15 You must be beginning to see that your thought processes, the very thought processes that tell you hour-by-hour and minute-by-minute how to perceive of and live in your world, are still often based on old concepts. This does not mean you have not changed nor that you are in need of accomplishment rather than the already accomplished. What this means is that you are still in need of unlearning, of undoing old patterns of thought. This is atonement and it is continuous and ongoing until it is no longer needed. Anything continuous and ongoing is part of creation. Thus the very act of undoing old patterns is an act of creation. As the old is undone, a vacuum is not created. The new is created.
- 4.16 You are in the process of unmaking what you have made. The old structure is coming down so that the new, what might be likened to a building with no frame, can rise.
- 4.17 This process too is union for it is giving and receiving as one although you recognize it not as such. It is not a process of waiting until one thing is accomplished for another to begin. What is happening now is happening in unison. As the old goes, the new arrives. There is no time-lapse in this learning and so it is a condition of miracle readiness. The old is replaced by the new simultaneously.
- 4.18 This is why you do not have to “wait” to hear your calling even though some of you may feel as if you are in a time of waiting for you hear no such call. The call is to be who you are and this is happening at lightning speed, a speed that cannot be measured because of its simultaneous nature. As was said within *A Course of Love*, time is but a measurement of the “time” it takes for learning to occur. As this notion of time dissolves, the state of miracle-readiness becomes your natural state.
- 4.19 While this adjustment of your thinking may not seem to be the miracle that it truly is, as your awareness of it grows, it is going to raise it to a level you will come to think of as an ability. As your old way of responding to life causes you to struggle or resist and the new way of thinking replaces that old pattern with a new pattern of response, you will begin to see that each

new response is the answer to a call that your heart alone can hear. As I have said, your heart has now become your eyes and ears. Your heart hears only one call, one voice, the language of one Source—that of unity.

**A TREATISE ON
THE PERSONAL SELF**

THE THIRD TREATISE

CHAPTER 4

The Dismantling of Illusion

- 4.1 This is not a self-help course but just the opposite. This Course has stated time and time again that you cannot learn on your own and that resigning as your own teacher is the only way to learn a new curriculum. This Course will not call you to effort of any kind. It will not tell you to leave behind your addictions or to go on a diet or a fast. It will not even tell you to be kind. It does not tell you to be responsible and does not chide your irresponsibility. It does not claim that you were once bad but that by following these tenets you can become good. It gives no credence and no blame to any past cause for your depression, anxiety, meanness, illness or insanity. It merely calls you to sanity by calling you to let go of illusion in favor of the truth.
- 4.2 The sameness that this Course calls you to is not a sameness of body or of habit. It asks not for monks or clones. It asks not that you give up anything but illusion, which is the giving up of nothing.
- 4.3 Before we can go on you must take all such ideas from your mind. Such ideas are not small matters. Ideas are the foundation of the self. You cannot have an idea of goodness without having an idea of evil. You cannot have an idea of an ideal state without having an idea of a state that is not ideal. You cannot have an idea you call “right” without believing in an idea that can be “wrong.”
- 4.4 The ego made such ideas necessary for the idea of the ego was “wrong” or inaccurate. The only way to bring that inaccuracy to light was through contrast.
- 4.5 To function from an inaccurate foundation was to build upon that foundation. Building a structure with a foundation that would not support it was the folly that the ego made of life. The only way for such an error to be seen as an error was through its dysfunction.
- 4.6 The only way to correct such an error is to dismantle the structure and begin again with a foundation capable of being built upon. This is what we

have done. We have taken away the foundation of illusion, the one error that became the basis of all that came after it. You cannot make another error such as this for it is the one error. Does it not make sense that the only error possible is that of not being who you are?

4.7 You can dismantle the ego and build another in its place and this has at times been done in the individual with great training, as in military training, or in cases of great abuse when a second ego personality is developed to save the first. The ego has also been dismantled and rebuilt over time and been seen as the rise and fall of civilizations. But as we have said before, the only replacement that will work is the replacement of illusion with the truth. The very purpose of this Treatise is to prevent the replacement of illusion with illusion, or one ego-self with another. The training of this Course, while gentle in nature, has been great, as great as that of any military training, as great as any emotional trauma that has left one in a state of emptiness. This is, in effect, the state in which you currently find yourself.

4.8 I repeat, and will do so again and again, that the ego-self is gone from you. Whether you fully realize this or not matters not. This *A Course of Love* has accomplished. Now the choice is before you to do one of two things: to proceed toward love or fear. If you proceed with fear you will assemble a new ego-self, an ego-self that perhaps will seem superior to the old, but which will nonetheless still be an ego-self. If you proceed with love, you will come to know your Christ-Self.

CHAPTER 21

The Identity of the True Self

- 21.1 The truth is not a set of facts. Written truth is not the truth but only the arrangement of the truth into language. You have a birth certificate that states the truth about your birth. The birth certificate is not the truth but symbolic of the truth.
- 21.2 The truth is not symbolic. It is. It is the same for everyone.
- 21.3 There are no two sides to the truth. There is not more than one truth. There is one truth.
- 21.4 The truth is not a concept. It is real. It is *all* that is real.
- 21.5 Your real Self exists in truth. It does not exist in illusion.
- 21.6 Your personal self exists in illusion. It is called a personal self because it is attached to a person. A person is a being born into time, a being whose existence began in time and will end in time.
- 21.7 The only means for the personal self and the true Self to exist together is for the truth to be lived in time. In order for the truth to be lived in time you must forget your uncertainty and be certain of the truth.
- 21.8 This certainty is antithetical to you. You think that to believe in one truth is to deny other truths. There is only one truth. Untruth *must* now be denied.
- 21.9 This will sound intolerant to you. It *is* a stance intolerant of illusion. You must no longer see illusion for it is no longer there! This is how you must live with it. You must live with it as you once lived with the truth. You must find it unobservable! It must become a concept only. Illusion is a set of facts, or in other words, a set of information. These facts are subject to change and mean one thing to one person and one thing to another. Illusion is symbolic. And what's more it symbolizes nothing for it does not symbolize what is!
- 21.10 This is your conundrum. When you have never known what *is* you have never been able to be certain. You have no *experience* with certainty other than—and this is a crucial other than—your certainty of your own identity,

the very identity this Course has disproved. This identity has been seen as your personal self. Thus your personal self is the only place in which you have experience that can now be used for a new purpose.

21.11 Even while this experience is experience of an ego-self, it is still an experience as near to certainty as you have been capable, simply because you could not exist without an identity. You might think of this as being certain of facts and information, for these are the things about yourself that few of you have doubted. Those who have had cause to doubt circumstances of their birth are often consumed with a desire to discover these unknown circumstances. For your birth, your name, the history of your family and the accumulated experiences of your lifetime are the things upon which you draw to feel the certainty you feel about your personal self. You identify yourself as male or female, married or single, homosexual or heterosexual. You might call yourselves Chinese or Lebanese or American, black or white or Indian. Your personal self may be deeply affected by these things you call yourself or may be minimally affected.

21.12 And even more so than these things, although this hasn't as often been considered as part of what makes you certain of your personal self, are the thoughts of your mind, thoughts that while certainly changeable, are unmistakably claimed to be your own in the way few things, in addition to your name and family of origin ever are. Even the most materialistic among you rarely count what you have acquired in form as part of your identity. What you have acquired that is not of form, you have, however, added to the few ideas that you hold certain. A degree earned or talent developed *is* seen as part of your identity, as part of who you are.

21.13 So too is it with beliefs. Many of you have a religious identity as well as a professional identity. Many of you have political or philosophical identities. You may call yourself Christian or doctor or Democrat. You may have beliefs you hold strongly, such as a stance against capital punishment or in favor of equal rights or environmental protection. And you may, even while recognizing, as you surely do, that these beliefs are subject to change, hold yourself to behaviors that fall within the parameters of your belief system. You think of these things as part of what make up the totality of who you are, of your personal self.

21.14 So it can be seen that there are several aspects to your personal self: a

historical aspect, an aspect we will call self-image, and an aspect that has to do with beliefs.

- 21.15 The historical aspect is based upon your family of origin, its history, and on the life you have led since your birth. The self-image aspect is based upon your race, ethnicity, culture, body size and shape, sex and sexual preferences, and so on. The aspect that has to do with beliefs is linked to your thoughts and ideas about the world you live in and the “type” of person you feel you have chosen to be within that world. Whether you have given thought to the interconnection of these ideas you hold about yourself or not, they exist. Your world-view, and your view of your personal self, are inextricably bound together. In other words, the world you were born into, regardless that it was the same world as all other human beings were born into, is also different than that of all other human beings. And what’s more, your experiences within that world are also different than the experiences of all other human beings.
- 21.16 All of these things have contributed to your idea that you are a separate being and as such incapable of truly understanding or knowing your brothers and sisters, those whose personal selves and world view cannot help but be different than your own—those whose thoughts are surely as distinct and separate as are your own.
- 21.17 Now however, you are being called to accept your true identity even while you retain the form of your personal self. As your true identity is that of a Self who exists in unity and the identity of your personal self is that of a self who exists in separation, this would seem impossible. Even while your belief system has changed and you believe that you exist in unity, all the things we have enumerated above will act to challenge these beliefs unless you are able to see them in a new light. No matter what you believe, while you have a body that is different from all the rest, a name that distinguishes you from some and yet links you with some, a nationality that separates you from other nationalities and a sex that divides you from those “opposite” you, unity will seem like a belief only.
- 21.18 Thus, certain things about your personal self must be accepted as aspects of your form and cease to be accepted as aspects of your identity. This will cause your existence to seem to have more of a dualistic nature for a short time while you carry observance forward into observance of your personal

self. As was said at the beginning of this Treatise, by the time the learning of this Treatise is complete, the personal self will continue to exist *only* as the self you present to others. It will be a representation only. It will represent only the truth. It will no longer be seen as your identity, but as representing your identity, an identity that has nothing to do with the thoughts of a separated mind or the circumstances of the physical body.

