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2. THE EGO–THE MIRACLE

1. Illusions will not last. ² Their death is sure and this alone is certain in their world. ³ It is the ego's world because of this. ⁴ What is the *ego*? ⁵ But a dream of what you really are. ⁶ A thought you are apart from your Creator and a wish to be what He created not. ⁷ It is a thing of madness, not reality at all. ⁸ A name for namelessness is all it is. ⁹ A symbol of impossibility; a choice for options that do not exist. ¹⁰ We name it but to help us understand that it is nothing but an ancient thought that what is made has immortality. ¹¹ But what could come of this except a dream which, like all dreams, can only end in death?
2. What is the ego? ² Nothingness, but in a form that seems like something. ³ In a world of form the ego cannot be denied for it alone seems real. ⁴ Yet could God's Son as He created him abide in form or in a world of form? ⁵ Who asks you to define the ego and explain how it arose can be but he who thinks it real, and seeks by definition to ensure that its illusive nature is concealed behind the words that seem to make it so.
3. There is no definition for a lie that serves to make it true. ² Nor can there be a truth that lies conceal effectively. ³ The ego's unreality is not denied by words nor is its meaning clear because its nature seems to have a form. ⁴ Who can define the undefinable? ⁵ And yet there is an answer even here.
4. We cannot really make a definition for what the ego is, but we *can* say what it is not. ² And this is shown to us with perfect clarity. ³ It is from this that we deduce all that the ego is. ⁴ Look at its opposite and you can see the only answer that is meaningful.
5. The ego's opposite in every way,—in origin, effect and consequence—we call a miracle. ² And here we find all that is not the ego in this world. ³ Here is the ego's opposite and here alone we look on what the ego was, for here we see all that it seemed to do, and cause and its effects must still be one.
6. Where there was darkness now we see the light. ² What is the ego? ³ What the darkness was. ⁴ Where is the ego? ⁵ Where the darkness was. ⁶ What is it now and where can it be found? ⁷ Nothing and nowhere. ⁸ Now the light has come: Its opposite has gone without a trace. ⁹ Where evil was there now is holiness. ¹⁰ What is the ego? ¹¹ What the evil was. ¹² Where is the ego? ¹³ In an evil dream that but seemed real while you were dreaming it. ¹⁴ Where there was crucifixion stands God's Son. ¹⁵ What is the ego? ¹⁶ Who has need to ask? ¹⁷ Where is the ego? ¹⁸ Who has need to seek for an illusion now that dreams are gone?
7. What is a *miracle*? ² A dream as well. ³ But look at all the aspects of *this* dream and you will never question any more. ⁴ Look at the kindly world you see extend before you as you walk in gentleness. ⁵ Look at the helpers all along the way you travel, happy in the certainty of Heaven and the surety of peace. ⁶ And look an instant, too, on what you left behind at last and finally passed by.
8. This was the ego—all the cruel hate, the need for vengeance and the cries of pain, the fear of dying and the urge to kill, the brotherless illusion and the self that seemed alone in all the universe. ² This terrible mistake about yourself the miracle corrects as gently as a loving mother sings her child to rest. ³ Is not a song like this what you would hear? ⁴ Would it not answer all you thought to ask, and

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even make the question meaningless?

9. Your questions have no answer, being made to still God's Voice, which asks of everyone one question only: "Are you ready yet to help Me save the world?" ² Ask this instead of what the ego is, and you will see a sudden brightness cover up the world the ego made. ³ No miracle is now withheld from anyone. ⁴ The world is saved from what you thought it was. ⁵ And what it is, is wholly uncondemned and wholly pure.
10. The miracle forgives; the ego damns. ² Neither need be defined except by this. ³ Yet could a definition be more sure, or more in line with what salvation is? ⁴ Problem and answer lie together here, and having met at last the choice is clear. ⁵ Who chooses hell when it is recognized? ⁶ And who would not go on a little while when it is given him to understand the way is short and Heaven is his goal?

3. FORGIVENESS—THE FACE OF CHRIST

1. *Forgiveness* is for God and toward God but not of Him. ² It is impossible to think of anything He created that could need forgiveness. ³ Forgiveness, then, is an illusion, but because of its purpose, which is the Holy Spirit's, it has one difference. ⁴ Unlike all other illusions it leads away from error and not towards it.
2. Forgiveness might be called a kind of happy fiction; a way in which the unknowing can bridge the gap between their perception and the truth. ² They cannot go directly from perception to knowledge because they do not think it is their will to do so. ³ This makes God appear to be an enemy instead of what He really is. ⁴ And it is just this insane perception that makes them unwilling merely to rise up and to return to Him in peace.
3. And so they need an illusion of help because they are helpless; a Thought of peace because they are in conflict. ² God knows what His Son needs before he asks. ³ He is not at all concerned with form, but having given the content it is His Will that it be understood. ⁴ And that suffices. ⁵ The form adapts itself to need; the content is unchanging, as eternal as its Creator.
4. *The face of Christ* has to be seen before the memory of God can return. ² The reason is obvious. ³ Seeing the face of Christ involves perception. ⁴ No one can look on knowledge. ⁵ But the face of Christ is the great symbol of forgiveness. ⁶ It is salvation. ⁷ It is the symbol of the real world. ⁸ Whoever looks on this no longer sees the world. ⁹ He is as near to Heaven as is possible outside the gate. ¹⁰ Yet from this gate it is no more than just a step inside. ¹¹ It is the final step. ¹² And this we leave to God.
5. Forgiveness is a symbol, too, but as the symbol of His Will alone it cannot be divided. ² And so the unity that it reflects becomes His Will. ³ It is the only thing still in the world in part, and yet the bridge to Heaven.
6. God's Will is all there is. ² We can but go from nothingness to everything; from hell to Heaven. ³ Is this a journey? ⁴ No, not in truth, for truth goes nowhere. ⁵ But illusions shift from place to place; from time to time. ⁶ The final step is also but a shift. ⁷ As a perception it is part unreal. ⁸ And yet this

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- part will vanish. ⁹ What remains is peace eternal and the Will of God.
7. There are no wishes now for wishes change. ² Even the wished-for can become unwelcome. ³ That must be so because the ego cannot be at peace. ⁴ But Will is constant, as the gift of God. ⁵ And what He gives is always like Himself. ⁶ This is the purpose of the face of Christ. ⁷ It is the gift of God to save His Son. ⁸ But look on this and you have been forgiven.
 8. How lovely does the world become in just that single instant when you see the truth about yourself reflected there. ² Now you are sinless and behold your sinlessness. ³ Now you are holy and perceive it so. ⁴ And now the mind returns to its Creator; the joining of the Father and the Son, the Unity of unities that stands behind all joining but beyond them all. ⁵ God is not seen but only understood. ⁶ His Son is not attacked but recognized.

4. TRUE PERCEPTION-KNOWLEDGE

1. The world you see is an illusion of a world. ² God did not create it, for what He creates must be eternal as Himself. ³ Yet there is nothing in the world you see that will endure forever. ⁴ Some things will last in time a little while longer than others. ⁵ But the time will come when all things visible will have an end.
2. The body's eyes are therefore not the means by which the real world can be seen, for the illusions that they look upon must lead to more illusions of reality. ² And so they do. ³ For everything they see not only will not last, but lends itself to thoughts of sin and guilt. ⁴ While everything that God created is forever without sin and therefore is forever without guilt.
3. Knowledge is not the remedy for false perception since, being another level, they can never meet. ² The one correction possible for false perception must be *true perception*. ³ It will not endure. ⁴ But for the time it lasts it comes to heal. ⁵ For true perception is a remedy with many names. ⁶ Forgiveness, salvation, Atonement, true perception, all are one. ⁷ They are the one beginning, with the end to lead to oneness far beyond themselves. ⁸ True perception is the means by which the world is saved from sin, for sin does not exist. ⁹ And it is this that true perception sees.
4. The world stands like a block before Christ's face. ² But true perception looks on it as nothing more than just a fragile veil, so easily dispelled that it can last no longer than an instant. ³ It is seen at last for only what it is. ⁴ And now it cannot fail to disappear, for now there is an empty place made clean and ready. ⁵ Where destruction was perceived the face of Christ appears, and in that instant is the world forgot, with time forever ended as the world spins into nothingness from where it came.
5. A world forgiven cannot last. ² It was the home of bodies. ³ But forgiveness looks past bodies. ⁴ This is its holiness; this is how it heals. ⁵ The world of bodies is the world of sin, for only if there were a body is sin possible. ⁶ From sin comes guilt as surely as forgiveness takes all guilt away. ⁷ And once all guilt is gone what more remains to keep a separated world in place? ⁸ For place has gone as well, along with time. ⁹ Only the body makes the world seem real, for being separate it could not remain where separation is impossible. ¹⁰ Forgiveness proves it is impossible because it sees it not. ¹¹ And what you then will overlook will not be understandable to you, just as its presence once had been your certainty.

