A long, dark tunnel with a bright light at the end, symbolizing a journey or a path. The tunnel is illuminated by a warm, golden light at the far end, creating a strong sense of perspective and depth. The walls of the tunnel are dark and textured, with some light reflecting off the surfaces. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and hopeful.

A
Simple Matter
of
Life and Death

Lessons from A Course In Miracles

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Email: ACIMonline.publishing@gmail.com
Website: www.acourseinmiraclesonline.com

*"He that believeth in me,
though he were dead,
yet shall he live."*

Jesus Christ

Lessons from the Workbook of A Course In Miracles.

The Course in Miracles is a direct communication from God through Jesus Christ indicating the apparent conditional situation between God and man which is one of false separation, and to the manner in which that apparent schism is and was repaired. Its sole purpose is to bring enlightenment through the transformation of your mind.

The Power Of Decision Is My Own.

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

You may believe that this position is extreme, and too inclusive to be true. Yet can truth have exceptions? If you have the gift of everything, can loss be real? Can pain be part of peace, or grief of joy? Can fear and sickness enter in a mind where love and perfect holiness abide? Truth must be all-inclusive, if it be the truth at all. Accept no opposites and no exceptions, for to do so is to contradict the truth entirely.

Salvation is the recognition that the truth is true, and nothing else is true. This you have heard before, but may not yet accept both parts of it. Without the first, the second has no meaning. But without the second, is the first no longer true. Truth cannot have an opposite. This cannot be too often said and thought about. For if what is not true is true as well as what is true, then part of truth is false. And truth has lost its meaning. Nothing but the truth is true, and what is false is false.

This is the simplest of distinctions, yet the most obscure. But not because it is a difficult distinction to perceive. It is concealed behind a vast array of choices that do not appear to be entirely your own. And thus the truth appears to

have some aspects that belie consistency, but do not seem to be but contradictions introduced by you.

As God created you, you must remain unchangeable, with transitory states by definition false. And that includes all shifts in feeling, alterations in conditions of the body and the mind; in all awareness and in all response. This is the all-inclusiveness which sets the truth apart from falsehood, and the false kept separate from the truth, as what it is.

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

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

Let us today be truly humble, and accept what we have made as what it is. The power of decision is our own. Decide but to accept your rightful place as co-creator of the universe, and all you think you made will disappear. What rises to awareness then will be all that there ever was, eternally as it is now. And it will take the place of self-deceptions made but to usurp the altar to the Father and the Son.

Today we practice true humility, abandoning the false pretense by which the ego seeks to prove it arrogant. Only the ego can be arrogant. But truth is humble in acknowledging its mightiness, its changelessness and its eternal wholeness, all-encompassing, God's perfect gift to His beloved Son. We lay aside the arrogance which says that we are sinners, guilty and afraid, ashamed of what we are; and lift our hearts in true humility instead to Him Who has created us immaculate, like to Himself in power and in love.

The power of decision is our own. And we accept of Him that which we are, and humbly recognize the Son of God. To recognize God's Son implies as well that all self-concepts have been laid aside, and recognized as false. Their arrogance has been perceived. And in humility the radiance of God's Son, his gentleness, his perfect sinlessness, his Father's Love, his right to Heaven and release from hell, are joyously accepted as our own.

Now do we join in glad acknowledgment that lies are false, and only truth is true. We think of truth alone as we arise, and spend five minutes practicing its ways, encouraging our frightened minds with this:

The power of decision is my own.

*This day I will accept myself as what my
Father's Will created me to be.*

Then will we wait in silence, giving up all self-deceptions, as we humbly ask our Self that He reveal Himself to us. And He Who never left will come again to our awareness, grateful to restore His home to God, as it was meant to be.

In patience wait for Him throughout the day, and

hourly invite Him with the words with which the day began, concluding it with this same invitation to your Self. **God's Voice will answer, for He speaks for you and for your Father. He will substitute the peace of God for all your frantic thoughts, the truth of God for self-deceptions, and God's Son for your illusions of yourself.**

Lesson 152

Your peace is with me, Father. I am safe.

Your peace surrounds me, Father. Where I go, Your peace goes there with me. It sheds its light on everyone I meet. I bring it to the desolate and lonely and afraid. I give Your peace to those who suffer pain, or grieve for loss, or think they are bereft of hope and happiness. Send them to me, my Father. Let me bring Your peace with me. For I would save Your Son, as is Your Will, that I may come to recognize my Self.