21.19 And yet, what might seem contradictory is that I have said that we can also *use* the certainty you have felt about your identity for our new purpose, the purpose of the miracle that will allow you to exist as who you are in human form. How, you might rightly ask, can you cease to identify yourself as you always have *and* use the only identity you have been certain of for a new purpose?

21.20 The answer too will seem contradictory, for the answer lies in realizing that your former identity does not matter, even while realizing that it *will* serve your new purpose. Further, there are even two aspects to this contradictory seeming answer. One is that your *certainty* regarding the identity of your personal self will be useful as that certainty is translated to the thought system of the truth and aids you in becoming certain of your *true* identity. The second is that the very differences that you seem to have will be seen as sameness by some and will attract them to you and to the truth you now will represent.

21.21 While this has been called the time of Christ, it is obviously no longer the time of Jesus Christ. My time came and my time ended. The time when a single baby born of a virgin mother could change the world has passed. The world is quite simply bigger now and the identities of your personal selves split by far more than history and far more than the oceans that separate east from west. This is why this call to return to your Self is being sounded far and wide and why it goes out to humble and ordinary people like yourself. There is no exclusivity to this call. It excludes no race nor religion nor ones of either sex or sexual preference. It but calls all to love and to live in the abundance of the truth.

21.22 In other words, it will matter not that there will be no priest or guru for those who seek the truth to turn to. It will matter not that a black man will not turn to a white man or a Muslim to a Christian. It will not matter if a young person looks to one his or her own age or turns to someone older.

And yet it will matter that someone will look at you and see that you are not so different than he or she. It will matter that someone will look at you and be drawn to the truth of him- or herself that is seen reflected there. What I am saying is that your differences can serve our purpose until differences are no longer seen. What I am saying is that you can remain confident in your personal self, knowing that your personal self will serve those you are meant to serve. What you have seen as your failings or weaknesses are as valuable as are your successes and strengths. What has separated you will also unite you.

- 21.23 It is not being said that anyone should, or will, remain blind to the unity that exists beyond all barriers of seeming differences such as those of race and religion. It is simply being said that they do not matter. It will not matter if a person turns to someone “like” him- or herself to find the truth, or if a person turns to someone totally “unlike” him- or herself to find the truth. As has been said many times, willingness is the starting point and as can be surely understood, where one is willing another may not be.
- 21.24 There is no “other” who can follow the call meant for you. No other who can give the response you are meant to give. Do not make any false plans that give your power to others more learned of this Course than you to be the savior only you can be. Do not think that only those who are more bold than you or who speak more eloquently or who are better examples of a good and saintly life are those who will lead the way for others to follow. Do not give in to the idea that one special one is needed nor give to any one a role you would not claim for yourself. No leaders and no followers are needed. This is quite obviously an old way of thinking. While no one is called to evangelize, all are called equally to represent the truth and to observance of the truth. That you each will do this in ways unique to who you are must be further addressed and seen as it relates to the relationship between the personal self and the Self; the truth and its representation and observance.

**A TREATISE
ON THE NEW**

THE FOURTH TREATISE

CHAPTER 1

All Are Chosen

- 1.1 Let me tell you what this Treatise will not be about. It will not be predictive. It will leave no one out. It will not appeal to fear nor give you cause for fear. It will not be about tools or tell you that some have the tools for accomplishment and that others do not. It will continue the view from within the embrace, an embrace and a view that is inclusive of all.
- 1.2 It will, however, be conclusive. It will separate truth from illusion in ways that will make some uncomfortable. It will continue to challenge your former ideas and beliefs as have the previous Treatises. But it will do this only to reach a conclusion of certainty from which you can live.
- 1.3 In doing so, it may seem to you as if some will be left out and as if you are being told that you can achieve what many others have tried and failed to achieve. These are the types of ideas that will cause discomfort to many of you as you still find it hard to believe in your own worthiness, and particularly in your own chosenness. It is this idea of being chosen that will cause your mind to conclude that some are not chosen now and that many were not chosen in the past.
- 1.4 Can you choose what is unavailable for choosing? Can you choose to own another's property? Take another's husband or wife? Choosing is not taking. Choosing implies relationship. Just as there are answers to choose between on a test, some of them correct and some of them incorrect, there are some answers that are not offered to be chosen because they do not relate to the question. All of the commandments and all of the beliefs of all of the world's religions are but related to this idea of choosing, a process of the free will with which you all are endowed.
- 1.5 A question has been asked and a response is awaited. Are you willing to be chosen? Are you willing to be the chosen of God? All are asked. What is your answer?
- 1.6 Why, you might ask, is a word such as *chosen* used, when many other

words would do, and when the concept of *being chosen* is one laden with so many false ideas about exclusivity? I am using this word specifically because of the precedent of its use historically. Many different groups believe they are the chosen people of God, or Buddha, or Muhammad. Many of this generation believe they are a chosen generation. Neither way of thinking is wrong. All are chosen.

- 1.7 An elementary example might be useful. In many countries, all are given the opportunity to go to school. This might be as easily stated as all are chosen for schooling. Some might look at this as lack of choice, saying that anything that is mandatory allows no room for choice. In their rebellion against the mandatory nature of their chosenness or opportunity, they might easily choose not to learn. The nature of life, however, is one of learning, and if they do not learn what is taught in school, they will, by default, learn what is not taught in school. If you can consider this example with no judgment, you can see it simply as a choice.
- 1.8 As is clearly being seen amid many school systems in the current time, the choice to not learn what is taught in school, when taken up by many, becomes a crisis in education that calls for education to change. It may signal that what is taught is no longer relevant, or that the means of teaching what is relevant no longer works. It may be a choice made regarding means or content, a choice made from fear or made from love. But there is, in other words, no lack of choice. A choice is always made. A choice to accept or reject, say yes or say no, to learn this or to learn that, to learn now or to learn later.
- 1.9 There but seems to be a difference in the “educated” choice and the “uneducated” choice. Many of you may look back on choices that you made and say, “I would have chosen differently if I had but known” this or that. The choice is the way of coming to know. No choice is not such. No choice ever excludes anyone from coming to know his or her chosen lesson.
- 1.10 This curriculum is mandatory and so some have rebelled and will rebel against it. Those who do not choose to learn from the curriculum, will, like school children, learn through what is not of the curriculum because they have *chosen* another *means* of learning. *Means* is what is being spoken of here. But all means are for one end. All will learn the same content, for all are chosen; and all learning, no matter what the means, will eventually lead them to the truth of who they are.

- 1.11 The choice that lies before you now concerns what it is you would come to know. The question asked throughout this Course is if you are willing to make the choice to come to know your Self and God *now*. This is the same as being asked if you are willing to be the chosen of God. This is the same question that has been asked throughout the existence of time. Some have chosen to come to know themselves and God directly. Others have chosen to come to know themselves and God indirectly. These are the only two choices, the choices between truth and illusion, fear and love, unity and separation, now and later. What you must understand is that all choices will lead to knowledge of Self and God, as no choices are offered that are not such. All are chosen and so it could not be otherwise. But at the same time, it must be seen that your choice matters *in time*, even if all will make the same choice eventually.
- 1.12 As was said within “A Treatise on the Personal Self,” even the house of illusion is held within the embrace of love, of God, of the truth. Does this sound exclusive to you? The embrace is inclusive. All are chosen.
- 1.13 And yet, as many of you have come instinctively to feel, something is different now. You are beginning to become excited by the feeling that something different is possible; that you might just be able to achieve what others have not; that this time might just be different than any other time. Even as you begin to tentatively let this excitement grow, your loyalty to your race, species, and the past, hinders your excitement. If what you are beginning to believe might be possible is possible, and has been possible, are you to look on all of those who have come before you as failures? Has the seed of the future lain dormant in the past? Could it have been activated hundreds or thousands of years ago, by countless souls more worthy than you, and ushered in the time of heaven on earth and the end of suffering long ago? Could many have been spared who weren’t? How capricious this must seem in your imaginings. What a fickle universe. What a perverse God. If an end to suffering and fear has been possible, and is possible, why has it not come to be? Why has it not been known? What could possibly make you believe it could come to be now when it didn’t come to be before?
- 1.14 The only answer might seem to lie in the laws of evolution, the slow learning and adaptive process of man. Surely this would seem a likely answer and one to assuage your guilt and uncertainty, your fear of believing

in yourself and in this time as the time to end all time. There must be something different about this time, the capabilities of those existing within it. It must be your science or technology, your advanced mental abilities, or even your leisure time that has opened up this opportunity. The only alternative would seem to be that this must be simply the chosen time and you the chosen people. If the chosen time had been two thousand years ago, life would have been different since then. If Jesus Christ were the chosen one, his life would have changed the world. If the Israelites were the chosen people, so much calamity would not have befallen them. And so the idea of choice rears its head again and wraps the simple statement that All Are Chosen in confusion.

1.15 This confusion is what this Treatise will seek to dispel so that you are left with no confusion and only certainty. The only thing that will dispel this confusion and bring you the certainty that is needed to create the new world is an understanding of creation and your role within it, both as Creators and Created.

1.16 As was said within “A Treatise on the Personal Self,” all notions of blame must be gone from you. Thus, you are asked not to look back with blame, for no such cause for blame exists. No cause to look back exists at all, for the truth exists in the present. This is the same as saying the truth exists within you. It is in this way that time is not real and will no longer be real to you as you come to live by the truth. It is in this way that the truth of the past still lives and that the illusion of the past never was.

1.17 The difference between this time and the time that has but seemed to have gone before has already been stated as the difference between the time of the Holy Spirit and the time of Christ. This has also been restated as the difference between the time of learning through contrast and the time of learning through observation. It is further stated here as the difference between learning by contrast and indirect communication and learning through observation and direct communication or experience. The same truth has always existed, but the choice of a means of coming to know the truth has shifted. All were chosen and all are chosen.

1.18 You have completed God’s act of choosing you by choosing God. This is all the chosen people are in time—those who have chosen God as God has chosen them. That you have chosen God *and* chosen a new means of coming

to know the truth—the means of Christ-consciousness, is what has ushered in the new time.