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6. This is the shift that true perception brings: What was projected out is seen within, and there forgiveness lets it disappear. ² For there the altar to the Son is set, and there his Father is remembered. ³ Here are all illusions brought to truth and laid upon the altar. ⁴ What is seen outside must lie beyond forgiveness, for it seems to be forever sinful. ⁵ Where is hope while sin is seen as outside? ⁶ What remedy can guilt expect? ⁷ But seen within your mind, guilt and forgiveness for an instant lie together, side by side, upon one altar. ⁸ There at last are sickness and its single remedy joined in one healing brightness. ⁹ God has come to claim His Own. ¹⁰ Forgiveness is complete.
7. And now God's *knowledge*, changeless, certain, pure and wholly understandable, enters its kingdom. ² Gone is perception, false and true alike. ³ Gone is forgiveness, for its task is done. ⁴ And gone are bodies in the blazing light upon the altar to the Son of God. ⁵ God knows it is His Own, as it is his. ⁶ And here They join, for here the face of Christ has shone away time's final instant, and now is the last perception of the world without a purpose and without a cause. ⁷ For where God's memory has come at last there is no journey, no belief in sin, no walls, no bodies, and the grim appeal of guilt and death is there snuffed out forever.
8. O my brothers, if you only knew the peace that will envelop you and hold you safe and pure and lovely in the Mind of God, you could but rush to meet Him where His altar is. ² Hallowed your Name and His, for they are joined here in this holy place. ³ Here He leans down to lift you up to Him, out of illusions into holiness; out of the world and to eternity; out of all fear and given back to love.

5. JESUS – CHRIST

1. There is no need for help to enter Heaven for you have never left. ² But there is need for help beyond yourself as you are circumscribed by false beliefs of your Identity, which God alone established in reality. ³ Helpers are given you in many forms, although upon the altar they are one. ⁴ Beyond each one there is a Thought of God, and this will never change. ⁵ But they have names which differ for a time, for time needs symbols, being itself unreal. ⁶ Their names are legion, but we will not go beyond the names the course itself employs. ⁷ God does not help because He knows no need. ⁸ But He creates all Helpers of His Son while he believes his fantasies are true. ⁹ Thank God for them for they will lead you home.
2. The name of *Jesus* is the name of one who was a man but saw the face of Christ in all his brothers and remembered God. ² So he became identified with *Christ*, a man no longer, but at one with God. ³ The man was an illusion, for he seemed to be a separate being, walking by himself, within a body that appeared to hold his self from Self, as all illusions do. ⁴ Yet who can save unless he sees illusions and then identifies them as what they are? ⁵ Jesus remains a Savior because he saw the false without accepting it as true. ⁶ And Christ needed his form that He might appear to men and save them from their own illusions.
3. In his complete identification with the Christ—the perfect Son of God, His one creation and His happiness, forever like Himself and One with Him—Jesus became what all of you must be. ² He led the way for you to follow him. ³ He leads you back to God because he saw the road before him, and he followed it. ⁴ He made a clear distinction, still obscure to you, between the false and true. ⁵ He

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offered you a final demonstration that it is impossible to kill God's Son; nor can his life in any way be changed by sin and evil, malice, fear or death.

4. And therefore all your sins have been forgiven because they carried no effects at all. ² And so they were but dreams. ³ Arise with him who showed you this because you owe him this who shared your dreams that they might be dispelled. ⁴ And shares them still, to be at one with you.
5. Is he the Christ? ² O yes, along with you. ³ His little life on earth was not enough to teach the mighty lesson that he learned for all of you. ⁴ He will remain with you to lead you from the hell you made to God. ⁵ And when you join your will with his, your sight will be his vision, for the eyes of Christ are shared. ⁶ Walking with him is just as natural as walking with a brother whom you knew since you were born, for such indeed he is. ⁷ Some bitter idols have been made of him who would be only brother to the world. ⁸ Forgive him your illusions, and behold how dear a brother he would be to you. ⁹ For he will set your mind at rest at last and carry it with you unto your God.
6. Is he God's only Helper? ² No, indeed. ³ For Christ takes many forms with different names until their oneness can be recognized. ⁴ But Jesus is for you the bearer of Christ's single message of the Love of God. ⁵ You need no other. ⁶ It is possible to read his words and benefit from them without accepting him into your life. ⁷ Yet he would help you yet a little more if you will share your pains and joys with him, and leave them both to find the peace of God. ⁸ Yet still it is his lesson most of all that he would have you learn, and it is this:

⁹ There is no death because the Son of God is like his Father. ¹⁰ Nothing you can do can change Eternal Love. ¹¹ Forget your dreams of sin and guilt, and come with me instead to share the resurrection of God's Son. ¹² And bring with you all those whom He has sent to you to care for as I care for you.

Introduction

1. Psychotherapy is the only form of therapy there is. ² Since only the mind can be sick, only the mind can be healed. ³ Only the mind is in need of healing. ⁴ This does not appear to be the case, for the manifestations of this world seem real indeed. ⁵ Psychotherapy is necessary so that an individual can begin to question their reality. ⁶ Sometimes he is able to start to open his mind without formal help, but even then it is always some change in his perception of interpersonal relationships that enables him to do so. ⁷ Sometimes he needs a more structured, extended relationship with an "official" therapist. ⁸ Either way, the task is the same; the patient must be helped to change his mind about the "reality" of illusions.

1. THE PURPOSE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

Introduction

1. Very simply, the purpose of psychotherapy is to remove the blocks to truth. ² Its aim is to aid the

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patient in abandoning his fixed delusional system, and to begin to reconsider the spurious cause and effect relationships on which it rests. ³ No one in this world escapes fear, but everyone can reconsider its causes and learn to evaluate them correctly. ⁴ God has given everyone a Teacher Whose wisdom and help far exceed whatever contributions an earthly therapist can provide. ⁵ Yet there are times and situations in which an earthly patient-therapist relationship becomes the means through which He offers His greater gifts to both.