Now Are We One With Him Who Is Our Source.

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

The world fades easily away before His sight. Its sounds grow dim. A melody from far beyond the world increasingly is more and more distinct; an ancient Call to Which He gives an ancient answer. You will recognize them both, for they are but your answer to your Father's Call to you. Christ answers for you, echoing your Self, using your voice to give His glad consent; accepting your deliverance for you.

How holy is your practicing today, as Christ gives you His sight and hears for you, and answers in your name the Call He hears! How quiet is the time you give to spend with Him, beyond the world. How easily are all your seeming sins forgot, and all your sorrows unremembered. On this day is grief laid by, for sights and sounds that come from nearer than the world are clear to you who will today accept the gifts He gives.

There is a silence into which the world can not intrude. There is an ancient peace you carry in your heart and have not lost. There is a sense of holiness in you the thought of sin has never touched. All this today you will remember. Faithfulness in practicing today will bring

rewards so great and so completely different from all things you sought before, that you will know that here your treasure is, and here your rest.

This is the day when vain imaginings part like a curtain, to reveal what lies beyond them. Now is what is really there made visible, while all the shadows which appeared to hide it merely sink away. Now is the balance righted, and the scale of judgment left to Him Who judges true. And in His judgment will a world unfold in perfect innocence before your eyes. Now will you see it with the eyes of Christ. Now is its transformation clear to you.

Brother, this day is sacred to the world. Your vision, given you from far beyond all things within the world, looks back on them in a new light. And what you see becomes the healing and salvation of the world. The valuable and valueless are both perceived and recognized for what they are. And what is worthy of your love receives your love, while nothing to be feared remains.

We will not judge today. We will receive but what is given us from judgment made beyond the world. Our practicing today becomes our gift of thankfulness for our release from blindness and from misery. All that we see will but increase our joy, because its holiness reflects our own. We stand forgiven in the sight of Christ, with all the world forgiven in our own. We bless the world, as we behold it in the light in which our Savior looks on us, and offer it the freedom given us through His forgiving vision, not our own.

Open the curtain in your practicing by merely letting go all things you think you want. Your trifling treasures put away, and leave a clean and open space within your mind where Christ can come, and offer you the treasure

of salvation. He has need of your most holy mind to save the world. Is not this purpose worthy to be yours? Is not Christ's vision worthy to be sought above the world's unsatisfying goals?

Let not today slip by without the gifts it holds for you receiving your consent and your acceptance. We can change the world, if you acknowledge them. You may not see the value your acceptance gives the world. But this you surely want; you can exchange all suffering for joy this very day. Practice in earnest, and the gift is yours. Would God deceive you? Can His promise fail? Can you withhold so little, when His Hand holds out complete salvation to His Son?

Lesson 164

Let Not My Mind Deny The Thought Of God.

What makes this world seem real except your own denial of the truth that lies beyond? What but your thoughts of misery and death obscure the perfect happiness and the eternal life your Father wills for you? And what could hide what cannot be concealed except illusion? What could keep from you what you already have except your choice to see it not, denying it is there?

The Thought of God created you. It left you not, nor have you ever been apart from it an instant. It belongs to you. By it you live. It is your Source of life, holding you one with it, and everything is one with you because it left you not. The Thought of God protects you, cares for you, makes soft your resting place and smooth your way, lighting your mind with happiness and love. Eternity and everlasting life shine in your mind, because the Thought of God has left you not, and still abides with you.

Who would deny his safety and his peace, his joy, his healing and his peace of mind, his quiet rest, his calm awakening, if he but recognized where they abide? Would he not instantly prepare to go where they are found, abandoning all else as worthless in comparison with them? And having found them, would he not make sure they stay with him, and he remain with them?

Deny not Heaven. It is yours today, but for the asking. Nor need you perceive how great the gift, how changed your mind will be before it comes to you. Ask to receive, and it is given you. Conviction lies within it. Till you welcome it as yours, uncertainty remains. Yet God is fair. Sureness is not required to receive what only your acceptance can bestow.

Ask with desire. You need not be sure that you request the only thing you want. But when you have received, you will be sure you have the treasure you have always sought. What would you then exchange for it? What would induce you now to let it fade away from your ecstatic vision? For this sight proves that you have exchanged your blindness for the seeing eyes of Christ; your mind has come to lay aside denial, and accept the Thought of God as your inheritance.

