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Introduction

1. If you did not feel guilty you could not attack, for condemnation is the root of attack. ² It is the judgment of one mind by another as unworthy of love and deserving of punishment. ³ But herein lies the split. ⁴ For the mind that judges perceives itself as separate from the mind being judged, believing that by punishing another, it will escape punishment. ⁵ All this is but the delusional attempt of the mind to deny itself, and escape the penalty of denial. ⁶ It is not an attempt to relinquish denial, but to hold on to it. ⁷ For it is guilt that has obscured the Father to you, and it is guilt that has driven you insane.
2. The acceptance of guilt into the mind of God's Son was the beginning of the separation, as the acceptance of the Atonement is its end. ² The world you see is the delusional system of those made mad by guilt. ³ Look carefully at this world, and you will realize that this is so. ⁴ For this world is the symbol of punishment, and all the laws that seem to govern it are the laws of death. ⁵ Children are born into it through pain and in pain. ⁶ Their growth is attended by suffering, and they learn of sorrow and separation and death. ⁷ Their minds seem to be trapped in their brain, and its powers to decline if their bodies are hurt. ⁸ They seem to love, yet they desert and are deserted. ⁹ They appear to lose what they love, perhaps the most insane belief of all. ¹⁰ And their bodies wither and gasp and are laid in the ground, and are no more. ¹¹ Not one of them but has thought that God is cruel.
3. If this were the real world, God *would* be cruel. ² For no Father could subject His children to this as the price of salvation and *be* loving. ³ *Love does not kill to save.* ⁴ If it did, attack would be salvation, and this is the ego's interpretation, not God's. ⁵ Only the world of guilt could demand this, for only the guilty could conceive of it. ⁶ Adam's "sin" could have touched no one, had he not believed it was the Father Who drove him out of Paradise. ⁷ For in that belief the knowledge of the Father was lost, since only those who do not understand Him could believe it.
4. This world *is* a picture of the crucifixion of God's Son. ² And until you realize that God's Son cannot be crucified, this is the world you will see. ³ Yet you will not realize this until you accept the eternal fact that God's Son is not guilty. ⁴ He deserves only love because he has given only love. ⁵ He cannot be condemned because he has never condemned. ⁶ The Atonement is the final lesson he need learn, for it teaches him that, never having sinned, he has no need of salvation.

I. Guiltlessness and Invulnerability

1. Earlier, I said that the Holy Spirit shares the goal of all good teachers, whose ultimate aim is to make themselves unnecessary by teaching their pupils all they know. ² The Holy Spirit wants only this, for sharing the Father's Love for His Son, He seeks to remove all guilt from his mind that he may remember his Father in peace. ³ Peace and guilt are antithetical, and the Father can be remembered only in peace. ⁴ Love and guilt cannot coexist, and to accept one is to deny the other. ⁵ Guilt hides Christ from your sight, for it is the denial of the blamelessness of God's Son.
2. In the strange world that you have made the Son of God *has* sinned. ² How could you see him, then? ³ By making him invisible, the world of retribution rose in the black cloud of guilt that you accepted, and you hold it dear. ⁴ For the blamelessness of Christ is the proof that the ego never was, and can never be. ⁵ Without guilt the ego has no life, and God's Son *is* without guilt.