2. What better purpose could any relationship have than to invite the Holy Spirit to enter into it and give it His Own great gift of rejoicing? ² What higher goal could there be for anyone than to learn to call upon God and hear His Answer? ³ And what more transcendent aim can there be than to recall the way, the truth and the life, and to remember God? ⁴ To help in this is the proper purpose of psychotherapy. ⁵ Could anything be holier? ⁶ For psychotherapy, correctly understood, teaches forgiveness and helps the patient to recognize and accept it. ⁷ And in his healing is the therapist forgiven with him.
3. Everyone who needs help, regardless of the form of his distress, is attacking himself, and his peace of mind is suffering in consequence. ² These tendencies are often described as "self-destructive," and the patient often regards them in that way himself. ³ What he does not realize and needs to learn is that this "self," which can attack and be attacked as well, is a concept he made up. ⁴ Further, he cherishes it, defends it, and is sometimes even willing to "sacrifice" his "life" on its behalf. ⁵ For he regards it as himself. ⁶ This self he sees as being acted on, reacting to external forces as they demand, and helpless midst the power of the world.
4. Psychotherapy, then, must restore to his awareness the ability to make his own decisions. ² He must become willing to reverse his thinking, and to understand that what he thought projected its effects on him were made by his projections on the world. ³ The world he sees does therefore not exist. ⁴ Until this is at least in part accepted, the patient cannot see himself as really capable of making decisions. ⁵ And he will fight against his freedom because he thinks that it is slavery.
5. The patient need not think of truth as God in order to make progress in salvation. ² But he must begin to separate truth from illusion, recognizing that they are not the same, and becoming increasingly willing to see illusions as false and to accept the truth as true. ³ His Teacher will take him on from there, as far as he is ready to go. ⁴ Psychotherapy can only save him time. ⁵ The Holy Spirit uses time as He thinks best, and He is never wrong. ⁶ Psychotherapy under His direction is one of the means He uses to save time, and to prepare additional teachers for His work. ⁷ There is no end to the help that He begins and He directs. ⁸ By whatever routes He chooses, all psychotherapy leads to God in the end. ⁹ But that is up to Him. ¹⁰ We are all His psychotherapists, for He would have us all be healed in Him.

Introduction

1. Psychotherapy is a process that changes the view of the self. ² At best this "new" self is a more beneficent self-concept, but psychotherapy can hardly be expected to establish reality. ³ That is not its function. ⁴ If it can make way for reality, it has achieved its ultimate success. ⁵ Its whole function, in the end, is to help the patient deal with one fundamental error; the belief that anger brings him something he really wants, and that by justifying attack he is protecting himself. ⁶ To whatever extent he comes to realize that this is an error, to that extent is he truly saved.

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2. Patients do not enter the therapeutic relationship with this goal in mind. ² On the contrary, such concepts mean little to them, or they would not need help. ³ Their aim is to be able to retain their self-concept exactly as it is, but without the suffering that it entails. ⁴ Their whole equilibrium rests on the insane belief that this is possible. ⁵ And because to the sane mind it is so clearly impossible, what they seek is magic. ⁶ In illusions the impossible is easily accomplished, but only at the cost of making illusions true. ⁷ The patient has already paid this price. ⁸ Now he wants a "better" illusion.
3. At the beginning, then, the patient's goal and the therapist's are at variance. ² The therapist as well as the patient may cherish false self-concepts, but their respective perceptions of "improvement" still must differ. ³ The patient hopes to learn how to get the changes he wants without changing his self-concept to any significant extent. ⁴ He hopes, in fact, to stabilize it sufficiently to include within it the magical powers he seeks in psychotherapy. ⁵ He wants to make the vulnerable invulnerable and the finite limitless. ⁶ The self he sees is his god, and he seeks only to serve it better.
4. Regardless of how sincere the therapist himself may be, he must want to change the patient's self-concept in some way that he believes is real. ² The task of therapy is one of reconciling these differences. ³ Hopefully, both will learn to give up their original goals, for it is only in relationships that salvation can be found. ⁴ At the beginning, it is inevitable that patients and therapists alike accept unrealistic goals not completely free of magical overtones. ⁵ They are finally given up in the minds of both.

I. The Limits on Psychotherapy

1. Yet the ideal outcome is rarely achieved. ² Therapy begins with the realization that healing is of the mind, and in psychotherapy those have come together who already believe this. ³ It may be they will not get much further, for no one learns beyond his own readiness. ⁴ Yet levels of readiness change, and when therapist or patient has reached the next one, there will be a relationship held out to them that meets the changing need. ⁵ Perhaps they will come together again and advance in the same relationship, making it holier. ⁶ Or perhaps each of them will enter into another commitment. ⁷ Be assured of this; each will progress. ⁸ Retrogression is temporary. ⁹ The overall direction is one of progress toward the truth.
2. Psychotherapy itself cannot be creative. ² This is one of the errors which the ego fosters; that it is capable of true change, and therefore of true creativity. ³ When we speak of "the saving illusion" or "the final dream," this is not what we mean, but here is the ego's last defense. ⁴ "Resistance" is its way of looking at things; its interpretation of progress and growth. ⁵ These interpretations will be wrong of necessity, because they are delusional. ⁶ The changes the ego seeks to make are not really changes. ⁷ They are but deeper shadows, or perhaps different cloud patterns. ⁸ Yet what is made of nothingness cannot be called new or different. ⁹ Illusions are illusions; truth is truth.
3. Resistance as defined here can be characteristic of a therapist as well as of a patient. ² Either way, it sets a limit on psychotherapy because it restricts its aims. ³ Nor can the Holy Spirit fight against the intrusions of the ego on the therapeutic process. ⁴ But He will wait, and His patience is infinite. ⁵ His goal is wholly undivided always. ⁶ Whatever resolutions patient and therapist reach in connection with their own divergent goals, they cannot become completely reconciled as one until they join with His. ⁷ Only then is all conflict over, for only then can there be certainty.

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4. Ideally, psychotherapy is a series of holy encounters in which brothers meet to bless each other and to receive the peace of God. ² And this will one day come to pass for every "patient" on the face of this earth, for who except a patient could possibly have come here? ³ The therapist is only a somewhat more specialized teacher of God. ⁴ He learns through teaching, and the more advanced he is the more he teaches and the more he learns. ⁵ But whatever stage he is in, there are patients who need him just that way. ⁶ They cannot take more than he can give for now. ⁷ Yet both will find sanity at last.

IV. The Process of Illness

1. As all therapy is psychotherapy, so all illness is mental illness. ² It is a judgment on the Son of God, and judgment is a mental activity. ³ Judgment is a decision, made again and again, against creation and its Creator. ⁴ It is a decision to perceive the universe as you would have created it. ⁵ It is a decision that truth can lie and must be lies. ⁶ What, then, can illness be except an expression of sorrow and of guilt? ⁷ And who could weep but for his innocence?
2. Once God's Son is seen as guilty, illness becomes inevitable. ² It has been asked for and will be received. ³ And all who ask for illness have now condemned themselves to seek for remedies that cannot help, because their faith is in the illness and not in salvation. ⁴ There can be nothing that a change of mind cannot effect, for all external things are only shadows of a decision already made. ⁵ Change the decision, and how can its shadow be unchanged? ⁶ Illness can be but guilt's shadow, grotesque and ugly since it mimics deformity. ⁷ If a deformity is seen as real, what could its shadow be except deformed?
3. The descent into hell follows step by step in an inevitable course, once the decision that guilt is real has been made. ² Sickness and death and misery now stalk the earth in unrelenting waves, sometimes together and sometimes in grim succession. ³ Yet all these things, however real they seem, are but illusions. ⁴ Who could have faith in them once this is realized? ⁵ And who could not have faith in them until he realizes this? ⁶ Healing is therapy or correction, and we have said already and will say again, all therapy is psychotherapy. ⁷ To heal the sick is but to bring this realization to them.
4. The word "cure" has come into disrepute among the more "respectable" therapists of the world, and justly so. ² For not one of them can cure, and not one of them understands healing. ³ At worst, they but make the body real in their own minds, and having done so, seek for magic by which to heal the ills with which their minds endow it. ⁴ How could such a process cure? ⁵ It is ridiculous from start to finish. ⁶ Yet having started, it must finish thus. ⁷ It is as if God were the devil and must be found in evil. ⁸ How could love be there? ⁹ And how could sickness cure? ¹⁰ Are not these both one question?
5. At best, and the word is perhaps questionable here, the "healers" of the world may recognize the mind as the source of illness. ² But their error lies in the belief that it can cure itself. ³ This has some merit in a world where "degrees of error" is a meaningful concept. ⁴ Yet must their cures remain temporary, or another illness rise instead, for death has not been overcome until the meaning of love is understood. ⁵ And who can understand this without the Word of God, given by Him to the Holy Spirit as His gift to you?