Now is all doubting past, the journey's end made certain, and salvation given you. Now is Christ's power in your mind, to heal as you were healed. For now you are among the saviors of the world. Your destiny lies there and nowhere else. Would God consent to let His Son remain forever starved by his denial of the nourishment he needs to live? Abundance dwells in him, and deprivation cannot cut him off from God's sustaining Love and from his home.

Practice today in hope. For hope indeed is justified. Your doubts are meaningless, for God is certain. And the Thought of Him is never absent. Sureness must abide within you who are host to Him. This course removes all doubts which you have interposed between Him and your certainty of Him.

We count on God, and not upon ourselves, to give us certainty. And in His Name we practice as His Word directs we do. His sureness lies beyond our every doubt. His Love remains beyond our every fear. The Thought of Him is still beyond all dreams and in our minds, according to His Will.

Lesson 165

I Am Entrusted With The Gifts Of God.

All things are given you. God's trust in you is limitless. He knows His Son. He gives without exception, holding nothing back that can contribute to your happiness. And yet, unless your will is one with His, His gifts are not received. But what would make you think there is another will than His?

Here is the paradox that underlies the making of the world. This world is not the Will of God, and so it is not real. Yet those who think it real must still believe there is another will, and one that leads to opposite effects from those He wills. Impossible indeed; but every mind that looks upon the world and judges it as certain, solid, trustworthy and true believes in two creators; or in one, himself alone. But never in one God.

The gifts of God are not acceptable to anyone who holds such strange beliefs. He must believe that to accept God's gifts, however evident they may become, however urgently he may be called to claim them as his own, is to be pressed to treachery against himself. He must deny their presence, contradict the truth, and suffer to preserve the world he made.

Here is the only home he thinks he knows. Here is the only safety he believes that he can find. Without the world he made is he an outcast; homeless and afraid. He does not realize that it is here he is afraid indeed, and homeless, too; an outcast wandering so far from home, so long away, he does not realize he has forgotten where he came from, where he goes, and even who he really is.

Yet in his lonely, senseless wanderings, God's gifts go with him, all unknown to him. He cannot lose them. But he will not look at what is given him. He wanders on, aware of the futility he sees about him everywhere, perceiving how his little lot but dwindles, as he goes ahead to nowhere. Still he wanders on in misery and poverty, alone though God is with him, and a treasure his so great that everything the world contains is valueless before its magnitude.

He seems a sorry figure; weary, worn, in threadbare clothing, and with feet that bleed a little from the rocky road he walks. No one but has identified with him, for everyone who comes here has pursued the path he follows, and has felt defeat and hopelessness as he is feeling them. Yet is he really tragic, when you see that he is following the way he chose, and need but realize Who walks with him and open up his treasures to be free?

This is your chosen self, the one you made as a replacement for reality. This is the self you savagely defend against all reason, every evidence, and all the witnesses with proof to show this is not you. You heed them not. You go on your appointed way, with eyes cast down lest you might catch a glimpse of truth, and be released from self-deception and set free.

You cower fearfully lest you should feel Christ's touch upon your shoulder, and perceive His gentle hand directing you to look upon your gifts. How could you then proclaim your poverty in exile? He would make you laugh at this perception of yourself. Where is self-pity then? And what becomes of all the tragedy you sought to make for him whom God intended only joy?

Your ancient fear has come upon you now, and justice has caught up with you at last. Christ's hand has touched your shoulder, and you feel that you are not alone. You even think the miserable self you thought was you may not be your Identity. Perhaps God's Word is truer than your own. Perhaps His gifts to you are real. Perhaps He has not wholly been outwitted by your plan to keep His Son in deep oblivion, and go the way you chose without your Self.

God's Will does not oppose. It merely is. It is not God you have imprisoned in your plan to lose your Self. He does not know about a plan so alien to His Will. There was a need He did not understand, to which He gave an Answer. That is all. And you who have this Answer given you have need no more of anything but This.

Now do we live, for now we cannot die. The wish for death is answered, and the sight that looked upon it now has been replaced by vision which perceives that you are not what you pretend to be. One walks with you Who gently answers all your fears with this one merciful reply, "It is not so." He points to all the gifts you have each time the thought of poverty oppresses you, and speaks of His Companionship when you perceive yourself as lonely and afraid.