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3. As you look upon yourself and judge what you do honestly, you may be tempted to wonder how you can be guiltless. ² Yet consider this: You are not guiltless in time, but in eternity. ³ You have "sinned" in the past, but there is no past. ⁴ Always has no direction. ⁵ Time seems to go in one direction, but when you reach its end it will roll up like a long carpet spread along the past behind you, and will disappear. ⁶ As long as you believe the Son of God is guilty you will walk along this carpet, believing that it leads to death. ⁷ And the journey will seem long and cruel and senseless, for so it is.
4. The journey the Son of God has set himself is useless indeed, but the journey on which his Father sets him is one of release and joy. ² The Father is not cruel, and His Son cannot hurt himself. ³ The retaliation that he fears and that he sees will never touch him, for although he believes in it the Holy Spirit knows it is not true. ⁴ The Holy Spirit stands at the end of time, where you must be because He is with you. ⁵ He has already undone everything unworthy of the Son of God, for such was His mission, given Him by God. ⁶ And what God gives has always been.
5. You will see me as you learn the Son of God is guiltless. ² He has always sought his guiltlessness, and he has found it. ³ For everyone is seeking to escape from the prison he has made, and the way to find release is not denied him. ⁴ Being in him, he has found it. ⁵ When he finds it is only a matter of time, and time is but an illusion. ⁶ For the Son of God is guiltless now, and the brightness of his purity shines untouched forever in God's Mind. ⁷ God's Son will always be as he was created. ⁸ Deny your world and judge him not, for his eternal guiltlessness is in the Mind of his Father, and protects him forever.
6. When you have accepted the Atonement for yourself, you will realize there is no guilt in God's Son. ² And only as you look upon him as guiltless can you understand his oneness. ³ For the idea of guilt brings a belief in condemnation of one by another, projecting separation in place of unity. ⁴ You can condemn only yourself, and by so doing you cannot know that you are God's Son. ⁵ You have denied the condition of his being, which is his perfect blamelessness. ⁶ Out of love he was created, and in love he abides. ⁷ Goodness and mercy have always followed him, for he has always extended the Love of his Father.
7. As you perceive the holy companions who travel with you, you will realize that there is no journey, but only an awakening. ² The Son of God, who sleepeth not, has kept faith with his Father for you. ³ There is no road to travel on, and no time to travel through. ⁴ For God waits not for His Son in time, being forever unwilling to be without him. ⁵ And so it has always been. ⁶ Let the holiness of God's Son shine away the cloud of guilt that darkens your mind, and by accepting his purity as yours, learn of him that it *is* yours.
8. You are invulnerable because you are guiltless. ² You can hold on to the past only through guilt. ³ For guilt establishes that you will be punished for what you have done, and thus depends on one-dimensional time, proceeding from past to future. ⁴ No one who believes this can understand what "always" means, and therefore guilt must deprive you of the appreciation of eternity. ⁵ You are immortal because you are eternal, and "always" must be now. ⁶ Guilt, then, is a way of holding past and future in your mind to ensure the ego's continuity. ⁷ For if what has been will be punished, the ego's continuity is guaranteed. ⁸ Yet the guarantee of your continuity is God's, not the ego's. ⁹ And immortality is the opposite of time, for time passes away, while immortality is constant.

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9. Accepting the Atonement teaches you what immortality is, for by accepting your guiltlessness you learn that the past has never been, and so the future is needless and will not be. ² The future, in time, is always associated with expiation, and only guilt could induce a sense of a need for expiation. ³ Accepting the guiltlessness of the Son of God as yours is therefore God's way of reminding you of His Son, and what he is in truth. ⁴ For God has never condemned His Son, and being guiltless he is eternal.
10. You cannot dispel guilt by making it real, and then atoning for it. ² This is the ego's plan, which it offers instead of dispelling it. ³ The ego believes in atonement through attack, being fully committed to the insane notion that attack is salvation. ⁴ And you who cherish guilt must also believe it, for how else but by identifying with the ego could you hold dear what you do not want?
11. The ego teaches you to attack yourself because you are guilty, and this must increase the guilt, for guilt is the result of attack. ² In the ego's teaching, then, there is no escape from guilt. ³ For attack makes guilt real, and if it is real there *is* no way to overcome it. ⁴ The Holy Spirit dispels it simply through the calm recognition that it has never been. ⁵ As He looks upon the guiltless Son of God, He knows that this is true. ⁶ And being true for you, you cannot attack yourself, for without guilt attack is impossible. ⁷ You, then, are saved because God's Son is guiltless. ⁸ And being wholly pure, you are invulnerable.