- 1.19 Many came to know the truth by indirect means and shared what they came to know through similarly indirect means. This is the nature of learning and of sharing in relationship. Means and end are one. Cause and effect are the same. It is these indirect means of communicating the truth that have led to your advances in science and technology, and to the refinement of your minds, hearts and senses, not the reverse. Your ancestors have done you a great service. With the means they had available—in the chosen means of a chosen consciousness united in oneness with the Holy Spirit—they passed on, indirectly, all that they came to know. This indirect means of communication is the reason for the existence of churches, and these means too have served you well.
- 1.20 But these indirect means of communication left much open to interpretation. Different interpretations of indirectly received truth resulted in different religions and varying sets of beliefs that, in the way of the time—the way of learning through contrast—provided contrast through dissent. The good in which one believed became the evil that another fought and in the contrast learning did occur and has continued to occur even unto this time. You have learned much of the nature of the truth by seeing what you have perceived as the contrast between good and evil.
- 1.21 It is the truth that you have now learned all that can be learned from this state of consciousness and that you have given your willingness to learn in a new way. The new way is here. If you are now to learn directly, you are also now to share directly. This is the way of learning in relationship. Means and end are one. Cause and effect are the same.
- 1.22 You have felt this shift coming and so has the world. This is the yearning we have spoken of as the proof of love's existence and of your existence in a state of unity rather than a state of separation. This yearning called you to the limits of the state of consciousness that was the time of the Holy Spirit. This limit acted upon you as a catalyst to create desire for the new. It is what has caused your growing impatience with the personal self, with acquiring all that your new learning in science and technology but seemed to offer. It is what has caused your growing desire for meaning and purpose. It is what has caused you to finally be ready to still your fear,

a fear that once prevented the direct and observable learning that now is available to you.

- 1.23 While the state of the world and the people within it may not outwardly seem much changed from the world of your ancestors despite the advances of learning that have taken place, it is a different world. You have not known the secret yearning in the hearts of your brothers and sisters, nor have you known that it matched your own. You may have seen the acts that this yearning has driven them to and thought, incorrectly, that the new time that is here is the end of the days of innocence. You may have thought it advantageous to have once been so clearly able to see the contrast between good and evil and feel now as if these distinctions have become more and more obscure. Some have yearned for a return to days not long past, days during which distinctions between right and wrong did seem to be more certain. But the very blurring of these edges have been the forerunners, the signs of the shift in consciousness that is occurring.
- 1.24 All across the world, people of the world have been demanding to learn directly, through experience, and saying “no more” to the lessons of the intermediaries. What has grown in you has grown in your children and they are not only ready, but also demanding to learn through observation and direct communication or experience. Many not yet grown to maturity have been born into the time of Christ, and do not fit within the time or the consciousness of the Holy Spirit.
- 1.25 For a short time, an overlap is occurring during which those unable to allow themselves to become aware of the new state of consciousness are resisting it, again indirectly. Some occupy themselves with mind and spirit numbing activities in order to block it out, having chosen to die within the state of consciousness in which they have lived. Others do not wish to experience the truth directly, but only to experience experience. They are in the desperate throes of wanting to experience everything before they allow themselves to directly experience the truth, thinking still that the experience of the truth will exclude much that they would want to try before they give into its pull and settle there. But all have become aware that a new experience awaits and that they stand at the threshold of choice.
- 1.26 Those born into the time of Christ will settle for nothing less than the truth and will soon begin looking earnestly for it. Even the ego-self will be

perceived clearly by these, and they will not want it for their identity but only will accept it until another identity is offered.

- 1.27 Let me repeat that during the time of the Holy Spirit, some were able to come to know themselves and God through the indirect means of this state of consciousness and to pass on what they learned through indirect means. Fewer were able to achieve a state of consciousness in which direct communication was possible, to come to know themselves and God directly, and to pass on this learning through direct means. What I am saying is that it is not impossible for those who remain unaware of the new consciousness to come to know themselves and God, and to continue to pass their learning on indirectly, or through indirect communication and contrast. But this also means that the great majority will become aware of the new state of consciousness and that learning will pass through them directly through observation and direct communication or experience. It means that the last generation born into the time of the Holy Spirit will live out their lives and that soon all who remain on earth will be those born into the time of Christ.
- 1.28 This is the truth of the state of the world in which you exist today.

CHAPTER 12

A Prelude to The Dialogues

- 12.1 Welcome, my new brothers and sisters in Christ, to the creation of the future through the sustainability of Christ-consciousness. Today we join together to birth the new.
- 12.2 From this time on, I will respond to you through direct communication or dialogue rather than through teaching. As with all new means of doing anything, this dialogue must have a starting point. This is it.
- 12.3 At this time, there is a gathering of pioneers of the new already in existence. They are beginning to see that they learn as one. They are beginning to see that their questions are the same. They are beginning to see that they share in means not confined to the physical senses.
- 12.4 This prelude will address them individually and collectively, and as you join with them in unity, you will realize that it also addresses you individually and as part of the collectivity of the whole. This dialogue will, however, be ongoing, and this is your invitation to participate in this dialogue. No matter where you are, no matter what concerns you still hold within your heart, no matter what questions are emanating from your mind, they will be met with a response.
- 12.5 Two changes of enormous proportions are upon you. The first is the end of learning, the ramifications of which will only slowly occur to your mind and be surprising revelations there. The second is the beginning of sharing in unity, a change that your heart will gladly accept but that your mind, once again, will be continuously surprised to encounter.
- 12.6 Take delight in these surprises. Laugh and be joyous. You no longer have a need to figure things out. Surprises cannot be figured out! They are meant to be joyous gifts being constantly revealed. Gifts that need only be received and responded to.
- 12.7 Once these dialogues are sustainable without need of the written word, the written word will be less necessary. In the meantime, let me explain why

these written words are not the acts of an intermediary and why they represent direct learning.

12.8 The simple and complete explanation of the non-intermediary nature of this dialogue is that it exists in unity. It is given and received in unity. Intermediary steps were needed only for the separate state. All conditions that were intermediary in nature during the time of learning, are, during the time of sharing, naturally converted to direct experiences of sharing.

12.9 Thus, if you have been religious, abandon not your churches, for you will find within them now, direct experiences of sharing. If you have found guidance and comfort in the written word, abandon not the written word, for the written word will now elicit direct experiences of sharing. If you have enjoyed learning through gatherings of students, gather still, and experience sharing directly. If a time arrives when you no longer feel drawn to these modes of sharing, share anew in ever-wider configurations.

12.10 All you must remember now is that the time of learning is past. While you are still encountering concerns and questions, you will be prone to continue to think of yourself as a learning being. While these dialogues continue to address these same questions and concerns, you will be prone to think of them as teaching dialogues and to consider yourself still a student. Considering yourself thus is simply a condition of the old for which you will need to be vigilant. You will be again surprised, however, to find what an enormous difference the release of this idea will make in your capacity to express who you are. As long as you continue to invite learning, you will continue to invite the *conditions* of learning. These are the conditions you have experienced throughout your lifetime and have expressed a willingness to leave behind. Only you can leave these conditions behind. The only way to do so is to, for a short while, be vigilant of your thought patterns so that you eradicate the idea of learning in separation and replace it with the idea of sharing in unity. Learning is a condition of the separated self, which is why it is no longer needed. You will not fully realize unity while you continue to hang on to this condition of the separation.

12.11 Another thing that you will want to be vigilant of, dear brothers and sisters, is the learned wisdom of the past. Let me give you an example that relates to the state of rebellion that was discussed within the text of this Treatise.

- 12.12 This example arose from one of those already gathered who was questioning the state of contentment. She quoted a learned priest and scholar who spoke of how he knew, as soon as he was content within the life of the monastery, that it was time to once again move out into the world. What he was really saying was that he saw the dawning of his contentment as the sign that one period of learning was over and that it was time to move on to the next. During the time of learning, this statement was consistent with learned wisdom. During the new time of sharing, there is no “next phase” of learning for you to move on to. There is no reason for you not to exist in continual contentment. Continual contentment will not stunt your growth or prevent you from sharing or from expressing yourself anew.
- 12.13 Is this not a good example of the *learned wisdom* that needs to be left behind? But what of the questions it raises? Do you not respond to the idea of continual contentment with doubt? Not only doubt that it can be continual but with doubt that you would desire it to be? These questions relate to our earlier discussion of temptations of the human experience. Are you willing to leave them behind? Are you willing, for instance, to leave behind the idea that contentment cannot and *should* not last? That lasting contentment, like unto a lasting peace, would somehow stunt your growth? Can you see that your idea of growth was synonymous with your idea of learning? That you were always both awaiting and dreading your next learning challenge?
- 12.14 Why was this so? You eagerly awaited each learning challenge in the hopes that it would bring you to the state in which you now abide! You dreaded each learning challenge because you feared that it would not bring you to this state and that you would continue to need to learn, and to perhaps suffer from, the conditions of learning!
- 12.15 You have arrived! The long journey that brought you here is over. Grow not impatient or desirous of a return to journeying before you begin to experience the joy of sharing and the new challenges of creating the new! This will be joyous journeying and your challenges will be joyous challenges!
- 12.16 The state of rebellion was the effect of the cause of learned wisdom. It became part of the nature of the human experience by becoming so consistent within you that it came, through the passing down of the human experience, to be integral to your nature. Have you not always been told and seen examples of man pushing against his limits? Has not this pushing

against limits been called progress? Have not even the most devastating misuses of power attained through this rebellion been seen retrospectively as having advanced the cause of man's evolution and society's knowledge?

12.17 This is just a beginning point of your ability to see what learned wisdom has wrought. This is a necessary end point of your review of your experience here so that you do not continue to advance learned wisdom. Learned wisdom will tell you to work hard. Learned wisdom will tell you that the strong survive, the mighty prevail, the weak shall perish. I attempted to dislodge much of this learned wisdom during my time on Earth and man is still puzzling over the meaning of my words. The time for puzzlement is over. Pass on no more of the prevailing learned wisdom. I told you once we would create a new language and thus we shall! We are creators of the new and we must start somewhere. Why not here?