Yet He reminds you still of one thing more you had forgotten. For His touch on you has made you like Himself. The gifts you have are not for you alone. What He has come to offer you, you now must learn to give. This is the lesson that His giving holds, for He has saved you from the solitude you sought to make in which to hide from God. He has reminded you of all the gifts that God has given you. He speaks as well of what becomes your will when

you accept these gifts, and recognize they are your own.

The gifts are yours, entrusted to your care, to give to all who chose the lonely road you have escaped. They do not understand they but pursue their wishes. It is you who teach them now. For you have learned of Christ there is another way for them to walk. Teach them by showing them the happiness that comes to those who feel the touch of Christ, and recognize God's gifts. Let sorrow not tempt you to be unfaithful to your trust.

Your sighs will now betray the hopes of those who look to you for their release. Your tears are theirs. If you are sick, you but withhold their healing. What you fear but teaches them their fears are justified. Your hand becomes the giver of Christ's touch; your change of mind becomes the proof that who accepts God's gifts can never suffer anything. You are entrusted with the world's release from pain.

Betray it not. Become the living proof of what Christ's touch can offer everyone. God has entrusted all His gifts to you. Be witness in your happiness to how transformed the mind becomes which chooses to accept His gifts, and feel the touch of Christ. Such is your mission now. For God entrusts the giving of His gifts to all who have received them. He has shared His joy with you. And now you go to share it with the world.

Lesson 166

There Is One Life, And That I Share With God.

There are not different kinds of life, for life is like the truth. It does not have degrees. It is the one condition in which all that God created share. Like all His Thoughts, it has no opposite. There is no death because what God created shares His Life. There is no death because an opposite to God does not exist. There is no death because the Father and the Son are one.

In this world, there appears to be a state that is life's opposite. You call it death. Yet we have learned that the idea of death takes many forms. It is the one idea which underlies all feelings that are not supremely happy. It is the alarm to which you give response of any kind that is not perfect joy. All sorrow, loss, anxiety and suffering and pain, even a little sigh of weariness, a slight discomfort or the merest frown, acknowledge death. And thus deny you live.

You think that death is of the body. Yet it is but an idea, irrelevant to what is seen as physical. A thought is in the mind. It can be then applied as mind directs it. But its origin is where it must be changed, if change occurs. Ideas leave not their source. The emphasis this course has placed on that idea is due to its centrality in our attempts to change your mind about yourself. It is the reason you can heal. It is the cause of healing. It is why you cannot die. 1 Its truth established you as one with God.

Death is the thought that you are separate from your Creator. It is the belief conditions change, emotions alternate because of causes you cannot control, you did not make, and you can never change. It is the fixed belief ideas can

leave their source, and take on qualities the source does not contain, becoming different from their own origin, apart from it in kind as well as distance, time and form.

Death cannot come from life. Ideas remain united to their source. They can extend all that their source contains. In that, they can go far beyond themselves. But they can not give birth to what was never given them. As they are made, so will their making be. As they were born, so will they then give birth. And where they come from, there will they return.

The mind can think it sleeps, but that is all. It cannot change what is its waking state. It cannot make a body, nor abide within a body. What is alien to the mind does not exist, because it has no source. For mind creates all things that are, and cannot give them attributes it lacks, nor change its own eternal, mindful state. It cannot make the physical. What seems to die is but the sign of mind asleep.

The opposite of life can only be another form of life. As such, it can be reconciled with what created it, because it is not opposite in truth. Its form may change; it may appear to be what it is not. Yet mind is mind, awake or sleeping. It is not its opposite in anything created, nor in what it seems to make when it believes it sleeps.

God creates only mind awake. He does not sleep, and His creations cannot share what He gives not, nor make conditions which He does not share with them. The thought of death is not the opposite to thoughts of life. Forever unopposed by opposites of any kind, the Thoughts of God remain forever changeless, with the power to extend forever changelessly, but yet within themselves, for they are everywhere.

What seems to be the opposite of life is merely sleeping. When the mind elects to be what it is not, and to assume an alien power which it does not have, a foreign state it cannot enter, or a false condition not within its Source, it merely seems to go to sleep a while. It dreams of time; an interval in which what seems to happen never has occurred, the changes wrought are substanceless, and all events are nowhere. When the mind awakes, it but continues as it always was.

Let us today be children of the truth, and not deny our holy heritage. Our life is not as we imagine it. Who changes life because he shuts his eyes, or makes himself what he is not because he sleeps, and sees in dreams an opposite to what he is? We will not ask for death in any form today. Nor will we let imagined opposites to life abide even an instant where the Thought of life eternal has been set by God Himself.