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6. Illness of any kind may be defined as the result of a view of the self as weak, vulnerable, evil and endangered, and thus in need of constant defense. ² Yet if such were really the self, defense would be impossible. ³ Therefore, the defenses sought for must be magical. ⁴ They must overcome all limits perceived in the self, at the same time making a new self-concept into which the old one cannot return. ⁵ In a word, error is accepted as real and dealt with by illusions. ⁶ Truth being brought to illusions, reality now becomes a threat and is perceived as evil. ⁷ Love becomes feared because reality is love. ⁸ Thus is the circle closed against the "inroads" of salvation.
7. Illness is therefore a mistake and needs correction. ² And as we have already emphasized, correction cannot be achieved by first establishing the "rightness" of the mistake and then overlooking it. ³ If illness is real it cannot be overlooked in truth, for to overlook reality is insanity. ⁴ Yet that is magic's purpose; to make illusions true through false perception. ⁵ This cannot heal, for it opposes truth. ⁶ Perhaps an illusion of health is substituted for a little while, but not for long. ⁷ Fear cannot long be hidden by illusions, for it is part of them. ⁸ It will escape and take another form, being the source of all illusions.
8. Sickness is insanity because all sickness is mental illness, and in it there are no degrees. ² One of the illusions by which sickness is perceived as real is the belief that illness varies in intensity; that the degree of threat differs according to the form it takes. ³ Herein lies the basis of all errors, for all of them are but attempts to compromise by seeing just a little bit of hell. ⁴ This is a mockery so alien to God that it must be forever inconceivable. ⁵ But the insane believe it because they are insane.
9. A madman will defend his own illusions because in them he sees his own salvation. ² Thus, he will attack the one who tries to save him from them, believing that he is attacking him. ³ This curious circle of attack-defense is one of the most difficult problems with which the psychotherapist must deal. ⁴ In fact, this is his central task; the core of psychotherapy. ⁵ The therapist is seen as one who is attacking the patient's most cherished possession; his picture of himself. ⁶ And since this picture has become the patient's security as he perceives it, the therapist cannot but be seen as a real source of danger, to be attacked and even killed.
10. The psychotherapist, then, has a tremendous responsibility. ² He must meet attack without attack, and therefore without defense. ³ It is his task to demonstrate that defenses are not necessary, and that defenselessness is strength. ⁴ This must be his teaching, if his lesson is to be that sanity is safe. ⁵ It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the insane believe that sanity is threat. ⁶ This is the corollary of the "original sin"; the belief that guilt is real and fully justified. ⁷ It is therefore the psychotherapist's function to teach that guilt, being unreal, cannot be justified. ⁸ But neither is it safe. ⁹ And thus it must remain unwanted as well as unreal.
11. Salvation's single doctrine is the goal of all therapy. ² Relieve the mind of the insane burden of guilt it carries so wearily, and healing is accomplished. ³ The body is not cured. ⁴ It is merely recognized as what it is. ⁵ Seen rightly, its purpose can be understood. ⁶ What is the need for sickness then? ⁷ Given this single shift, all else will follow. ⁸ There is no need for complicated change. ⁹ There is no need for long analyses and wearying discussion and pursuits. ¹⁰ The truth is simple, being one for all.

V. The Process of Healing

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1. While truth is simple, it must still be taught to those who have already lost their way in endless mazes of complexity. ² This is the great illusion. ³ In its wake comes the inevitable belief that, to be safe, one must control the unknown. ⁴ This strange belief relies on certain steps which never reach to consciousness. ⁵ First, it is ushered in by the belief that there are forces to be overcome to be alive at all. ⁶ And next, it seems as if these forces can be held at bay only by an inflated sense of self that holds in darkness what is truly felt, and seeks to raise illusions to the light.
2. Let us remember that the ones who come to us for help are bitterly afraid. ² What they believe will help can only harm; what they believe will harm alone can help. ³ Progress becomes impossible until the patient is persuaded to reverse his twisted way of looking at the world; his twisted way of looking at himself. ⁴ The truth is simple. ⁵ Yet it must be taught to those who think it will endanger them. ⁶ It must be taught to those who will attack because they feel endangered, and to those who need the lesson of defenselessness above all else, to show them what is strength.
3. If this world were ideal, there could perhaps be ideal therapy. ² And yet it would be useless in an ideal state. ³ We speak of ideal teaching in a world in which the perfect teacher could not long remain; the perfect psychotherapist is but a glimmer of a thought not yet conceived. ⁴ But still we speak of what can yet be done in helping the insane within the bounds of the attainable. ⁵ While they are sick, they can and must be helped. ⁶ No more than that is asked of psychotherapy; no less than all he has to give is worthy of the therapist. ⁷ For God Himself holds out his brother as his savior from the world.
4. Healing is holy. ² Nothing in the world is holier than helping one who asks for help. ³ And two come very close to God in this attempt, however limited, however lacking in sincerity. ⁴ Where two have joined for healing, God is there. ⁵ And He has guaranteed that He will hear and answer them in truth. ⁶ They can be sure that healing is a process He directs, because it is according to His Will. ⁷ We have His Word to guide us, as we try to help our brothers. ⁸ Let us not forget that we are helpless of ourselves, and lean upon a strength beyond our little scope for what to teach as well as what to learn.
5. A brother seeking aid can bring us gifts beyond the heights perceived in any dream. ² He offers us salvation, for he comes to us as Christ and Savior. ³ What he asks is asked by God through him. ⁴ And what we do for him becomes the gift we give to God. ⁵ The sacred calling of God's holy Son for help in his perceived distress can be but answered by his Father. ⁶ Yet He needs a voice through which to speak His holy Word; a hand to reach His Son and touch his heart. ⁷ In such a process, who could not be healed? ⁸ This holy interaction is the plan of God Himself, by which His Son is saved.
6. For two have joined. ² And now God's promises are kept by Him. ³ The limits laid on both the patient and the therapist will count as nothing, for the healing has begun. ⁴ What they must start their Father will complete. ⁵ For He has never asked for more than just the smallest willingness, the least advance, the tiniest of whispers of His Name. ⁶ To ask for help, whatever form it takes, is but to call on Him. ⁷ And He will send His Answer through the therapist who best can serve His Son in all his present needs. ⁸ Perhaps the answer does not seem to be a gift from Heaven. ⁹ It may even seem to be a worsening and not a help. ¹⁰ Yet let the outcome not be judged by us.
7. Somewhere all gifts of God must be received. ² In time no effort can be made in vain. ³ It is not our perfection that is asked in our attempts to heal. ⁴ We are deceived already, if we think there is a

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need of healing. ⁵ And the truth will come to us only through one who seems to share our dream of sickness. ⁶ Let us help him to forgive himself for all the trespasses with which he would condemn himself without a cause. ⁷ His healing is our own. ⁸ And as we see the sinlessness in him come shining through the veil of guilt that shrouds the Son of God, we will behold in him the face of Christ, and understand that it is but our own.

8. Let us stand silently before God's Will, and do what it has chosen that we do. ² There is one way alone by which we come to where all dreams began. ³ And it is there that we will lay them down, to come away in peace forever. ⁴ Hear a brother call for help and answer him. ⁵ It will be God to Whom you answer, for you called on Him. ⁶ There is no other way to hear His Voice. ⁷ There is no other way to seek His Son. ⁸ There is no other way to find your Self. ⁹ Holy is healing, for the Son of God returns to Heaven through its kind embrace. ¹⁰ For healing tells him, in the Voice for God, that all his sins have been forgiven him.