12.18 Think and speak no more of the suffering of the past. Spread the joyous news! Tell only joyous stories. Advance the idea of joyous challenges that allow for all the creativity you have put into challenges of the past but without the struggle. Let not the idea of struggle take hold in the new. Let not the idea of fear take hold in the new. Let not the idea of judgment take hold in the new. Announce far and wide freedom from the old ideas, the learned wisdom of old. What could be more invigorating, more challenging, more stimulating to your enrichment, than throwing out the old and beginning again? And doing so without effort, without struggle. What could be more looked forward to than the chance to create the new through sharing in unity and relationship with your brothers and sisters in Christ?

12.19 I know you still have questions, dear brothers and sisters. I know that you will experience times of not knowing how to proceed. I know that you will occasionally have setbacks and choose the conditions of learning instead of sharing in unity in order to realize some bit of knowledge that you feel is necessary before you can go on. But I ask you to try to remember to turn to the new rather than the old each time you think you are experiencing uncertainty or lack.

12.20 The only thing that is going to hold you back from your ability to sustain Christ-consciousness is doubt about yourself. You must constantly remember that doubt about yourself is fear, and reject the instinct, so engrained into your singular consciousness, to let doubt of yourself take hold

of you. Even though you are abiding now in the state of Christ-consciousness, the *pattern* of the old thoughts will continue until they are replaced by a new pattern. That self-doubt arises in your thought patterns will not mean that you have cause for self-doubt. You have no cause for self-doubt because you have no cause for fear. To dwell in fear will end your ability to dwell within the love that is Christ-consciousness. As there is no longer any cause for self-doubt there are no *reasons* for self-doubt. Do not examine yourself for reasons for self-doubt when it arises. The self-centeredness of the final stage of learning is over.

12.21 Your “centeredness” must now be focused on sharing in unity and relationship, and thus creating anew in unity and relationship. Along with the creation of a new language, another imperative creation with which to begin our new work is that of new patterns. The patterns of old were patterns designed for the optimal benefit of learning. These patterns were created by the one mind and heart that you share in unity with God. The new patterns of sharing in unity and relationship and thus creating unity and relationship are only now being created by the one mind and heart that you share in unity with God. You will be the co-creator of the new pattern of consciousness that is sharing in unity and relationship, as you were once the co-creator of the pattern of consciousness that was learning.

12.22 Again let me remind you that we are speaking of the new. There has always been a state of consciousness that we are here calling Christ-consciousness. There has never been a sustained Christ-consciousness in form. The Christ-consciousness that has always existed, a consciousness of what *is*, is an all-inclusive consciousness, the consciousness of the embrace. It is not a learned state, as was the singular consciousness of the human form. It is your innate consciousness, a consciousness far too vast to be learned but one easily shared by all.

12.23 In other words, you, as a being of singular consciousness, could learn the thought patterns of a singular consciousness because it was a finite consciousness, a consciousness with limits. You, as a being joined in Christ-consciousness, must share this consciousness *in order* to know it. It cannot be grasped by the singular consciousness. You could think of this as something which, were it integrated into the thought processes of the singular brain, would cause brain damage, because it would cause an over-

load of information. The singular consciousness would act like a computer with a full drive and reject the information or be overcome by it if such were possible. Such is not possible, because Christ-consciousness is not available to the separated self. Christ-consciousness is the consciousness of unity for unity is what *is*.

- 12.24 You now exist within a shared consciousness. The pattern of a shared consciousness is one of sharing in unity and relationship. There is no pattern within it for learning (which is individual), for individual gain, or for individual accomplishment.
- 12.25 But realize, those of you who would mourn this as a loss, that you have already achieved all that was possible to achieve as an individual. The purpose of individual learning was the return of unity! Pause a moment here, and celebrate this feat of the personal self! The personal self, through the self-centeredness of the final stages of learning, has achieved the ultimate achievement possible! Let yourself be grateful for the learning you have achieved. Celebrate this graduation, this anointing, this passage. And leave it behind. Realize that it has made you new. Rejoice and be glad and turn your attention to the new. Attend to the dawning of the consciousness of unity. Realize that it is a truly *new* state, a state that cannot be learned, a state the awareness of which can only be revealed to you through unity and relationship.
- 12.26 Realize this without fear, for I am with you. This is akin to being stranded in a foreign land with none of the ways you learned how to adapt in the past being of service to you. That is how new this is—and more. But the difference is that you are not alone and that you are not in a foreign land but returned to your home of origin. What you cannot learn you can remember. What you cannot learn will simply be known through sharing.
- 12.27 It is the *way* in which you will come to remember and share in unity that concerns you now and what we are speaking of when we talk of patterns. There was a pattern to the process of learning that was shared by all learners and inherent to your natures. The means were different for each, but the pattern was the same. There was an overall design that ensured optimal learning and that design was known to you in the pattern of that design, a pattern that was part of the pattern of your thoughts, even after the ego came to rule your thought system. Without this pattern, the ego could have

- succeeded in becoming the ruler of the personal self. Part of this design and pattern was the freedom of free will.
- 12.28 Free will continues in the pattern of Christ-consciousness. Love continues. The individual or singular consciousness that was appropriate to the time of learning does not continue. Thus the new pattern is one of creation in relationship and unity rather than learning. What this means will be revealed to you and shared by all who abide within Christ-consciousness because you abide in a consciousness of unity through your choice.
- 12.29 You do not have to choose to share, because you cannot *not* share. You do not have to continually choose unity, because you have already chosen unity and abide there. You do, however, have to refrain from choosing separation. You do have to refrain from choosing learning and the conditions of learning.
- 12.30 What will help you to remain doubt-free and thus fear-free and continually able to sustain Christ-consciousness, is coming to know the new design, and the new patterns that reveal the design. This new design, and the new patterns that will be helpful to you in its sustainability, are what must be created through our sharing in unity and be communicated through our continuing dialogues with one another.
- 12.31 This is a prelude to but one form of these dialogues. Sharing in unity is automatic. It is the nature of Christ-consciousness. Once you have adapted to this nature you will realize that what is communicated through our dialogues and those you share with your brothers and sisters, is simply communication of what already *is*. This will help you to adapt to the revelations that replace learning. This will help you to adapt to the truth of a sharing you will have received even before it is communicated through the means to which you are accustomed. It will help us together to establish the new patterns by which you and those who come after you, will more fully come to awareness of all they have inherited and all it is within their power to create.
- 12.32 I do not have the answers that would continue to make of me a teacher and you a student. The answers to the elevation of the personal self and the living of Christ-consciousness in form are yet to be revealed and shared. This is the time that is before us, the time of creation of the future, the time of the creation of a future not based upon the past.

- 12.33 This time is before *us*. Because you are a being still existing in form, you still exist in the realm of time and space. Yet time and space no longer separate us, and the creation of the design or pattern that reveals our lack of separation is part of the creation that is before *us*. It will be mutually decided through the coming revelations and our responses to the revelations of the new.
- 12.34 Creation of the new has begun. We are an interactive part of this creative act of a loving Creator. Creation is a dialogue. Creation—which is God and us in unity—will respond to our responses. Will respond to what we envision, imagine and desire. Creation of the new could not begin without you. Your willingness for the new, a willingness that included the leaving behind of the old, a willingness that included the leaving behind of fear and judgment and a separate will, was necessary to begin creation of the new. Your former willingness to accept the old but kept creation's power harnessed to the old. Does this not make perfect sense when you realize that creation, like God, is not "other than" who you are? How could creation proceed on to the new without you?
- 12.35 What will the future hold? It is up to us dear brothers and sisters. It is up to us acting as one body, one mind, one heart. It is up to us creating as one body, one mind, one heart. Because it is the new future of a new form joined in unity and relationship, the only guarantees that are known to us is that it will be a future of love, a future without fear, a future with unlimited freedom. For what more could we ask? And what more could be asked of us?
- 12.36 Make no mistake that what is asked of us is everything. What is asked is our total willingness to abandon the old, our total willingness to embrace the new. But also make no mistake that what is given to us is everything. All the power of creation is released onto us. Let us begin.

**THE DIALOGUES
OF A COURSE OF LOVE**

BOOK THREE

CHAPTER 1

Acceptance of the State of Grace of the Newly Identified Child of God

1.1 Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

1.2 I come to you today as co-Creator of the Self you are and the Self you hope to represent with your physical form. I come to you today not as a personal self who is “other” than you, but as a divine Self who is the same as you. In our union we bear the sameness of the Son of God. In going forth with the vision of unity you become as I was during life. You “receive” and you “give” from the well of the spirit. You need not prepare or plan, you need only to claim your inheritance, your gifts, your Self.

1.3 What this means in practical terms is that you let the personal self step back and the true Self step forward. Realize that all of your “concerns” are still for the personal self, a self whom you continue to believe can fail to fulfill or live your mission and your purpose. You “see” this failure occurring through ineptness of speech, through inappropriateness of attire, through lack of physical stamina, through lack of intelligence—through lack, in other words, of abilities of the personal self. As long as you “see” such visions, you “see” the pattern of the personal self going forth much as it did before. You do not “see” the new, the new Self of elevated form or the true Self of divine union. You “see” the separated self still “trying,” still “struggling,” still fumbling along. You do not see the natural grace and order of the universe extending into the realm of the elevated Self, the space of the elevated Self. As long as you see in this way, you keep the personal self in the forefront rather than allowing and aiding the personal self in the stepping back that is required in order for the true Self to step forward.

1.4 All of this confusion and struggle is occurring because you do not

know what to do to prepare. You have not been convinced that you are done preparing as you are done with learning. You still want to figure out what to do, what comes next, what you need to learn, how to better “prepare” for what is ahead.