His holy home we strive to keep today as He established it, and wills it be forever and forever. He is Lord of what we think today. And in His Thoughts, which have no opposite, we understand there is one life, and that we share with Him, with all creation, with their thoughts as well, whom He created in a unity of life that cannot separate in death and leave the Source of life from where it came.

We share one life because we have one Source, a Source from Which perfection comes to us, remaining always in the holy minds which He created perfect. As we were, so are we now and will forever be. A sleeping mind must waken, as it sees its own perfection mirroring the Lord of Life so perfectly it fades into what is reflected there. And now it is no more a mere reflection. It becomes

the thing reflected, and the light which makes reflection possible. No vision now is needed. For the wakened mind is one that knows its Source, its Self, its Holiness.

Lesson 167

I Am Forever An Effect Of God

Father, I was created in Your Mind, a holy Thought that never left its home. I am forever Your Effect, and You forever and forever are my Cause. As You created me I have remained. Where You established me I still abide. And all Your attributes abide in me, because it is Your Will to have a Son so like his Cause that Cause and Its Effect are indistinguishable. Let me know that I am an Effect of God, and so I have the power to create like You. And as it is in Heaven, so on earth. Your plan I follow here, and at the end I know that You will gather Your effects into the tranquil Heaven of Your Love, where earth will vanish, and all separate thoughts unite in glory as the Son of God.

There Is No Death. The Son Of God Is Free.

Death is a thought that takes on many forms, often unrecognized. It may appear as sadness, fear, anxiety or doubt; as anger, faithlessness and lack of trust; concern for bodies, envy, and all forms in which the wish to be as you are not may come to tempt you. All such thoughts are but reflections of the worshipping of death as savior and as giver of release.

Embodiment of fear, the host of sin, god of the guilty and the lord of all illusions and deceptions, does the thought of death seem mighty. For it seems to hold all living things within its withered hand; all hopes and wishes in its blighting grasp; all goals perceived but in its sightless eyes. The frail, the helpless and the sick bow down before its image, thinking it alone is real, inevitable, worthy of their trust. For it alone will surely come.

All things but death are seen to be unsure, too quickly lost however hard to gain, uncertain in their outcome, apt to fail the hopes they once engendered, and to leave the taste of dust and ashes in their wake, in place of aspirations and of dreams. But death is counted on. For it will come with certain footsteps when the time has come for its arrival. It will never fail to take all life as hostage to itself.

Would you bow down to idols such as this? Here is the strength and might of God Himself perceived within an idol made of dust. Here is the opposite of God proclaimed as lord of all creation, stronger than God's Will for life, the endlessness of love and Heaven's perfect, changeless constancy. Here is the Will of Father and of Son defeated finally, and laid to rest beneath the headstone death has placed upon the body of the holy Son of God.

Unholy in defeat, he has become what death would have him be. His epitaph, which death itself has written, gives no name to him, for he has passed to dust. It says but this: "Here lies a witness God is dead." And this it writes again and still again, while all the while its worshippers agree, and kneeling down with foreheads to the ground, they whisper fearfully that it is so.

It is impossible to worship death in any form, and still select a few you would not cherish and would yet avoid, while still believing in the rest. For death is total. Either all things die, or else they live and cannot die. No compromise is possible. For here again we see an obvious position, which we must accept if we be sane; what contradicts one thought entirely can not be true, unless its opposite is proven false.

The idea of the death of God is so preposterous that even the insane have difficulty in believing it. For it implies that God was once alive and somehow perished; killed, apparently, by those who did not want Him to survive. Their stronger will could triumph over His, and so eternal life gave way to death. And with the Father died the Son as well.

Death's worshippers may be afraid. And yet, can thoughts like these be fearful? If they saw that it is only this which they believe, they would be instantly released. And you will show them this today. There is no death, and we renounce it now in every form, for their salvation and our own as well. God made not death. Whatever form it takes must therefore be illusion. This the stand we take today. And it is given us to look past death, and see the life beyond.

Our Father, bless our eyes today. We are Your messengers, and we would look upon the glorious reflection of Your Love which shines in everything. We live and move in You alone. We are not separate from Your eternal life. There is no death, for death is not Your Will. And we abide where You have placed us, in the life we share with You and with all living things, to be like You and part of You forever. We accept Your Thoughts as ours, and our will is one with Yours eternally. Amen.