VI. The Definition of Healing

1. The process of psychotherapy, then, can be defined simply as forgiveness, for no healing can be anything else. ² The unforgiving are sick, believing they are unforgiven. ³ The hanging-on to guilt, its hugging-close and sheltering, its loving protection and alert defense,—all this is but the grim refusal to forgive. ⁴ "God may not enter here" the sick repeat, over and over, while they mourn their loss and yet rejoice in it. ⁵ Healing occurs as a patient begins to hear the dirge he sings, and questions its validity. ⁶ Until he hears it, he cannot understand that it is he who sings it to himself. ⁷ To hear it is the first step in recovery. ⁸ To question it must then become his choice.
2. There is a tendency, and it is very strong, to hear this song of death only an instant, and then dismiss it uncorrected. ² These fleeting awarenesses represent the many opportunities given us literally "to change our tune." ³ The sound of healing can be heard instead. ⁴ But first the willingness to question the "truth" of the song of condemnation must arise. ⁵ The strange distortions woven inextricably into the self-concept, itself but a pseudo-creation, make this ugly sound seem truly beautiful. ⁶ "The rhythm of the universe," "the herald angel's song," all these and more are heard instead of loud discordant shrieks.
3. The ear translates; it does not hear. ² The eye reproduces; it does not see. ³ Their task is to make agreeable whatever is called on, however disagreeable it may be. ⁴ They answer the decisions of the mind, reproducing its desires and translating them into acceptable and pleasant forms. ⁵ Sometimes the thought behind the form breaks through, but only very briefly, and the mind grows fearful and begins to doubt its sanity. ⁶ Yet it will not permit its slaves to change the forms they look upon; the sounds they hear. ⁷ These are its "remedies"; its "safeguards" from insanity.
4. These testimonies which the senses bring have but one purpose; to justify attack and thus keep unforgiveness unrecognized for what it is. ² Seen undisguised it is intolerable. ³ Without protection it could not endure. ⁴ Here is all sickness cherished, but without the recognition that this is so. ⁵ For when an unforgiveness is not recognized, the form it takes seems to be something else. ⁶ And now it is the "something else" that seems to terrify. ⁷ But it is not the "something else" that can be healed. ⁸ It is not sick, and needs no remedy. ⁹ To concentrate your healing efforts here is but futility. ¹⁰ Who can cure what cannot be sick and make it well?

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5. Sickness takes many forms, and so does unforgiveness. ² The forms of one but reproduce the forms of the other, for they are the same illusion. ³ So closely is one translated into the other, that a careful study of the form a sickness takes will point quite clearly to the form of unforgiveness that it represents. ⁴ Yet seeing this will not effect a cure. ⁵ That is achieved by only one recognition; that only forgiveness heals an unforgiveness, and only an unforgiveness can possibly give rise to sickness of any kind.
6. This realization is the final goal of psychotherapy. ² How is it reached? ³ The therapist sees in the patient all that he has not forgiven in himself, and is thus given another chance to look at it, open it to re-evaluation and forgive it. ⁴ When this occurs, he sees his sins as gone into a past that is no longer here. ⁵ Until he does this, he must think of evil as besetting him here and now. ⁶ The patient is his screen for the projection of his sins, enabling him to let them go. ⁷ Let him retain one spot of sin in what he looks upon, and his release is partial and will not be sure.
7. No one is healed alone. ² This is the joyous song salvation sings to all who hear its Voice. ³ This statement cannot be too often remembered by all who see themselves as therapists. ⁴ Their patients can but be seen as the bringers of forgiveness, for it is they who come to demonstrate their sinlessness to eyes that still believe that sin is there to look upon. ⁵ Yet will the proof of sinlessness, seen in the patient and accepted in the therapist, offer the mind of both a covenant in which they meet and join and are as one.

II. Is Psychotherapy a Profession?

1. Strictly speaking the answer is no. ² How could a separate profession be one in which everyone is engaged? ³ And how could any limits be laid on an interaction in which everyone is both patient and therapist in every relationship in which he enters? ⁴ Yet practically speaking, it can still be said that there are those who devote themselves primarily to healing of one sort or another as their chief function. ⁵ And it is to them that a large number of others turn for help. ⁶ That, in effect, is the practice of therapy. ⁷ These are therefore "officially" helpers. ⁸ They are devoted to certain kinds of needs in their professional activities, although they may be far more able teachers outside of them. ⁹ These people need no special rules, of course, but they may be called upon to use special applications of the general principles of healing.
2. First, the professional therapist is in an excellent position to demonstrate that there is no order of difficulty in healing. ² For this, however, he needs special training, because the curriculum by which he became a therapist probably taught him little or nothing about the real principles of healing. ³ In fact, it probably taught him how to make healing impossible. ⁴ Most of the world's teaching follows a curriculum in judgment, with the aim of making the therapist a judge.
3. Even this the Holy Spirit can use, and will use, given the slightest invitation. ² The unhealed healer may be arrogant, selfish, unconcerned, and actually dishonest. ³ He may be uninterested in healing as his major goal. ⁴ Yet something happened to him, however slight it may have been, when he chose to be a healer, however misguided the direction he may have chosen. ⁵ That "something" is enough. ⁶ Sooner or later that something will rise and grow; a patient will touch his heart, and the therapist will silently ask him for help. ⁷ He has himself found a therapist. ⁸ He has asked the Holy Spirit to enter the relationship and heal it. ⁹ He has accepted the Atonement for himself.

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4. God is said to have looked on all He created and pronounced it good. ² No, He declared it perfect, and so it was. ³ And since His creations do not change and last forever, so it is now. ⁴ Yet neither a perfect therapist nor a perfect patient can possibly exist. ⁵ Both must have denied their perfection, for their very need for each other implies a sense of lack. ⁶ A one-to-one relationship is not one Relationship. ⁷ Yet it is the means of return; the way God chose for the return of His Son. ⁸ In that strange dream a strange correction must enter, for only that is the call to awake. ⁹ And what else should therapy be? ¹⁰ Awake and be glad, for all your sins have been forgiven you. ¹¹ This is the only message that any two should ever give each other.
5. Something good must come from every meeting of patient and therapist. ² And that good is saved for both, against the day when they can recognize that only that was real in their relationship. ³ At that moment the good is returned to them, blessed by the Holy Spirit as a gift from their Creator as a sign of His Love. ⁴ For the therapeutic relationship must become like the relationship of the Father and the Son. ⁵ There is no other, for there is nothing else. ⁶ The therapists of this world do not expect this outcome, and many of their patients would not be able to accept help from them if they did. ⁷ Yet no therapist really sets the goal for the relationships of which he is a part. ⁸ His understanding begins with recognizing this, and then goes on from there.
6. It is in the instant that the therapist forgets to judge the patient that healing occurs. ² In some relationships this point is never reached, although both patient and therapist may change their dreams in the process. ³ Yet it will not be the same dream for both of them, and so it is not the dream of forgiveness in which both will someday wake. ⁴ The good is saved; indeed is cherished. ⁵ But only little time is saved. ⁶ The new dreams will lose their temporary appeal and turn to dreams of fear, which is the content of all dreams. ⁷ Yet no patient can accept more than he is ready to receive, and no therapist can offer more than he believes he has. ⁸ And so there is a place for all relationships in this world, and they will bring as much good as each can accept and use.
7. Yet it is when judgment ceases that healing occurs, because only then it can be understood that there is no order of difficulty in healing. ² This is a necessary understanding for the healed healer. ³ He has learned that it is no harder to wake a brother from one dream than from another. ⁴ No professional therapist can hold this understanding consistently in his mind, offering it to all who come to him. ⁵ There are some in this world who have come very close, but they have not accepted the gift entirely in order to stay and let their understanding remain on earth until the closing of time. ⁶ They could hardly be called professional therapists. ⁷ They are the Saints of God. ⁸ They are the Saviors of the world. ⁹ Their image remains, because they have chosen that it be so. ¹⁰ They take the place of other images, and help with kindly dreams.
8. Once the professional therapist has realized that minds are joined, he can also recognize that order of difficulty in healing is meaningless. ² Yet well before he reaches this in time he can go towards it. ³ Many holy instants can be his along the way. ⁴ A goal marks the end of a journey, not the beginning, and as each goal is reached another can be dimly seen ahead. ⁵ Most professional therapists are still at the very start of the beginning stage of the first journey. ⁶ Even those who have begun to understand what they must do may still oppose the setting-out. ⁷ Yet all the laws of healing can be theirs in just an instant. ⁸ The journey is not long except in dreams.
9. The professional therapist has one advantage that can save enormous time if it is properly used. ² He has chosen a road in which there is great temptation to misuse his role. ³ This enables him to pass

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by many obstacles to peace quite quickly, if he escapes the temptation to assume a function that has not been given him. ⁴To understand there is no order of difficulty in healing, he must also recognize the equality of himself and the patient. ⁵There is no halfway point in this. ⁶Either they are equal or not. ⁷The attempts of therapists to compromise in this respect are strange indeed. ⁸Some utilize the relationship merely to collect bodies to worship at their shrine, and this they regard as healing. ⁹Many patients, too, consider this strange procedure as salvation. ¹⁰Yet at each meeting there is One Who says, "My brother, choose again."