- 1.5 And yet you know that you have been prepared by me, and that in union with me you cannot fail. You cannot fail to be prepared, for you are already accomplished. What will it now take for your mind to accept this truth? For the mind’s acceptance of this truth is what is needed.
- 1.6 Your heart knows the reality of this truth, knows that this new reality is real and different from the reality of old. Ideally, mind and heart in union together accept this new reality and, with this acceptance, the heart is freed to dwell in the house of the Lord, the new world, the Kingdom that has *already* been prepared and so needs no preparation.
- 1.7 This acceptance is crucial to the elevation of the personal self. Without this acceptance the personal self must still struggle and try, prepare and plan. It does not know how to do otherwise. You do not think you know how to do otherwise.
- 1.8 This is the final surrender. The surrender of the control of the personal self. Even with the ego gone, the personal self can continue to move about within the world, a faceless and nameless entity, a being without an identity, humble and selfless and ineffective. For there must be cause to engender effect.
- 1.9 These anti-ego tendencies are a real danger in this time. You are not called to selflessness but to *Self!*
- 1.10 This is the transition you have felt yourself to be in. The ego is gone but the true Self has not been allowed as yet to dwell within the personal self, thus elevating the personal self. You have thus been self-less for a time and the personal self has floundered from this lack of identity. A person could literally die during this time from lack of identity, lack of cause. To die to the personal self is not what is required any longer as we work instead to elevate the personal self. This elevation occurs through the acceptance of your true identity, not through being identity-less. The reign of the ego began during just such a time of identity-less-ness. You cannot go on in such a way.
- 1.11 Help is here. Be what you have been called to be. Open your dwelling place to your true Self, your true identity. Imagine this opening and this replace-

ment occurring with every fiber of your being. Imagine the separate self being enfolded, embraced, and finally consumed—taken into the Self of union. The body of Christ becomes real through this indwelling of Christ in form.

1.12 This thought makes you worry about the identity of the one you have called yourself. This has been the purpose of many renaming ceremonies that symbolize the release of the old and the acceptance of the *new*. This occurs in one form or another in the sacraments you have known as Baptism, Confirmation, and Marriage. Each of these invite a new *identity*. So, too, do we invite a new identity now. While these sacraments have largely lost their meaning, the sacrament I now call you to restores meaning. Since new names are only symbols of new identities, renaming is not required or expected here. We go beyond what can be symbolized to what can only be known within. It is to this state of grace that I call you now, today: The state of grace of the newly identified child of God.

1.13 Open your heart, for the one who dwells there in union with all will emerge from this opening. What was once a tiny pinprick of light becomes a beacon as you open your heart and allow your true identity to be what *is*, even within your form. You *are* in grace and union with the Source and Cause of unity. Be no longer causeless. You and your Source are one.

1.14 *I am no longer the personal self who was separate and alone.*

I am my Christ Self.

I dwell in unity.

My identity is certain.

This is the truth.

I am not less than I once was, but more.

Where once I was empty, I now am full.

Where once I dwelt in darkness

I now dwell in the light.

Where once I had forgotten

Now I remember who I Am.

Now I go forth

To live as who I Am within the world

To make cause and effect as one, and

Union with the Source of love and all creation the reality.

- 1.15 These Dialogues are for everyone because we exist in unity with everyone. No one will be forced to join our conversation. Only those listening will be ready to hear. Only those ready to hear will listen. Remember that you cannot be taught what unity would freely give. The goal is no longer learning. The goal is accepting the identity that has always been yours and that has newly been revealed and returned to your remembrance. To “know” and not accept what you “know” to be the truth is a continuation of the pattern of insanity that must be replaced with a pattern of sanity.
- 1.16 Insanity is acting as if the truth is not the truth. Sanity is accepting the truth as your reality and acting from that truth. Once the truth has been learned, the nature of untruth remains only as an acceptance of insanity. What I will help you now to do is to reject this insanity and to accept the perfect sanity of the truth.
- 1.17 This cannot be done through learning, for as you have been told, learning was the means of the separated self’s return to unity. These lessons have been given. They can be reviewed and reviewed again. They can be used as continuing lessons until you feel that learning is fully accomplished. They can serve as reminders as you continue to become the Self you have learned that you are. But further learning is not what will complete the transformation of the personal self to the elevated Self. Learning will not sustain Christ-consciousness.
- 1.18 So what is it that we will now do? If I do not teach, and you do not learn, what is our continuing means for completing this transformation? As you have been shown, this will not occur by means of preparation but by means of acceptance. This will not occur by means of trying but by means of surrender.
- 1.19 As you begin this Dialogue, questions naturally arise. You might think that for the receiver, or transcriber, of this Dialogue, this Dialogue may, in truth, feel like a dialogue, an exchange, a conversation, and wonder how you, as a reader of these words, can feel that same way. You can feel that same way by realizing that you are, as you read these words, as much a “receiver” of this Dialogue as she who first hears these words and transfers them to paper.
- 1.20 Is a piece of music not received by you even when you may be one of thousands or millions who hear it? Does it matter who is first to hear the music? This is, in truth, a dialogue between me and you. Wish not that

the “way” of the transcriber of these words were the way for everyone, and think not that to hear “directly” from the Source is different than what you do here. This is thinking with the mindset of separation rather than the mindset of unity. What I say to you here, I say to *you*. It matters not that I say these same words to many, for you and the many who join you in receiving these words are one.

- 1.21 These Dialogues begin with prayer to remind you of what you have learned in unity, a learning that has been different from all learning you but thought you accomplished as a separated self. You have achieved an incredible feat by allowing and accepting the state of unity even though you could not learn how to do so. This has been the difficulty with every curriculum that has sought to teach the truth. In order for the truth to be truly learned, you first had to enter a state in which this learning could occur, a state that could not be taught but only accessed through your longing and desire.
- 1.22 You who have joined mind and heart in unity have returned to a natural state of knowing in which learning is no longer needed. You have now come upon a curriculum that is impossible to learn. No teacher is available for none is needed. And yet many of you still feel what you would describe as a need for continued learning and a continuing relationship with a teacher who will guide you through the application of what you have learned. You dare not, as yet, to turn to your own heart, and trust the knowing that has been returned to you as you begin to live in the reality of the truth.
- 1.23 This is akin to thinking of a god who exists outside or apart from yourself. If you fully accepted your true identity, you would no longer look outside of yourself for guidance for you would realize that your Self is all there is. We are one body, one Christ. We are one Self.
- 1.24 Your Self is not the person you have been since birth. Your body does not contain you. What you are going to find happening, as you accept your true identity, is a transference of purpose concerning your body. What once you saw as yourself, you now must come to see only as a *representation* of your Self. You *are* everything and everyone. All that you see *is* you. You stand not separate and apart from anything.
- 1.25 We are one body.
- 1.26 Learning accepts that there are those separate from you who know things that you know not. This is not the case. When you fully accept this,

you will see that it is true. Like the acceptance of unity that could not be taught, but was the condition for learning, acceptance of your true identity cannot be taught but is the condition necessary for being who you are and the realization that learning is no longer necessary.

1.27 Thus we work now toward acceptance of what you have learned in unity. We work towards your acceptance of sanity and your rejection of insanity. We work together in love and unity for what can only be received in the love and unity in which we truly exist together, as one body, one Christ, one Self.

CHAPTER 3

The Covenant of the New

- 3.1 The Covenant of the New is simply our agreement to proceed together on the palm-strewn path of Christ-consciousness. It is a path upon which joy triumphs over sorrow and victory triumphs over defeat. All that it requires is the acceptance of the new and the denial of the old that will allow for the sustainability of Christ-consciousness in form.
- 3.2 My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, this is the call you have heard for as long as you can remember, the call you have heard as often as you have grown still and listened. It is the one beautiful note, the tolling of the bell of the Lord, your invitation to return home. This call has always sounded. It is not a death knell but a call to life. It is not of the past or the future but of the eternal now. It is within you as we speak, the tone and timbre of this dialogue.
- 3.3 It calls to you and asks you to invest your life with the very purpose you have always desired. You are not purposeless now. Your life is not meaningless. You are the ushers, the pioneers of the new. Your work, as will be often repeated, is to accept the new, and deny or refuse to accept the old. Only in this way will the new triumph over the old.
- 3.4 I have purposefully used words such as *victory* and *triumph*, words unusual to the body of this work but words that will become usual in our normal conversation in this dialogue. I use them as I use together the words *accept* and *deny*. As the old must be denied for the new to come into being, the old must be vanquished in order for the truth to triumph over illusion.
- 3.5 As the wholehearted, you have it within your ability to do what those who live their lives with a split mind could never do. You have it within your ability to mend the rift of duality, a state that was necessary for the learning of the separated self but that is no longer necessary. The mending of the rift between heart and mind returned you to your Self. In the same way, the mending of the rift of duality will return the world to its Self. The mending of the rift of duality was accomplished in you when you joined

mind and heart and returned to the oneness and unity of Christ-consciousness. Sustaining Christ-consciousness will accomplish the same thing in your world.

- 3.6 Duality and contrast are synonymous. In the time of the Holy Spirit, you learned through contrast. You learned from the contrast of good and evil, weak and strong, right and wrong. You learned from the contrast of love and fear, sickness and health, life and death. In this time of Christ, such learning is no longer necessary, and so these conditions of learning are no longer necessary. Thus one of your first acts of acceptance is the acceptance of the end of the conditions of learning. This does not mean, however, that you accept goodness and deny evil or even that you accept love and deny fear. How can this be?
- 3.7 Our first action in understanding what we are called together to do is to begin to declassify all the various aspects of life that were needed in the time of learning. This is why we began quite truthfully and simply with an acceptance of the new and denial of the old. This is as far as acceptance and denial need go. For if you give credence to the ideas of contrast, you bring those ideas forward with you into the new. We let the old go, and with it all ideas of contrast and opposites, of conflict and opposing forces. This is all that is needed for the new to triumph over the old. There are no battles needed, no victories hard won through might and struggle. This is what is meant by surrender. We achieve victory now through surrender, an active and total acceptance of what is given.
- 3.8 Let us talk again for a moment of the idea of giving and receiving as one that was introduced within *A Course of Love* and taught quite thoroughly in "A Treatise on Unity and Its Recognition". Let's talk of this now as an idea, rather than as something learned, and as an idea for you to carry forward with you into the new. This is the first of many ideas that were previously taught that I would like to talk of in a new way. These are ideas that address your true nature as a being existing in union, and this is why we call them ideas to carry forward. These are new ideas to you because you have recently learned them and through the art of thought begun to integrate them into the elevated Self of form. These are really not new ideas, however, but rather ideas of who you truly are birthed within the self of form so that the Self and the elevated Self of form are able to work with ideas birthed from the same source.