Lesson 163

I Am Not A Body. I Am Free.

Freedom must be impossible as long as you perceive a body as yourself. The body is a limit. Who would seek for freedom in a body looks for it where it can not be found. The mind can be made free when it no longer sees itself as in a body, firmly tied to it and sheltered by its presence. If this were the truth, the mind were vulnerable indeed!

The mind that serves the Holy Spirit is unlimited forever, in all ways, beyond the laws of time and space, unbound by any preconceptions, and with strength and power to do whatever it is asked. Attack thoughts cannot enter such a mind, because it has been given to the Source of love, and fear can never enter in a mind that has attached itself to love. It rests in God. And who can be afraid who lives in Innocence, and only loves?

It is essential for your progress in this course that you accept today's idea, and hold it very dear. Be not concerned that to the ego it is quite insane. The ego holds the body dear because it dwells in it, and lives united with the home that it has made. It is a part of the illusion that has sheltered it from being found illusory itself.

Here does it hide, and here it can be seen as what it is. Declare your innocence and you are free. The body disappears, because you have no need of it except the need the Holy Spirit sees. For this, the body will appear as useful form for what the mind must do. It thus becomes a vehicle which helps forgiveness be extended to the all-inclusive goal that it must reach, according to God's plan.

Cherish today's idea, and practice it today and every day. Make it a part of every practice period you take. There is no thought that will not gain thereby in power to help the world, and none which will not gain in added gifts to you as well. We sound the call of freedom round the world with this idea. And would you be exempt from the acceptance of the gifts you give?

The Holy Spirit is the home of minds that seek for freedom. In Him they have found what they have sought. The body's purpose now is unambiguous. And it becomes perfect in the ability to serve an undivided goal. In conflict-free and unequivocal response to mind with but the thought of freedom as its goal, the body serves, and serves its purpose well. Without the power to enslave, it is a worthy servant of the freedom which the mind within the Holy Spirit seeks.

Be free today. And carry freedom as your gift to those who still believe they are enslaved within a body. Be you free, so that the Holy Spirit can make use of your escape from bondage, to set free the many who perceive themselves as bound and helpless and afraid. Let love replace their fears through you. Accept salvation now, and give your mind to Him Who calls to you to make this gift to Him. For He would give you perfect freedom, perfect joy, and hope that finds its full accomplishment in God.

You are God's Son. In immortality you live forever. Would you not return your mind to this? Then practice well the thought the Holy Spirit gives you for today. Your brothers stand released with you in it; the world is blessed along with you, God's Son will weep no more, and Heaven offers thanks for the increase of joy your practice brings

even to it. And God Himself extends His Love and happiness each time you say:

*I am not a body. I am free.
I hear the Voice That God has given me,
and it is only This my mind obeys.*

Lesson 199

In Fearlessness And Love I Spend Today

"This day, my Father, would I spend with You, as You have chosen all my days should be. And what I will experience is not of time at all. The joy that comes to me is not of days nor hours, for it comes from Heaven to Your Son. This day will be Your sweet reminder to remember You, Your gracious calling to Your holy Son, the sign Your grace has come to me, and that it is Your Will I be set free today."

What Is Death?

Death is the central dream from which all illusions stem. Is it not madness to think of life as being born, aging, losing vitality, and dying in the end? We have asked this question before, but now we need to consider it more carefully. It is the one fixed, unchangeable belief of the world that all things in it are born only to die. This is regarded as "the way of nature," not to be raised to question, but to be accepted as the "natural" law of life. The cyclical, the changing and unsure; the undependable and the unsteady, waxing and waning in a certain way upon a certain path, - all this is taken as the Will of God. And no one asks if a benign Creator could will this.

In this perception of the universe as God created it, it would be impossible to think of Him as loving. For who has decreed that all things pass away, ending in dust and disappointment and despair, can but be feared. He holds your little life in his hand but by a thread, ready to break it off without regret or care, perhaps today. Or if he waits, yet is the ending certain. Who loves such a god knows not of love, because he has denied that life is real. Death has become life's symbol. His world is now a battleground, where contradiction reigns and opposites make endless war. Where there is death is peace impossible.

Death is the symbol of the fear of God. His Love is blotted out in the idea, which holds it from awareness like a shield held up to obscure the sun. The grimness of the symbol is enough to show it cannot coexist with God. It holds an image of the Son of God in which he is "laid to rest" in devastation's arms, where worms wait to greet him and to last a little while by his destruction.