III. The Fear of Redemption

1. You may wonder why it is so crucial that you look upon your hatred and realize its full extent. ² You may also think that it would be easy enough for the Holy Spirit to show it to you, and to dispel it without the need for you to raise it to awareness yourself. ³ Yet there is one more obstacle you have interposed between yourself and the Atonement. ⁴ We have said that no one will countenance fear if he recognizes it. ⁵ Yet in your disordered state of mind you are not afraid of fear. ⁶ You do not like it, but it is not your desire to attack that really frightens you. ⁷ You are not seriously disturbed by your hostility. ⁸ You keep it hidden because you are more afraid of what it covers. ⁹ You could look even upon the ego's darkest cornerstone without fear if you did not believe that, without the ego, you would find within yourself something you fear even more. ¹⁰ You are not really afraid of crucifixion. ¹¹ Your real terror is of redemption.
2. Under the ego's dark foundation is the memory of God, and it is of this that you are really afraid. ² For this memory would instantly restore you to your proper place, and it is this place that you have sought to leave. ³ Your fear of attack is nothing compared to your fear of love. ⁴ You would be willing to look even upon your savage wish to kill God's Son, if you did not believe that it saves you from love. ⁵ For this wish caused the separation, and you have protected it because you do not want the separation healed. ⁶ You realize that, by removing the dark cloud that obscures it, your love for your Father would impel you to answer His Call and leap into Heaven. ⁷ You believe that attack is salvation because it would prevent you from this. ⁸ For still deeper than the ego's foundation, and much stronger than it will ever be, is your intense and burning love of God, and His for you. ⁹ This is what you really want to hide.
3. In honesty, is it not harder for you to say "I love" than "I hate"? ² You associate love with weakness and hatred with strength, and your own real power seems to you as your real weakness. ³

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For you could not control your joyous response to the call of love if you heard it, and the whole world you thought you made would vanish. ⁴ The Holy Spirit, then, seems to be attacking your fortress, for you would shut out God, and He does not will to be excluded.

4. You have built your whole insane belief system because you think you would be helpless in God's Presence, and you would save yourself from His Love because you think it would crush you into nothingness. ² You are afraid it would sweep you away from yourself and make you little, because you believe that magnitude lies in defiance, and that attack is grandeur. ³ You think you have made a world God would destroy; and by loving Him, which you do, you would throw this world away, which you *would*. ⁴ Therefore, you have used the world to cover your love, and the deeper you go into the blackness of the ego's foundation, the closer you come to the Love that is hidden there. ⁵ *And it is this that frightens you.*
5. You can accept insanity because you made it, but you cannot accept love because you did not. ² You would rather be a slave of the crucifixion than a Son of God in redemption. ³ Your individual death seems more valuable than your living oneness, for what is given you is not so dear as what you made. ⁴ You are more afraid of God than of the ego, and love cannot enter where it is not welcome. ⁵ But hatred can, for it enters of its own volition and cares not for yours.
6. You must look upon your illusions and not keep them hidden, because they do not rest on their own foundation. ² In concealment they appear to do so, and thus they seem to be self-sustained. ³ This is the fundamental illusion on which the others rest. ⁴ For beneath them, and concealed as long as they are hidden, is the loving mind that thought it made them in anger. ⁵ And the pain in this mind is so apparent, when it is uncovered, that its need of healing cannot be denied. ⁶ Not all the tricks and games you offer it can heal it, for here is the real crucifixion of God's Son.
7. And yet he is not crucified. ² Here is both his pain and his healing, for the Holy Spirit's vision is merciful and His remedy is quick. ³ Do not hide suffering from His sight, but bring it gladly to Him. ⁴ Lay before His eternal sanity all your hurt, and let Him heal you. ⁵ Do not leave any spot of pain hidden from His light, and search your mind carefully for any thoughts you may fear to uncover. ⁶ For He will heal every little thought you have kept to hurt you and cleanse it of its littleness, restoring it to the magnitude of God.
8. Beneath all the grandiosity you hold so dear is your real call for help. ² For you call for love to your Father as your Father calls you to Himself. ³ In that place which you have hidden, you will only to unite with the Father, in loving remembrance of Him. ⁴ You will find this place of truth as you see it in your brothers, for though they may deceive themselves, like you they long for the grandeur that is in them. ⁵ And perceiving it you will welcome it, and it will be yours. ⁶ For grandeur is the right of God's Son, and no illusions can satisfy him or save him from what he is. ⁷ Only his love is real, and he will be content only with his reality.
9. Save him from his illusions that you may accept the magnitude of your Father in peace and joy. ² But exempt no one from your love, or you will be hiding a dark place in your mind where the Holy Spirit is not welcome. ³ And thus you will exempt yourself from His healing power, for by not offering total love you will not be healed completely. ⁴ Healing must be as complete as fear, for love cannot enter where there is one spot of fear to mar its welcome.
10. You who prefer separation to sanity cannot obtain it in your right mind. ² You were at peace until

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you asked for special favor. ³ And God did not give it for the request was alien to Him, and you could not ask this of a Father Who truly loved His Son. ⁴ Therefore you made of Him an unloving father, demanding of Him what only such a father could give. ⁵ And the peace of God's Son was shattered, for he no longer understood his Father. ⁶ He feared what he had made, but still more did he fear his real Father, having attacked his own glorious equality with Him.