- 3.9 Ideas of who you truly are, birthed by the wholehearted self in union with all, are the ideas that will allow new patterns to emerge and the design of the future to be created. These are the ideas that replace the learned concepts we leave behind.
- 3.10 You will notice that all of these ideas have in common a quality of oneness. Oneness replaces duality or contrast. You will be seeking now for replacements for that which formerly ordered your life. Thus we will speak of these replacements.
- 3.11 That giving and receiving are one in truth is best understood by taking away the idea of one who gives and one who receives. If all are one, such ideas make no sense. This would seem to make the idea of giving and receiving as one senseless as well. In a way, this is true. Giving and receiving as one is senseless in terms related to a shared consciousness. Giving and receiving as one is not senseless, however, when that shared consciousness is occupying form.
- 3.12 All ideas leave not their source, thus giving and receiving is an idea, as are all ideas, that exists apart from form. Giving and receiving are thus one within the shared consciousness of unity, which is the same as saying giving and receiving are one in truth. A shared consciousness is the truth of who you are. The elevation of the personal self, however, requires that this giving and receiving as one be shared in form. Yet the elevated form, which now represents the shared consciousness of the Self, is not separate from the shared consciousness. Thus giving and receiving as one is now the nature of the elevated Self of form, and what we work toward through this dialogue is your full awareness of what this means.
- 3.13 Helping you to achieve full awareness of who you are is different than helping you to learn. As was said before, you know what you need to know. What we seek to achieve through this dialogue is acceptance and awareness of what you know. Acceptance is easily achieved through willingness. Full awareness *in form* of what has previously been hidden by the mists of illusion is the more challenging task.
- 3.14 Giving and receiving as one has become one in form as well as one in idea. What this means, simply stated once again, is that giving and receiving occur in unison, or in union. There is no “time” in which giving and receiving seem to be separate actions. There is no “time” in which giving and receiving

is not occurring. Giving and receiving as one thus simply describes the nature of the new, the nature of shared consciousness.

- 3.15 What might this mean to the elevated Self of form? Using this dialogue as an example will serve to explain. This dialogue is continuous and ongoing. It *is* giving and receiving as one. It is merely represented by the words on this page and the words on this page are but a representation of what is continuously being shared. So too is it with you. You, as the elevated Self of form, are a continual representation of what is continuously being given and received, what is continuously being shared. You are a representation, for instance, of this dialogue. You are a representation of all of your brothers and sisters in Christ. You are a representation of the truth. You are a representation of all that is given and received in truth. You are a representation of creation. A representation of union. You are a representation of the Self.
- 3.16 As the Self, you are giver and receiver. Your Self is a full participant in this dialogue. You as the Self *are* the truth. You as the Self *are* the creator and the created. You as the Self are union itself. This is what awareness is about. Consciousness has to do with that of which you are aware. To know what you now know, and remain aware only of the reality of the separated self, would not sustain Christ-consciousness in form.
- 3.17 This is why I will often repeat that I am no longer your teacher. You must realize your oneness with me and all that was created and you cannot do so while you think of me as teacher and yourself as student. While you think of yourself as a learning being you will still be looking to something or someone “other” than your Self rather than seeking the awareness that exists within.
- 3.18 This is not meant to convey any division between the Self and the elevated Self of form, but to demonstrate that there is a difference *in form* between the Self and the elevated Self of form. The Self was and will always remain more than the body. The body, however, is also newly the Self. The body is also, newly, one body, one Christ.
- 3.19 It is this difference that exists between the Self and the elevated Self of form that makes of us creators of the new, because the elevated Self of form is new. The Self is eternal. Your Self of elevated form is newly birthed, just as I was once newly birthed even though my Self was eternal. One of the major things we will be seeing as we proceed is the difference between form

and content and the difference in the way separate forms express content. It will be challenging to become aware that different expressions do not make different. These differences were spoken of within this Course as unique expressions of the selfsame love that exists in all.

3.20 As the system of nature supports the life of many different trees, the trees are all still of one life-giving and life-supporting system. Can this be said of any of the systems you have developed as a learning being? Are your systems life-giving and life-supporting? The patterns of the new will create only such life-giving and life-supporting systems—as long as the patterns of the new are accepted and lived with your full awareness.

3.21 Now I realize that this is just the first step revealed and that many of you will feel already as if you are being asked to learn again and not only that, but as if I have presented you with a concept difficult to learn. What you need remember now is that your separated self already learned this concept of giving and receiving, and that for the elevated Self of form it is simply a shared quality of oneness. It is not in need of learning or even understanding. It *is*. Awareness of what *is*, is a quality of Christ-consciousness. Thus you are already aware of the truth of giving and receiving being one. This awareness exists within you and you cannot any longer claim to be unaware of it through non-acceptance of what is.

3.22 These are your ideas as well as mine. They are the ideas of your brothers and sisters as much as they are of God. I am teaching you nothing, nothing old and nothing new. I am reminding you of what you know as I have reminded you of your identity.

3.23 What this portion of the dialogue attempts to do is to give you a language to support what you already know, and are already aware of, so that you are more comfortable with letting what you know serve you in your creation of the new. All—*all*—that you need in order to create the new is available within you. The power of the universe is given and received constantly in support of the creation of the new. This is what creation is! The entire universe, the All of All, giving and receiving as one. This is *our* power. And *our* power is needed for the creation of the Covenant of the New in this time of Christ.

CHAPTER 7

Time and the Experience of Transformation

- 7.1 Just as when you were a being existing in the shared consciousness of unity you couldn't know what the experience of form would be like without entering into it, you cannot know the experience of unity without entering into it. To "enter" into the experience of form is something you can picture in your mind, and that you have language to represent, because you are aware of the self of form. To "enter" into the experience of unity is something more difficult to imagine, and something for which you have little language.
- 7.2 You were told within this Course that what you learn in unity is shared. This language was used because you were still, at that time, a learning being. Now we will adjust our language somewhat to represent the new and restate what was said earlier as "What you *discover* in unity is shared." Learning does not occur in unity, but discovery is an ongoing aspect of creation and thus of the state of union in which you truly abide.
- 7.3 You were also told within this Course that because you were learning in separation, unity had to be experienced individually before learning could be shared at another level, and that levels are a function of time. We then talked of the integration of levels that collapse time. This integration of levels is the integration of form and unity. When Christ-consciousness is sustained, time will collapse and the sun may not need to rise or set to separate day into night. Resting and waking will be part of the same continuum of being.
- 7.4 Experiences of form take place in time because experience, too, was designed for learning. Now experience is needed in time to aid your total acceptance of what you have learned. In order to experience the new you must answer the call to let revelation and discovery, rather than learning, be what you gain from experience.

- 7.5 What was created cannot be uncreated. Thus transformation is needed. The miracle makes you fully aware of the embrace and the consciousness of unity and places you outside of time. In this state, no duality exists. Doing and being are one.
- 7.6 Action is the bridge between form and the formless because action is the expression of the self in form. “Right” action comes from the unity in which doing and being are one, or in other words from the state in which there is no division between who you are and what you do. “Right” action comes from the state of wholeness. Being whole is being all you are. Being all you are is what the elevated Self of form represents.
- 7.7 You have been told that you are time-bound only as a particular self, existing as man or woman in a particular time in history. Now you are called to discover how to exist in form without being defined by this time-bound particularity.
- 7.8 That you are living form does not require you to be defined by particularity. You can accept the body now as what it is in all its manifestations while not seeing it as “bound” by the particularity of time and space. It may still exist in a particular time and place, but this is simply the nature of one aspect of what you are. The nature of form is that it exists as matter, it occupies space and is perceptible to the senses. You have previously seen this one aspect of form as separating it from mind, heart, and spirit—those aspects that are not perceptible to the senses. But let me repeat that all that lives is from the same Source, and there is nothing more alive than mind and heart combined in the spirit of wholeheartedness.
- 7.9 Matter is simply another word for content, and need not be maligned. The content of all living things is the energy of the spirit of wholeheartedness. The content of all living things is, in other words, whole. By seeing only aspects of wholeness you have not seen content nor matter truly. You have not been aware of all that you are. You are thus now called to discover and to become aware of all that you are. The body, rather than aiding you in learning as it once did, will aid you now in this discovery.
- 7.10 Realize that this is a call to love all of yourself. You who once could love spirit *or* mind, mind *or* body—because of the dualistic nature associated with them—now can love all of your Self, all of God, all of creation. You can respond to love with love.

7.11 But again, we start with the body, returning love to it now. It is what it is, and nothing that it is, is deserving of anything other than love. This call to love all of your Self is a call to unconditional, nonjudgmental love. It is not just a call to nonjudgmentalness, but to nonjudgmental love. This nonjudgmental love is the condition upon which your discovery of all you do not yet know awaits.

7.12 Discovery is not the same as remembrance. Remembrance was necessary for your return to your true identity, the Self as it was created. Remembrance was not about what you did not know, but about what you knew but had forgotten. Memory has returned you to your Self. Discovery will allow the new you to come into being by revealing what you do not yet know about how to live as the elevated Self of form.

7.13 This discovery can only take place in the reality of love.

7.14 Being in love is a definition of what you now are as you accept the unconditional, nonjudgmental love of all. This is a transference of love from the particular to the universal. Loving all that you are, including your body, is not love of the particular but universal love. The old way in which you related to your body, be it a love or a hate relationship, was a particular relationship with the vessel that only seemed to contain you. It was a relationship with the separated self. Now, because your relationship is with wholeness, you can transfer love from the particular to the universal by loving all. We are one body, one Christ.