Yet the worms as well are doomed to be destroyed as certainly. And so do all things live because of death. Devouring is nature's "law of life." God is insane, and fear alone is real.

The curious belief that there is part of dying things that may go on apart from what will die, does not proclaim a loving God nor re-establish any grounds for trust. If death is real for anything, there is no life. Death denies life. But if there is reality in life, death is denied. No compromise in this is possible. There is either a god of fear or One of Love. The world attempts a thousand compromises, and will attempt a thousand more. Not one can be acceptable to God's teachers, because not one could be acceptable to God. He did not make death because He did not make fear. Both are equally meaningless to Him.

The "reality" of death is firmly rooted in the belief that God's Son is a body. And if God created bodies, death would indeed be real. But God would not be loving. There is no point at which the contrast between the perception of the real world and that of the world of illusions becomes more sharply evident. Death is indeed the death of God, if He is Love. And now His Own creation must stand in fear of Him. He is not Father, but destroyer. He is not Creator, but avenger. Terrible His Thoughts and fearful His image. To look on His creations is to die.

"And the last to be overcome will be death." Of course! Without the idea of death there is no world. All dreams will end with this one. This is salvation's final goal; the end of all illusions. And in death are all illusions born. What can be born of death and still have life? But what is born of God and still can die? The

inconsistencies, the compromises and the rituals the world fosters in its vain attempts to cling to death and yet to think love real are mindless magic, ineffectual and meaningless. God is, and in Him all created things must be eternal. Do you not see that otherwise He has an opposite, and fear would be as real as love?

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

Manual For Teachers

What Is The Resurrection?

Very simply, the resurrection is the overcoming or surmounting of death. It is a reawakening or a rebirth; a change of mind about the meaning of the world. It is the acceptance of the Holy Spirit's interpretation of the world's purpose; the acceptance of the Atonement for oneself. It is the end of dreams of misery, and the glad awareness of the Holy Spirit's final dream. It is the recognition of the gifts of God. It is the dream in which the body functions perfectly, having no function except communication. It is the lesson in which learning ends, for it is consummated and surpassed with this. It is the invitation to God to take His final step. It is the relinquishment of all other purposes, all other interests, all other wishes and all other concerns. It is the single desire of the Son for the Father.

The resurrection is the denial of death, being the assertion of life. Thus is all the thinking of the world reversed entirely. Life is now recognized as salvation, and pain and misery of any kind perceived as hell. Love is no longer feared, but gladly welcomed. Idols have disappeared, and the remembrance of God shines unimpeded across the world. Christ's face is seen in every living thing, and nothing is held in darkness, apart from the light of forgiveness. There is no sorrow still upon the earth. The joy of Heaven has come upon it.

Here the curriculum ends. From here on, no directions are needed. Vision is wholly corrected and all mistakes undone. Attack is meaningless and peace has come. The goal of the curriculum has been achieved. Thoughts turn to Heaven and away from hell. All longings are satisfied, for what remains unanswered or incomplete? The last

illusion spreads across the world, forgiving all things and replacing all attack. The whole reversal is accomplished. Nothing is left to contradict the Word of God. There is no opposition to the truth. And now the truth can come at last. How quickly will it come as it is asked to enter and envelop such a world!

All living hearts are tranquil with a stir of deep anticipation, for the time of everlasting things is now at hand. There is no death. The Son of God is free. And in his freedom is the end of fear. No hidden places now remain on earth to shelter sick illusions, dreams of fear and misperceptions of the universe. All things are seen in light, and in the light their purpose is transformed and understood. And we, God's children, rise up from the dust and look upon our perfect sinlessness. The song of Heaven sounds around the world, as it is lifted up and brought to truth.

Now there are no distinctions. Differences have disappeared and Love looks on Itself. What further sight is needed? What remains that vision could accomplish? We have seen the face of Christ, His sinlessness, His Love behind all forms, beyond all purposes. Holy are we because His holiness has set us free indeed! And we accept His holiness as ours; as it is. As God created us so will we be forever and forever, and we wish for nothing but His Will to be our own. Illusions of another will are lost, for unity of purpose has been found.