11. In peace he needed nothing and asked for nothing. ² In war he demanded everything and found nothing. ³ For how could the gentleness of love respond to his demands, except by departing in peace and returning to the Father? ⁴ If the Son did not wish to remain in peace, he could not remain at all. ⁵ For a darkened mind cannot live in the light, and it must seek a place of darkness where it can believe it is where it is not. ⁶ God did not allow this to happen. ⁷ Yet you demanded that it happen, and therefore believed that it was so.
12. To "single out" is to "make alone," and thus make lonely. ² God did not do this to you. ³ Could He set you apart, knowing that your peace lies in His Oneness? ⁴ He denied you only your request for pain, for suffering is not of His creation. ⁵ Having given you creation, He could not take it from you. ⁶ He could but answer your insane request with a sane answer that would abide with you in your insanity. ⁷ And this He did. ⁸ No one who hears His answer but will give up insanity. ⁹ For His answer is the reference point beyond illusions, from which you can look back on them and see them as insane. ¹⁰ But seek this place and you will find it, for Love is in you and will lead you there.

IV. The Function of Time

1. And now the reason why you are afraid of this course should be apparent. ² For this is a course on love, because it is about you. ³ You have been told that your function in this world is healing, and your function in Heaven is creating. ⁴ The ego teaches that your function on earth is destruction, and you have no function at all in Heaven. ⁵ It would thus destroy you here and bury you here, leaving you no inheritance except the dust out of which it thinks you were made. ⁶ As long as it is reasonably satisfied with you, as its reasoning goes, it offers you oblivion. ⁷ When it becomes overtly savage, it offers you hell.
2. Yet neither oblivion nor hell is as unacceptable to you as Heaven. ² Your definition of Heaven *is* hell and oblivion, and the real Heaven is the greatest threat you think you could experience. ³ For hell and oblivion are ideas that you made up, and you are bent on demonstrating their reality to establish yours. ⁴ If their reality is questioned, you believe that yours is. ⁵ For you believe that attack is your reality, and that your destruction is the final proof that you were right.
3. Under the circumstances, would it not be more desirable to have been wrong, even apart from the fact that you were wrong? ² While it could perhaps be argued that death suggests there *was* life, no one would claim that it proves there *is* life. ³ Even the past life that death might indicate, could only have been futile if it must come to this, and needs this to prove that it was at all. ⁴ You question Heaven, but you do not question this. ⁵ Yet you could heal and be healed if you did question it. ⁶ And even though you know not Heaven, might it not be more desirable than death? ⁷ You have been as selective in your questioning as in your perception. ⁸ An open mind is more honest than this.
4. The ego has a strange notion of time, and it is with this notion that your questioning might well begin. ² The ego invests heavily in the past, and in the end believes that the past is the only aspect of

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time that is meaningful. ³ Remember that its emphasis on guilt enables it to ensure its continuity by making the future like the past, and thus avoiding the present. ⁴ By the notion of paying for the past in the future, the past becomes the determiner of the future, making them continuous without an intervening present. ⁵ For the ego regards the present only as a brief transition to the future, in which it brings the past to the future by interpreting the present in past terms.