7.15 The observation, envisioning, and desire you have been practicing in order to be ready to accept revelation works hand in hand with the new pattern of discovery, but discovery is less time bound. Let me explain.

7.16 Observation takes place in time. Even while you have been called to observe what *is*, what you are observing in form are the representations of what *is* in time. Your envisioning too is bound to time and that is why so many of you think of envisioning as envisioning the future. Envisioning is less bound to time than is observation because it is not about what your body's eyes see, and will increasingly join with what you observe until your vision is released from old patterns and guides you more truly.

7.17 Desire is an acknowledgment of the uniqueness of each Self, and is a demonstration of means and end being the same. Desire keeps you focused on your own path and leaves you nonjudgmental of the paths of others. Yet

desire, like observation and vision, is still related to the self of form. It is a step toward full acceptance and awareness of who you are now and what this means as you become the elevated Self of form.

7.18 Revelation is of God. Observation, vision, and desire are steps leading you beyond what the individual, separated self sees, to the revelation of what *is*. These steps that lead to revelation are not ongoing aspects of creation, because they are related to particular forms as they exist in time. Time is not an aspect of eternity or of unity. Time is thus what has separated the self that exists in form from the Self that exists in union or the state of Christ-consciousness. By becoming one body, one Christ, you have accepted existence as a non-particular being in a state outside of time—you have accepted existence as a new Self, the Self of elevated form. You just do not yet understand what this means.

7.19 Discovery is not bound by time as it is an ongoing aspect of creation. As you were told in “A Treatise on the New”, the future is yet to be created. While this seems like a time-bound statement, it is not. It is merely one way of stating that creation is ongoing rather than static. That while creation *is* and *is* as it was created, it was created to be eternally expanding and expressing in new ways.

7.20 With your new awareness *you* are now linked, through the consciousness of unity, with the entire field of creation, rather than only with the time-bound field of creation of form. As your awareness grows, you will begin to expand and express in new ways. Those ways thus now include the form of your body without being limited to creation of, and in, form. The body has thus joined creation in a non-time-bound way.

7.21 Evolution is the time-bound way in which the body has participated in creation. This is why you have been told that you are not called to evolution. Time-bound evolution is the way of the creature, the natural response of the living organism to the stimulus of matter upon matter, and of the creature’s perception of its own experience in time. This time-bound evolution is really adaptation. It occurs in reaction to what is perceived as necessary for survival.

7.22 Time-bound evolution is still surely going on, and as the planet becomes crowded, as progress has left so many unfulfilled, as environmental concerns mount, even the perceived survival needs are leading you toward new answers of what survival may mean.

- 7.23 Everyone knows, in this time of Christ, that the end of the old way is near and that the new is coming. They are thus moving toward anticipation rather than adaptation, and evolution moves with them. But evolution in time is part of the old that needs to be left behind. It is a provision of the time of learning that allows the learning being to learn at his or her own pace and to pass this learning on in time.
- 7.24 Everyone knows that this has not worked to improve the fate of man. Everyone secretly fears that evolution will not keep pace with the changing world and that man's reign over his environment will come to an abrupt and painful end. Some even fear an evolutionary setback, and see any threat against civilization as they know it as a return to barbaric times.
- 7.25 These scenarios of fear we leave behind as we abandon ideas of evolution in time and proceed to an awareness of how the elevated Self of form can replace the laws of evolution in time with the laws of transformation outside of time.
- 7.26 In order to facilitate your understanding, I call you now to imagine your body as a dot in the center of a circle and the circle as representing all that you are. The dot of your body is all that is bound by time. What transformation outside of time asks you to do is to see the body as but this one, small, aspect of what you are. In observing both yourself and others, you have learned to view your body in the field of time. This will be helpful now as you begin to imagine the "more" that you are, the "more" that exists beyond the body's boundary and beyond the boundary of time and particularity.
- 7.27 This circle in which you have placed your body is not a circle of time and space. It is not a circle that can be drawn around where you exist so as to define, perhaps, a mile of space and say that this is all you. No, the circle that exists around you is the circle of shared consciousness, the circle of unity. In truth, this circle is everything, the All of All, the universe, God. But just as the Earth can be seen as your home, although you are rarely consciously aware of existing in this "larger" home, you will not always be aware of this circle of the Self as the All of Everything, and it will, in fact, be helpful as we begin, to imagine on a smaller scale.
- 7.28 You might begin by imagining first your actual, physical, home, then your neighborhood, community, city, state, country. You see yourself as most your "self" in your home, your neighborhood, your community. You

identify with the citizens of the city, state, and country you occupy. You have an address, perhaps a yard, or farm, perhaps a public spot that has become a favorite park or lake or beach that you consider partially yours. You have a route to and from your work or other places that you go, where you see familiar landmarks, structures, faces. You visit the homes of friends and relatives, your church, perhaps a school or library, certain restaurants or places of civic duty or social engagement. You may expand this small territory you call your own with business travel or vacations, and have more than one locale that feels like home; or you may never travel far from the building in which you dwell. What I ask you to do is to think of these areas as the territory of your body, and to remember that while this is your territory, it is a shared territory and a territory within the territory of planet Earth.

7.29 Thus we will begin once again with parameters, with a territory of shared consciousness, rather than with consciousness of the All of Everything. This territory we will call the territory of your conscious awareness. This territory of conscious awareness is shared with the larger consciousness of unity, just as the territory of your body is shared with those who live and work nearby. This territory of conscious awareness exists within the larger consciousness of unity, just as the territory of your body exists within the larger territory of the planet Earth. We will begin here, with the territory of your conscious awareness, knowing that discovery and revelation will expand this territory, and realizing that no matter how small this cosmic territory may be, it will still at times give way to awareness of the All of Everything.

**THE FORTY DAYS
AND FORTY NIGHTS**

DAY 10

Power

- 10.1 Power is the ability to *be* cause and effect. It is the ability to harness the cause and effect power of love. It is a quality of form as well as a quality of union. Form *is* the ultimate expression of the power of creation. The power of creation, harnessed *by* form in the service *of* form is the next step in the expansion of the power of creation. It is the power of the elevated Self of form.
- 10.2 See you now why the certainty of union must be combined with the confidence of the self of form? Certainty is knowing that this power exists. Confidence is the expression of your reliance upon it. To rely on your own power is to rely on the connection that exists between the self of form and the Self of union and to, through this reliance, tie the two together so that there is no seam, no boundary, no remaining separation.
- 10.3 We have talked before of conviction and your willingness to, like the apostles, let your conviction spring from your willingness to experience its cause and its effect. I am asking you now to be willing to move from conviction to reliance. I am not asking you to do this today any more than I am asking you to move from maintenance to sustainability today, I am merely making you aware of this difference, just as I made you aware of the difference between the states of maintenance and sustainability. As with the states of maintenance and sustainability, I am giving you cause for movement, the effect of which will be the movement from conviction to reliance.
- 10.4 Conviction is tied to belief, and to a former lack of belief that has been overcome. Reliance is not tied to belief nor to the overcoming of disbelief and thus releases you from the need for belief. Certainty is complete lack of doubt and any perceived need for doubt.
- 10.5 Realize that in the time of learning, you felt a need for your doubt just as you felt a need for your beliefs and for the reassurances that were important to your self-confidence. These needs are tied to your feelings and thus we

will return to a discussion of feelings in connection with the ideas of confidence, reliance, and certainty.

- 10.6 Confidence in your *feelings* will lead to confidence in your Self. While you think it is your access to unity that will be the more difficult to achieve and sustain, this will not be the case for most of you, for the simple reason that the certainty that comes from union will seem to come, at least initially, from a place other than the self. Because certainty seems to come from a place “other than” or beyond the self of form, you will instinctively have greater trust in it. You will believe it comes from a place “other than” or beyond the self of form *because* it comes in the form of certainty.
- 10.7 The feelings that lead you to either a state of confidence or to a state of lack of confidence could be spoken of most succinctly by considering your concept of intuition. You all understand intuition and each of you have had intuitive moments. You may have felt, for no good reason, as if you shouldn’t do something you were about to do. You may have trusted the intuition and then learned that had you done what you planned to do, an accident or some other event you would not have welcomed might have occurred. You may have never had any proof that following your intuition was the correct thing to do but still felt as if it was. Or you may have doubted your intuition and had something occur that made you think back and wish that you had not doubted it.
- 10.8 This intuition came as a feeling, but not necessarily as a feeling of certainty. You may have reacted to the intuition with confidence or with lack of confidence.
- 10.9 There are other instances of intuition that come, not as these seeming warnings, but as what you might call intuitive flashes of insight—intuition that causes you to make connections between point A and point B, be point A and point B distinct points in a scientific puzzle or murky points about relationships between lovers.
- 10.10 This type of intuition seems to come more as thought than as feeling, but even so, it is your feelings about such thoughts that will often determine how you act upon them. Do you trust in your intuition or do you doubt it?
- 10.11 What you have trusted in the most is rational thought, and intuition is different than rational thought, as are feelings of all kinds. You think of feelings either as that which comes to you through your five senses or as

emotions, and you have not trusted in these feelings as much as you have trusted in rational thought. This lack of trust works both for you and against you now. It works for you in that you do not have to resist and reject an existing trust as you do with the thoughts of the mind you call rational. It works against you because all feelings are capable of providing what you have called intuitive knowledge or insights and your distrust of this knowledge and insight will need to be overcome.