10. Do not forget that any form of specialness must be defended, and will be. ²The defenseless therapist has the strength of God with him, but the defensive therapist has lost sight of the Source of his salvation. ³He does not see and he does not hear. ⁴How, then, can he teach? ⁵Because it is the Will of God that he take his place in the plan for salvation. ⁶Because it is the Will of God that his patient be helped to join with him there. ⁷Because his inability to see and hear does not limit the Holy Spirit in any way. ⁸Except in time. ⁹In time there can be a great lag between the offering and the acceptance of healing. ¹⁰This is the veil across the face of Christ. ¹¹Yet it can be but an illusion, because time does not exist and the Will of God has always been exactly as it is.

III. The Question of Payment

1. No one can pay for therapy, for healing is of God and He asks for nothing. ²It is, however, part of His plan that everything in this world be used by the Holy Spirit to help in carrying out the plan. ³Even an advanced therapist has some earthly needs while he is here. ⁴Should he need money it will be given him, not in payment, but to help him better serve the plan. ⁵Money is not evil. ⁶It is nothing. ⁷But no one here can live with no illusions, for he must yet strive to have the last illusion be accepted by everyone everywhere. ⁸He has a mighty part in this one purpose, for which he came. ⁹He stays here but for this. ¹⁰And while he stays he will be given what he needs to stay.
2. Only an unhealed healer would try to heal for money, and he will not succeed to the extent to which he values it. ²Nor will he find his healing in the process. ³There will be those of whom the Holy Spirit asks some payment for His purpose. ⁴There will be those from whom He does not ask. ⁵It should not be the therapist who makes these decisions. ⁶There is a difference between payment and cost. ⁷To give money where God's plan allots it has no cost. ⁸To withhold it from where it rightfully belongs has enormous cost. ⁹The therapist who would do this loses the name of healer, for he could never understand what healing is. ¹⁰He cannot give it, and so he does not have it.
3. The therapists of this world are indeed useless to the world's salvation. ²They make demands, and so they cannot give. ³Patients can pay only for the exchange of illusions. ⁴This, indeed, must demand payment, and the cost is great. ⁵A "bought" relationship cannot offer the only gift whereby all healing is accomplished. ⁶Forgiveness, the Holy Spirit's only dream, must have no cost. ⁷For if it does, it merely crucifies God's Son again. ⁸Can this be how he is forgiven? ⁹Can this be how the dream of sin will end?
4. The right to live is something no one need fight for. ²It is promised him, and guaranteed by God. ³Therefore it is a right the therapist and patient share alike. ⁴If their relationship is to be holy, whatever one needs is given by the other; whatever one lacks the other supplies. ⁵Herein is the relationship made holy, for herein both are healed. ⁶The therapist repays the patient in gratitude, as does the patient repay him. ⁷There is no cost to either. ⁸But thanks are due to both, for the release

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- from long imprisonment and doubt. ⁹ Who would not be grateful for such a gift? ¹⁰ Yet who could possibly imagine that it could be bought?
5. It has well been said that to him who hath shall be given. ² Because he has, he can give. ³ And because he gives, he shall be given. ⁴ This is the law of God, and not of the world. ⁵ So it is with God's healers. ⁶ They give because they have heard His Word and understood it. ⁷ All that they need will thus be given them. ⁸ But they will lose this understanding unless they remember that all they have comes only from God. ⁹ If they believe they need anything from a brother, they will recognize him as a brother no longer. ¹⁰ And if they do this, a light goes out even in Heaven. ¹¹ Where God's Son turns against himself, he can look only upon darkness. ¹² He has himself denied the light, and cannot see.
 6. One rule should always be observed: No one should be turned away because he cannot pay. ² No one is sent by accident to anyone. ³ Relationships are always purposeful. ⁴ Whatever their purpose may have been before the Holy Spirit entered them, they are always His potential temple; the resting place of Christ and home of God Himself. ⁵ Whoever comes has been sent. ⁶ Perhaps he was sent to give his brother the money he needed. ⁷ Both will be blessed thereby. ⁸ Perhaps he was sent to teach the therapist how much he needs forgiveness, and how valueless is money in comparison. ⁹ Again will both be blessed. ¹⁰ Only in terms of cost could one have more. ¹¹ In sharing, everyone must gain a blessing without cost.
 7. This view of payment may well seem impractical, and in the eyes of the world it would be so. ² Yet not one worldly thought is really practical. ³ How much is gained by striving for illusions? ⁴ How much is lost by throwing God away? ⁵ And is it possible to do so? ⁶ Surely it is impractical to strive for nothing, and to attempt to do what is impossible. ⁷ Then stop a while, long enough to think of this: You have perhaps been seeking for salvation without recognizing where to look. ⁸ Whoever asks your help can show you where. ⁹ What greater gift than this could you be given? ¹⁰ What greater gift is there that you would give?
 8. Physician, healer, therapist, teacher, heal thyself. ² Many will come to you carrying the gift of healing, if you so elect. ³ The Holy Spirit never refuses an invitation to enter and abide with you. ⁴ He will give you endless opportunities to open the door to your salvation, for such is His function. ⁵ He will also tell you exactly what your function is in every circumstance and at all times. ⁶ Whoever He sends you will reach you, holding out his hand to his Friend. ⁷ Let the Christ in you bid him welcome, for that same Christ is in him as well. ⁸ Deny him entrance, and you have denied the Christ in you. ⁹ Remember the sorrowful story of the world, and the glad tidings of salvation. ¹⁰ Remember the plan of God for the restoration of joy and peace. ¹¹ And do not forget how very simple are the ways of God:

¹² *You were lost in the darkness of the world until you asked for light.*

¹³ *And then God sent His Son to give it to you.*

II. The Ladder of Prayer

1. Prayer has no beginning and no end. ² It is a part of life. ³ But it does change in form, and grow

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with learning until it reaches its formless state, and fuses into total communication with God. ⁴ In its asking form it need not, and often does not, make appeal to God, or even involve belief in Him. ⁵ At these levels prayer is merely wanting, out of a sense of scarcity and lack.