5. "Now" has no meaning to the ego. ² The present merely reminds it of past hurts, and it reacts to the present as if it *were* the past. ³ The ego cannot tolerate release from the past, and although the past is over, the ego tries to preserve its image by responding as if it were present. ⁴ It dictates your reactions to those you meet in the present from a past reference point, obscuring their present reality. ⁵ In effect, if you follow the ego's dictates you will react to your brother as though he were someone else, and this will surely prevent you from recognizing him as he is. ⁶ And you will receive messages from him out of your own past because, by making it real in the present, you are forbidding yourself to let it go. ⁷ You thus deny yourself the message of release that every brother offers you *now*.
6. The shadowy figures from the past are precisely what you must escape. ² They are not real, and have no hold over you unless you bring them with you. ³ They carry the spots of pain in your mind, directing you to attack in the present in retaliation for a past that is no more. ⁴ And this decision is one of future pain. ⁵ Unless you learn that past pain is an illusion, you are choosing a future of illusions and losing the many opportunities you could find for release in the present. ⁶ The ego would preserve your nightmares, and prevent you from awakening and understanding they are past. ⁷ Would you recognize a holy encounter if you are merely perceiving it as a meeting with your own past? ⁸ For you would be meeting no one, and the sharing of salvation, which makes the encounter holy, would be excluded from your sight. ⁹ The Holy Spirit teaches that you always meet yourself, and the encounter is holy because you are. ¹⁰ The ego teaches that you always encounter your past, and because your dreams were not holy, the future cannot be, and the present is without meaning.
7. It is evident that the Holy Spirit's perception of time is the exact opposite of the ego's. ² The reason is equally clear, for they perceive the goal of time as diametrically opposed. ³ The Holy Spirit interprets time's purpose as rendering the need for time unnecessary. ⁴ He regards the function of time as temporary, serving only His teaching function, which is temporary by definition. ⁵ His emphasis is therefore on the only aspect of time that can extend to the infinite, for *now* is the closest approximation of eternity that this world offers. ⁶ It is in the reality of "now," without past or future, that the beginning of the appreciation of eternity lies. ⁷ For only "now" is here, and only "now" presents the opportunities for the holy encounters in which salvation can be found.
8. The ego, on the other hand, regards the function of time as one of extending itself in place of eternity, for like the Holy Spirit, the ego interprets the goal of time as its own. ² The continuity of past and future, under its direction, is the only purpose the ego perceives in time, and it closes over the present so that no gap in its own continuity can occur. ³ Its continuity, then, would keep you in time, while the Holy Spirit would release you from it. ⁴ It is His interpretation of the means of salvation that you must learn to accept, if you would share His goal of salvation for you.
9. You, too, will interpret the function of time as you interpret yours. ² If you accept your function in the world of time as one of healing, you will emphasize only the aspect of time in which healing can occur. ³ Healing cannot be accomplished in the past. ⁴ It must be accomplished in the present to release the future. ⁵ This interpretation ties the future to the present, and extends the present rather than the past. ⁶ But if you interpret your function as destruction, you will lose sight of the present

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and hold on to the past to ensure a destructive future. ⁷ And time will be as you interpret it, for of itself it is nothing.

X. Release from Guilt

1. You are accustomed to the notion that the mind can see the source of pain where it is not. ² The doubtful service of such displacement is to hide the real source of guilt, and keep from your awareness the full perception that it is insane. ³ Displacement always is maintained by the illusion that the source of guilt, from which attention is diverted, must be true; and must be fearful, or you would not have displaced the guilt onto what you believed to be less fearful. ⁴ You are therefore willing to look upon all kinds of "sources," provided they are not the deeper source to which they bear no real relationship at all.
2. Insane ideas have no real relationships, for that is why they are insane. ² No real relationship can rest on guilt, or even hold one spot of it to mar its purity. ³ For all relationships that guilt has touched are used but to avoid the person *and* the guilt. ⁴ What strange relationships you have made for this strange purpose! ⁵ And you forgot that real relationships are holy, and cannot be used by you at all. ⁶ They are used only by the Holy Spirit, and it is that which makes them pure. ⁷ If you displace your guilt upon them, the Holy Spirit cannot use them. ⁸ For, by pre-empting for your own ends what you should have given Him, He cannot use it for your release. ⁹ No one who would unite in any way with anyone for his individual salvation will find it in that strange relationship. ¹⁰ It is not shared, and so it is not real.
3. In any union with a brother in which you seek to lay your guilt upon him, or share it with him or perceive his own, *you* will feel guilty. ² Nor will you find satisfaction and peace with him, because your union with him is not real. ³ You will see guilt in that relationship because you put it there. ⁴ It is inevitable that those who suffer guilt will attempt to displace it, because they do believe in it. ⁵ Yet though they suffer, they will not look within and let it go. ⁶ They cannot know they love, and cannot understand what loving is. ⁷ Their main concern is to perceive the source of guilt outside themselves, beyond their own control.
4. When you maintain that you are guilty but the source of your guilt lies in the past, you are not looking inward. ² The past is not *in* you. ³ Your weird associations to it have no meaning in the present. ⁴ Yet you let them stand between you and your brothers, with whom you find no real relationships at all. ⁵ Can you expect to use your brothers as a means to "solve" the past, and still to see them as they really are? ⁶ Salvation is not found by those who use their brothers to resolve problems that are not there. ⁷ You wanted not salvation in the past. ⁸ Would you impose your idle wishes on the present, and hope to find salvation now?
5. Determine, then, to be not as you were. ² Use no relationship to hold you to the past, but with each one each day be born again. ³ A minute, even less, will be enough to free you from the past, and give your mind in peace over to the Atonement. ⁴ When everyone is welcome to you as you would have yourself be welcome to your Father, you will see no guilt in you. ⁵ For you will have accepted the Atonement, which shone within you all the while you dreamed of guilt, and would not look within and see it.
6. As long as you believe that guilt is justified in any way, in anyone, whatever he may do, you will