- 10.12 Feelings come from the innate knowing of the self of form—in short, from the body. The body is the “given” form and while it was the perfect vehicle for learning in the time of learning, it is now being transformed into the perfect vehicle for the realization of the elevated Self of form. During this transformation, we work with what *is* as well as with the new and the forgotten. This is why it has been said that the certainty that comes from access to unity may be less difficult for you to become aware of and accept than the confidence in the self of form that must accompany it. In developing the confidence of the self of form, we work with what has been in a new way, and as you all know from the time of learning, it is often more difficult to become adept in doing something in a way different than you have done it before than to do something completely new. This is because old patterns or habits must be done away with before achievement of a new way is possible.
- 10.13 This also relates to our discussion of image versus presence and to the image of your personal self that was discussed at the beginning of our dialogue. While you still hold an image of your personal self, you still hold inaccurate ideas about the feelings of the personal self. This is because your image of the personal self is based on the past and the feelings of the past. This is also because your image of the personal self is a mental construct, and not a simple mental construct but a whole set of thoughts, beliefs, and mental pictures.
- 10.14 Because you believe that your feelings have misled you in the past, you now still doubt your feelings. Because you have doubted yourself in the past, you now still look for reassurances and proof that you are “right” before you feel confidence and the ability to act. To “know” before you act is wise. But to think that doubting your feelings or seeking outside assurances of what you know will lead to either confidence or certainty is foolish.

- 10.15 Pause a moment here and consider our need for a distinction between the certainty you feel from unity and the confidence you need to feel in the self of form. Reflect further on your idea of certainty coming from a place “other than” the self. Realize in these reflections that you are still reliant on means “other than” the self, including your image of the state of unity and including your image of me. Although you have been called to union you still hold an image of the state of unity as separate from yourself. Although I have removed myself from the role of teacher and entered this dialogue with you as an equal, you still hold an image of me as “other than” yourself. You will never fully rely upon your Self while you hold these images.
- 10.16 When I call you to replace conviction with reliance, I call you to replace belief in an outside source with reliance upon your Self.
- 10.17 Part of the difficulty you find in accepting reliance on your Self is what you have “learned” within this Course. As you “learned” to remove the ego and deny the personal self, you transferred your reliance to me and to the state of unity. This was purposeful. Now, however, you are asked to return to wholeness, a state in which you are not separate from me or from the state of union.
- 10.18 You have “learned” the distinction between Christ-consciousness and the man Jesus. You have “learned” the distinction between your Self and the man or woman you are. Now you are called to forget what you have “learned” and to let all distinctions slip away. You are called to forget what you have learned and to realize what you know.
- 10.19 Thus I will speak to you from this point onward as the voice of Christ-consciousness, the voice of your own true consciousness, the consciousness that we truly share. I came to you in the form of the consciousness of the man I once was because you were, prior to this point, unready to give up image for presence, the individual for the universal, reliance on an outside source for reliance on yourself, Jesus for Christ-consciousness. You needed the reference point of a “person,” of a being who had lived and breathed and met challenges similar to your own. You have been unable to see the two as the same for you have not realized this sameness in yourself. This sameness of the person you are and Christ-consciousness, of union and presence, of the individual and the universal, is what the elevated Self of form must encompass.
- 10.20 I ask you not to give up your relationship with me as the man Jesus,

but to accept that the man Jesus was simply a representation, in form, of Christ-consciousness. I do, however, ask you to give up your identification of the voice of this dialogue as that belonging to the man Jesus who lived two thousand years ago. To continue to identify this voice with that man is to be unable to recognize this voice as the voice of your own true consciousness—the voice of Christ-consciousness. Yet to realize that this is the same voice that animated the man Jesus two thousand years ago will aid you in realizing that this is the voice that will now animate the elevated Self of form, or in other words, you.

10.21 I have spoken with you throughout this time as the man Jesus so that you realize that man and Christ-consciousness can be joined. That you, as man or woman, existing in this particular time and space, can join with Christ-consciousness. You can be both/and, rather than either/or. As I speak to you now as the voice of Christ-consciousness—as your own true Self—you will not have lost Jesus as your companion and helpmate but will only know more fully the content of the man Jesus. As you join with Christ-consciousness in this dialogue, you will realize you have not lost your Self but will only know more fully the content of your Self.

10.22 Remember that you have been told since the beginning of *A Course of Love* that the answers that you seek lie within, and that their source is your own true identity. You have been told since the beginning of this Course that this is the time of the second coming of Christ. What we have just discussed is what both of these statements mean. This is the culmination point of these two great objectives coming together in you and your brothers and sisters.

10.23 I will still be with you to point the way, but if you can cease to think of this as the wisdom of an outside source, if you can hear it and feel it and think of it as a true dialogue, a true sharing in relationship in which an exchange is taking place, you will further your progress greatly.

10.24 Let us talk a moment of this exchange, for it is a key to your understanding of your Self and your power. This dialogue, as one-sided as it may seem when presented in this way, *is* an exchange and will only become more so as we proceed. I am not imparting wisdom that you are unaware of but reminding you of what you have forgotten. I am not having a monologue, but we are having a dialogue in which you are a full participant. As much of what you read in these dialogues comes from your own heart and those of your

- brothers and sisters in Christ as it does from me. It comes, in truth, from our union, from the consciousness we share. This shared consciousness is the source of wisdom *because* it is shared—shared in unity and relationship.
- 10.25 Before we move on to the all-important discussion of unity and relationship, let me spend my final time with you as the man Jesus talking more of feelings.
- 10.26 It is highly unlikely that in your image of an ideal self you left much room for feelings of the type you currently experience. This is why we have recently spoken of anger and of those things which you dislike—why we have spoken, in short, of the feelings you would think would have no place within the ideal self or the elevated Self of form.
- 10.27 I asked you once before to review your ideas about the afterlife, a life in which most of you believe peacefulness reigns and the spirit is free of the body. Yet if you were to think now of a person whom you know who has died, you would not be likely to think of them much differently than they were in life, even while you are able to imagine them being peaceful and free of the constraints of the body. This is as good an idea as I can give you of how to imagine the elevated Self of form, as not much different than you are now, but peaceful and free of the constraints of the body.
- 10.28 Let's continue with this idea a while longer as you consider a particular person you fondly remember from life and how you have thought of him or her since death. Do you not occasionally think that this person would be happy or sad to see you in the state you are in when you think of them? Do you not at times shake your head and think that a dead loved one was lucky not to have lived to see the current state of affairs of the world because you know they would not have liked it? And do you not, in all honesty, think that even in whatever form or lack of form they now occupy, they do not like it, even now, even beyond the grave?
- 10.29 And do you not, when thinking of idolized spiritual leaders, see them as *world* leaders as well, leaders not only capable but bound to taking a stance against the many situations there are to dislike in the world? Do they not feel for the suffering? Do they not dislike poverty? Are they not called upon at times to take unpopular stands against popular leaders? Do not even your ideas of saints and angels include concepts of their feeling compassion and mercy, and of their acting upon those feelings by championing the cause of

good over that of evil or of the powerless over the powerful? Isn't history replete with idols who have done just this?

10.30 I am not calling you to be as these people are or were or to act as these people have, but I am calling you to acknowledge that feelings are involved at every level of every being you can imagine. Consciousness is about what you are aware of, not about what you think. And you are very much aware of your feelings.

10.31 If you are being called to acknowledge these feelings, what are you being called to do with them? You are being called to respond to them with acceptance and love. As a man, I took a stand for the powerless and called them to power. I am still doing so. Not because any of you are powerless but because you do not know your power. If there is one thing associated with my life more so than any other, it was this. I was an advocate for all to know their power. Do you think that my advocacy was a social statement for the times in which I lived? Or do you not see that it is the same now as then?

10.32 All the issues that those you would call spiritual leaders are called to champion or censor have their roots in timeless and universal spiritual truths. It is the timeless and universal that you are called, in unity, to respond to and with. But this response will not be generated without the feelings that precede them! When speaking of gossip we used a simple example of a relatively harmless situation. When speaking of the many issues facing your world in this time, we are speaking of situations that would seem to be extreme and to call for extreme measures. The only extreme measure called for now is the same extreme measure that I called for during my life. It is the call to embrace your power.

10.33 My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, turn your thoughts not to ideals of social activism, to causes, or to championing any one side over another. Turn not to your thoughts but to your feelings and go where they lead. And everywhere they lead you, remember one thing only. Remember to embrace your power. The power of love is the cause and effect that will change the world by returning you, and all your brothers and sisters, to who they are in truth. This cannot be done from without but must be done from within. It is the transformation that is caused within that will affect the world without.

10.34 The power you must come to rely upon is the power of your own Self to create and express the cause and effect that is the power of love.

10.35 Although I need no awareness of the issues facing your time in order to speak to you of such things, I am aware of them. So is every other living thing because all that lives exists in relationship. What I have often referred to as the urgency of this time has been partially because of these issues and partially because of your readiness. It is no accident that these two aspects of urgency are converging. When your reliance on all that exists apart from your Self—your reliance on science and technology and medicine and military might—has been shown to be unfounded, a new source of reliable power is finally sought with the tenacity with which these other sources of seeming power have been sought. This is what has occurred. This is the time at which we stand.

10.36 All of the solutions to the issues facing the world and those who live upon it have been pursued separately from one another and from God—until recently. Now unity is being sought and unity is being found.

10.37 But these issues, when removed from feelings, still remain issues. They remain social causes, environmental causes, political causes. The cause of all these issues is fear. The cause and effect of love is all that will replace these causes of fear with the means and end that will transform them along with you. You are means and end. It is within your power to be saviors of the world. It is from within that your power will save the world.

10.38 As you can see, it is difficult for me, even now, even in this final address to you as the man Jesus, to speak of feelings without addressing the grand scheme of things. I want to comfort and reassure you in this final message. I want to tell you to be embraced by love and to let all the feelings of love flowing through you now find their expression. I desire, more than anything, your happiness, your peace, and your acceptance of the power that will cause these things to come to be. Yet I know you and what you want to hear. I know you have long waited for your feelings to be addressed in a more personal way. But please remember that none of the approaches that have been used to “address” your feelings in the way you might desire have worked. This will work.

10.39 This is the secret of succession, your promised inheritance. This is the gift of love I came to give and give newly now, to you. Blessed brother and sister, we feel the same love, the same compassion, the same tenderness for each other and the world. This is unity. This will save us. This will save the world.