2. These forms of prayer, or asking-out-of-need, always involve feelings of weakness and inadequacy, and could never be made by a Son of God who knows Who he is. ² No one, then, who is sure of his Identity could pray in these forms. ³ Yet it is also true that no one who is uncertain of his Identity can avoid praying in this way. ⁴ And prayer is as continual as life. ⁵ Everyone prays without ceasing. ⁶ Ask and you have received, for you have established what it is you want.
3. It is also possible to reach a higher form of asking-out-of-need, for in this world prayer is reparative, and so it must entail levels of learning. ² Here, the asking may be addressed to God in honest belief, though not yet with understanding. ³ A vague and usually unstable sense of identification has generally been reached, but tends to be blurred by a deep-rooted sense of sin. ⁴ It is possible at this level to continue to ask for things of this world in various forms, and it is also possible to ask for gifts such as honesty or goodness, and particularly for forgiveness for the many sources of guilt that inevitably underlie any prayer of need. ⁵ Without guilt there is no scarcity. ⁶ The sinless have no needs.
4. At this level also comes that curious contradiction in terms known as "praying for one's enemies." ² The contradiction lies not in the actual words, but rather in the way in which they are usually interpreted. ³ While you believe you have enemies, you have limited prayer to the laws of this world, and have also limited your ability to receive and to accept to the same narrow margins. ⁴ And yet, if you have enemies you have need of prayer, and great need, too. ⁵ What does the phrase really mean? ⁶ Pray for yourself, that you may not seek to imprison Christ and thereby lose the recognition of your own Identity. ⁷ Be traitor to no one, or you will be treacherous to yourself.
5. An enemy is the symbol of an imprisoned Christ. ² And who could He be except yourself? ³ The prayer for enemies thus becomes a prayer for your own freedom. ⁴ Now it is no longer a contradiction in terms. ⁵ It has become a statement of the unity of Christ and a recognition of His sinlessness. ⁶ And now it has become holy, for it acknowledges the Son of God as he was created.
6. Let it never be forgotten that prayer at any level is always for yourself. ² If you unite with anyone in prayer, you make him part of you. ³ The enemy is you, as is the Christ. ⁴ Before it can become holy, then, prayer becomes a choice. ⁵ You do not choose for another. ⁶ You can but choose for yourself. ⁷ Pray truly for your enemies, for herein lies your own salvation. ⁸ Forgive them for your sins, and you will be forgiven indeed.
7. Prayer is a ladder reaching up to Heaven. ² At the top there is a transformation much like your own, for prayer is part of you. ³ The things of earth are left behind, all unremembered. ⁴ There is no asking, for there is no lack. ⁵ Identity in Christ is fully recognized as set forever, beyond all change and incorruptible. ⁶ The light no longer flickers, and will never go out. ⁷ Now, without needs of any kind, and clad forever in the pure sinlessness that is the gift of God to you, His Son, prayer can again become what it was meant to be. ⁸ For now it rises as a song of thanks to your Creator, sung without words, or thoughts, or vain desires, unneedful now of anything at all. ⁹ So it extends, as it was meant to do. ¹⁰ And for this giving God Himself gives thanks.
8. God is the goal of every prayer, giving it timelessness instead of end. ² Nor has it a beginning,

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because the goal has never changed. ³ Prayer in its earlier forms is an illusion, because there is no need for a ladder to reach what one has never left. ⁴ Yet prayer is part of forgiveness as long as forgiveness, itself an illusion, remains unattained. ⁵ Prayer is tied up with learning until the goal of learning has been reached. ⁶ And then all things will be transformed together, and returned unblemished into the Mind of God. ⁷ Being beyond learning, this state cannot be described. ⁸ The stages necessary to its attainment, however, need to be understood, if peace is to be restored to God's Son, who lives now with the illusion of death and the fear of God.

III. Praying for Others

1. We said that prayer is always for yourself, and this is so. ² Why, then, should you pray for others at all? ³ And if you should, how should you do it? ⁴ Praying for others, if rightly understood, becomes a means for lifting your projections of guilt from your brother, and enabling you to recognize it is not he who is hurting you. ⁵ The poisonous thought that he *is* your enemy, your evil counterpart, your nemesis, must be relinquished before *you* can be saved from guilt. ⁶ For this the means is prayer, of rising power and with ascending goals, until it reaches even up to God.
2. The earlier forms of prayer, at the bottom of the ladder, will not be free from envy and malice. ² They call for vengeance, not for love. ³ Nor do they come from one who understands that they are calls for death, made out of fear by those who cherish guilt. ⁴ They call upon a vengeful god, and it is he who seems to answer them. ⁵ Hell cannot be asked for another, and then escaped by him who asks for it. ⁶ Only those who are in hell can ask for hell. ⁷ Those who have been forgiven, and who accepted their forgiveness, could never make a prayer like that.
3. At these levels, then, the learning goal must be to recognize that prayer will bring an answer only in the form in which the prayer was made. ² This is enough. ³ From here it will be an easy step to the next levels. ⁴ The next ascent begins with this:

⁵ What I have asked for for my brother is not what I would have. ⁶ Thus have I made of him my enemy.

⁷ It is apparent that this step cannot be reached by anyone who sees no value or advantage to himself in setting others free. ⁸ This may be long delayed, because it may seem to be dangerous instead of merciful. ⁹ To the guilty there seems indeed to be a real advantage in having enemies, and this imagined gain must go, if enemies are to be set free.

4. Guilt must be given up, and not concealed. ² Nor can this be done without some pain, and a glimpse of the merciful nature of this step may for some time be followed by a deep retreat into fear. ³ For fear's defenses are fearful in themselves, and when they are recognized they bring their fear with them. ⁴ Yet what advantage has an illusion of escape ever brought a prisoner? ⁵ His real escape from guilt can lie only in the recognition that the guilt has gone. ⁶ And how can this be recognized as long as he hides it in another, and does not see it as his own? ⁷ Fear of escape makes it difficult to welcome freedom, and to make a jailer of an enemy seems to be safety. ⁸ How, then, can he be released without an insane fear for yourself? ⁹ You have made of him your salvation and your escape from guilt. ¹⁰ Your investment in this escape is heavy, and your fear of letting it go is strong.
5. Stand still an instant, now, and think what you have done. ² Do not forget that it is you who did it,

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and who can therefore let it go. ³ Hold out your hand. ⁴ This enemy has come to bless you. ⁵ Take his blessing, and feel how your heart is lifted and your fear released. ⁶ Do not hold on to it, nor onto him. ⁷ He is a Son of God, along with you. ⁸ He is no jailer, but a messenger of Christ. ⁹ Be this to him, that you may see him thus.

6. It is not easy to realize that prayers for things, for status, for human love, for external "gifts" of any kind, are always made to set up jailers and to hide from guilt. ² These things are used for goals that substitute for God, and therefore distort the purpose of prayer. ³ The desire for them *is* the prayer. ⁴ One need not ask explicitly. ⁵ The goal of God is lost in the quest for lesser goals of any kind, and prayer becomes requests for enemies. ⁶ The power of prayer can be quite clearly recognized even in this. ⁷ No one who wants an enemy will fail to find one. ⁸ But just as surely will he lose the only true goal that is given him. ⁹ Think of the cost, and understand it well. ¹⁰ All other goals are at the cost of God.

Introduction

1. Forgiveness offers wings to prayer, to make its rising easy and its progress swift. ² Without its strong support it would be vain to try to rise above prayer's bottom step, or even to attempt to climb at all. ³ Forgiveness is prayer's ally; sister in the plan for your salvation. ⁴ Both must come to hold you up and keep your feet secure; your purpose steadfast and unchangeable. ⁵ Behold the greatest help that God ordained to be with you until you reach to Him. ⁶ Illusion's end will come with this. ⁷ Unlike the timeless nature of its sister, prayer, forgiveness has an end. ⁸ For it becomes unneeded when the rising up is done. ⁹ Yet now it has a purpose beyond which you cannot go, nor have you need to go. ¹⁰ Accomplish this and you have been redeemed. ¹¹ Accomplish this and you have been transformed. ¹² Accomplish this and you will save the world.