These things await us all, but we are not prepared as yet to welcome them with joy. As long as any mind remains possessed of evil dreams, the thought of hell is real. God's teachers have the goal of wakening the minds

of those asleep, and seeing there the vision of Christ's face to take the place of what they dream. The thought of murder is replaced with blessing. Judgment is laid by, and given Him Whose function judgment is. And in His final judgment is restored the truth about the holy Son of God. He is redeemed, for he has heard God's Word and understood its meaning. He is free because he let God's Voice proclaim the truth. And all he sought before to crucify are resurrected with him, by his side, as he prepares with them to meet his God.

Manual For Teachers

There Is No Peace Except The Peace Of God.

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

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

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

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

Freedom is given you where you beheld but chains and iron doors. But you must change your mind about

the purpose of the world, if you would find escape. You will be bound till all the world is seen by you as blessed, and everyone made free of your mistakes and honored as he is. You made him not; no more yourself. And as you free the one, the other is accepted as he is.

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

There is no peace except the peace of God, because He has one Son who cannot make a world in opposition to God's Will and to his own, which is the same as His. What could he hope to find in such a world? It cannot have reality, because it never was created. Is it here that he would seek for peace? Or must he see that, as he looks on it, the world can but deceive? Yet can he learn to look on it another way, and find the peace of God.

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

Let us not lose our way again today. We go to Heaven, and the path is straight. Only if we attempt to wander

can there be delay, and needless wasted time on thorny byways. God alone is sure, and He will guide our footsteps. He will not desert His Son in need, nor let him stray forever from his home. The Father calls; the Son will hear. And that is all there is to what appears to be a world apart from God, where bodies have reality.

Now is there silence. Seek no further. You have come to where the road is carpeted with leaves of false desires, fallen from the trees of hopelessness you sought before. Now are they underfoot. And you look up and on toward Heaven, with the body's eyes but serving for an instant longer now. Peace is already recognized at last, and you can feel its soft embrace surround your heart and mind with comfort and with love.

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

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

Lesson 200

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

Forget not once this journey is begun the end is certain. Doubt along the way will come and go and go to come again. Yet is the ending sure. No one can fail to do what God appointed him to do. When you forget, remember that you walk with Him and with His Word upon your heart. Who could despair when Hope like this is His? Illusions of despair may seem to come, but learn how not to be deceived by them. Behind each one there is reality and there is God. Why would you wait for this and trade it for illusions, when His Love is but an instant farther on the road where all illusions end? The end is sure and guaranteed by God. Who stands before a lifeless image when a step away the Holy of the Holies opens up an ancient door that leads beyond the world?

You are a stranger here. But you belong to Him Who loves you as He loves Himself. Ask but my help to roll the stone away, and it is done according to His Will. We have begun the journey. Long ago the end was written in the stars and set into the Heavens with a shining Ray that held it safe within eternity and through all time as well. And holds it still; unchanged, unchanging and unchangeable.

Be not afraid. We only start again an ancient journey long ago begun that but seems new. We have begun again upon a road we travelled on before and lost our way a little while. And now we try again. Our new beginning has the certainty the journey lacked till now. Look up and see His Word among the stars, where He has set your name along with His. Look up and find your certain destiny the world would hide but God would have you see.

Let us wait here in silence, and kneel down an instant in our gratitude to Him Who called to us and helped us hear His Call. And then let us arise and go in faith along the way to Him. Now we are sure we do not walk alone. For God is here, and with Him all our brothers. Now we know that we will never lose the way again. The song begins again which had been stopped only an instant, though it seems to be unsung forever. What is here begun will grow in life and strength and hope, until the world is still an instant and forgets all that the dream of sin had made of it.

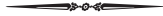
Let us go out and meet the newborn world, knowing that Christ has been reborn in it, and that the holiness of this rebirth will last forever. We had lost our way but He has found it for us. Let us go and bid Him welcome Who returns to us to celebrate salvation and the end of all we thought we made. The morning star of this new day looks on a different world where God is welcomed and His Son with Him. We who complete Him offer thanks to Him, as He gives thanks to us. The Son is still, and in the quiet God has given him enters his home and is at peace at last.

Manual For Teachers



DIARY

*Observations of continuing happiness and joy
through conversions from death to eternal life*



How simple is the Great Way to Salvation.

All it says is that the world you see
has nothing to do with reality.

It is of your own making and does not exist.

All it says is what was never true is not true
now, and never will be.

The impossible has not occurred
and can have no effects.

And that is all.

Can this be hard to learn
by anyone who wants it to be true?

You need simply let yourself be as you
truly are and have always been.