I. Forgiveness of Yourself

1. No gift of Heaven has been more misunderstood than has forgiveness. ² It has, in fact, become a scourge; a curse where it was meant to bless, a cruel mockery of grace, a parody upon the holy peace of God. ³ Yet those who have not yet chosen to begin the steps of prayer cannot but use it thus. ⁴ Forgiveness' kindness is obscure at first, because salvation is not understood, *nor truly sought for*. ⁵ What was meant to heal is used to hurt because forgiveness is not wanted. ⁶ Guilt becomes salvation, and the remedy appears to be a terrible alternative to life.
2. Forgiveness-to-destroy will therefore suit the purpose of the world far better than its true objective, and the honest means by which this goal is reached. ² Forgiveness-to-destroy will overlook no sin, no crime, no guilt that it can seek and find and "love." ³ Dear to its heart is error, and mistakes loom large and grow and swell within its sight. ⁴ It carefully picks out all evil things, and overlooks the loving as a plague; a hateful thing of danger and of death. ⁵ Forgiveness-to-destroy *is* death, and this it sees in all it looks upon and hates. ⁶ God's mercy has become a twisted knife that would destroy the holy Son He loves.
3. Would you forgive yourself for doing this? ² Then learn that God has given you the means by which you can return to Him in peace. ³ *Do not see error*. ⁴ Do not make it real. ⁵ Select the loving and forgive the sin by choosing in its place the face of Christ. ⁶ How otherwise can prayer return to

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God? ⁷ He loves His Son. ⁸ Can you remember Him and hate what He created? ⁹ You will hate his Father if you hate the Son He loves. ¹⁰ For as you see the Son you see yourself, and as you see yourself is God to you.

4. As prayer is always for yourself, so is forgiveness always given you. ² It is impossible to forgive another, for it is only your sins you see in him. ³ You want to see them there, and not in you. ⁴ That is why forgiveness of another is an illusion. ⁵ Yet it is the only happy dream in all the world; the only one that does not lead to death. ⁶ Only in someone else can you forgive yourself, for you have called him guilty of your sins, and in him must your innocence now be found. ⁷ Who but the sinful need to be forgiven? ⁸ And do not ever think you can see sin in anyone except yourself.
5. This is the great deception of the world, and you the great deceiver of yourself. ² It always seems to be another who is evil, and in his sin you are the injured one. ³ How could freedom be possible if this were so? ⁴ You would be slave to everyone, for what he does entails your fate, your feelings, your despair or hope, your misery or joy. ⁵ You have no freedom unless he gives it to you. ⁶ And being evil, he can only give of what he is. ⁷ You cannot see his sins and not your own. ⁸ But you can free him and yourself as well.
6. Forgiveness, truly given, is the way in which your only hope of freedom lies. ² Others will make mistakes and so will you, as long as this illusion of a world appears to be your home. ³ Yet God Himself has given all His Sons a remedy for all illusions that they think they see. ⁴ Christ's vision does not use your eyes, but you can look through His and learn to see like Him. ⁵ Mistakes are tiny shadows, quickly gone, that for an instant only seem to hide the face of Christ, which still remains unchanged behind them all. ⁶ His constancy remains in tranquil silence and in perfect peace. ⁷ He does not know of shadows. ⁸ His the eyes that look past error to the Christ in you.
7. Ask, then, His help, and ask Him how to learn forgiveness as His vision lets it be. ² You are in need of what He gives, and your salvation rests on learning this of Him. ³ Prayer cannot be released to Heaven while forgiveness-to-destroy remains with you. ⁴ God's mercy would remove this withering and poisoned thinking from your holy mind. ⁵ Christ has forgiven you, and in His sight the world becomes as holy as Himself. ⁶ Who sees no evil in it sees like Him. ⁷ For what He has forgiven has not sinned, and guilt can be no more. ⁸ Salvation's plan is made complete, and sanity has come.
8. Forgiveness is the call to sanity, for who but the insane would look on sin when he could see the face of Christ instead? ² This is the choice you make; the simplest one, and yet the only one that you *can* make. ³ God calls on you to save His Son from death by offering Christ's Love to him. ⁴ This is your need, and God holds out this gift to you. ⁵ As He would give, so must you give as well. ⁶ And thus is prayer restored to formlessness, beyond all limits into timelessness, with nothing of the past to hold it back from reuniting with the ceaseless song that all creation sings unto its God.
9. But to achieve this end you first must learn, before you reach where learning cannot go. ² Forgiveness is the key, but who can use a key when he has lost the door for which the key was made, and where alone it fits? ³ Therefore we make distinctions, so that prayer can be released from darkness into light. ⁴ Forgiveness' role must be reversed, and cleansed from evil usages and hateful goals. ⁵ Forgiveness-to-destroy must be unveiled in all its treachery, and then let go forever and forever. ⁶ There can be no trace of it remaining, if the plan that God established for returning be achieved at last, and learning be complete.

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10. This is the world of opposites. ² And you must choose between them every instant while this world retains reality for you. ³ Yet you must learn alternatives for choice, or you will not be able to attain your freedom. ⁴ Let it then be clear to you exactly what forgiveness means to you, and learn what it should be to set you free. ⁵ The level of your prayer depends on this, for here it waits its freedom to ascend above the world of chaos into peace.

II. False versus True Healing

1. False healing merely makes a poor exchange of one illusion for a "nicer" one; a dream of sickness for a dream of health. ² This can occur at lower forms of prayer, combining with forgiveness kindly meant but not completely understood as yet. ³ Only false healing can give way to fear, so sickness will be free to strike again. ⁴ False healing can indeed remove a form of pain and sickness. ⁵ But the cause remains, and will not lack effects. ⁶ The cause is still the wish to die and overcome the Christ. ⁷ And with this wish is death a certainty, for prayer *is* answered. ⁸ Yet there is a kind of seeming death that has a different source. ⁹ It does not come because of hurtful thoughts and raging anger at the universe. ¹⁰ It merely signifies the end has come for usefulness of body functioning. ¹¹ And so it is discarded as a choice, as one lays by a garment now outworn.
2. This is what death should be; a quiet choice, made joyfully and with a sense of peace, because the body has been kindly used to help the Son of God along the way he goes to God. ² We thank the body, then, for all the service it has given us. ³ But we are thankful, too, the need is done to walk the world of limits, and to reach the Christ in hidden forms and clearly seen at most in lovely flashes. ⁴ Now we can behold Him without blinders, in the light that we have learned to look upon again.
3. We call it death, but it is liberty. ² It does not come in forms that seem to be thrust down in pain upon unwilling flesh, but as a gentle welcome to release. ³ If there has been true healing, this can be the form in which death comes when it is time to rest a while from labor gladly done and gladly ended. ⁴ Now we go in peace to freer air and gentler climate, where it is not hard to see the gifts we gave were saved for us. ⁵ For Christ is clearer now; His vision more sustained in us; His Voice, the Word of God, more certainly our own.
4. This gentle passage to a higher prayer, a kind forgiveness of the ways of earth, can only be received with thankfulness. ² Yet first true healing must have come to bless the mind with loving pardon for the sins it dreamed about and laid upon the world. ³ Now are its dreams dispelled in quiet rest. ⁴ Now its forgiveness comes to heal the world and it is ready to depart in peace, the journey over and the lessons learned.
5. This is not death according to the world, for death is cruel in its frightened eyes and takes the form of punishment for sin. ² How could it be a blessing, then? ³ And how could it be welcome when it must be feared? ⁴ What healing has occurred in such a view of what is merely opening the gate to higher prayer and kindly justice done? ⁵ Death is reward and not a punishment. ⁶ But such a viewpoint must be fostered by the healing that the world cannot conceive. ⁷ There is no partial healing. ⁸ What but shifts illusions has done nothing. ⁹ What is false cannot be partly true. ¹⁰ If you are healed your healing is complete. ¹¹ Forgiveness is the only gift you give and would receive.
6. False healing rests upon the body's cure, leaving the cause of illness still unchanged, ready to

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strike again until it brings a cruel death in seeming victory. ² It can be held at bay a little while, and there can be brief respite as it waits to take its vengeance on the Son of God. ³ Yet it cannot be overcome until all faith in it has been laid by, and placed upon God's substitute for evil dreams; a world in which there is no veil of sin to keep it dark and comfortless. ⁴ At last the gate of Heaven opens and God's Son is free to enter in the home that stands ready to welcome him, and was prepared before time was and still but waits for him.