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- not look within, where you would always find Atonement. ² The end of guilt will never come as long as you believe there is a reason for it. ³ For you must learn that guilt is always totally insane, and has no reason. ⁴ The Holy Spirit seeks not to dispel reality. ⁵ If guilt were real, Atonement would not be. ⁶ The purpose of Atonement is to dispel illusions, not to establish them as real and then forgive them.
7. The Holy Spirit does not keep illusions in your mind to frighten you, and show them to you fearfully to demonstrate what He has saved you from. ² What He has saved you from is gone. ³ Give no reality to guilt, and see no reason for it. ⁴ The Holy Spirit does what God would have Him do, and has always done so. ⁵ He has seen separation, but knows of union. ⁶ He teaches healing, but He also knows of creation. ⁷ He would have you see and teach as He does, and through Him. ⁸ Yet what He knows you do not know, though it is yours.
8. *Now* it is given you to heal and teach, to make what will be *now*. ² As yet it is not now. ³ The Son of God believes that he is lost in guilt, alone in a dark world where pain is pressing everywhere upon him from without. ⁴ When he has looked within and seen the radiance there, he will remember how much his Father loves him. ⁵ And it will seem incredible that he ever thought his Father loved him not, and looked upon him as condemned. ⁶ The moment that you realize guilt is insane, wholly unjustified and wholly without reason, you will not fear to look upon the Atonement and accept it wholly.
9. You who have been unmerciful to yourself do not remember your Father's Love. ² And looking without mercy upon your brothers, you do not remember how much you love Him. ³ Yet it is forever true. ⁴ In shining peace within you is the perfect purity in which you were created. ⁵ Fear not to look upon the lovely truth in you. ⁶ Look through the cloud of guilt that dims your vision, and look past darkness to the holy place where you will see the light. ⁷ The altar to your Father is as pure as He Who raised it to Himself. ⁸ Nothing can keep from you what Christ would have you see. ⁹ His Will is like His Father's, and He offers mercy to every child of God, as He would have you do.
10. Release from guilt as you would be released. ² There is no other way to look within and see the light of love, shining as steadily and as surely as God Himself has always loved His Son. ³ *And as His Son loves Him.* ⁴ There is no fear in love, for love is guiltless. ⁵ You who have always loved your Father can have no fear, for any reason, to look within and see your holiness. ⁶ You cannot be as you believed you were. ⁷ Your guilt is without reason because it is not in the Mind of God, where you are. ⁸ And this *is* reason, which the Holy Spirit would restore to you. ⁹ He would remove only illusions. ¹⁰ All else He would have you see. ¹¹ And in Christ's vision He would show you the perfect purity that is forever within God's Son.
11. You cannot enter into real relationships with any of God's Sons unless you love them all and equally. ² Love is not special. ³ If you single out part of the Sonship for your love, you are imposing guilt on all your relationships and making them unreal. ⁴ You can love only as God loves. ⁵ Seek not to love unlike Him, for there is no love apart from His. ⁶ Until you recognize that this is true, you will have no idea what love is like. ⁷ No one who condemns a brother can see himself as guiltless and in the peace of God. ⁸ If he is guiltless and in peace and sees it not, he is delusional, and has not looked upon himself. ⁹ To him I say:

¹⁰ Behold the Son of God, and look upon his purity and be still. ¹¹ In quiet look upon his holiness, and offer thanks unto his Father that no guilt has ever touched him.

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12. No illusion that you have ever held against him has touched his innocence in any way. ² His shining purity, wholly untouched by guilt and wholly loving, is bright within you. ³ Let us look upon him together and love him. ⁴ For in love of him is your guiltlessness. ⁵ But look upon yourself, and gladness and appreciation for what you see will banish guilt forever. ⁶ I thank You, Father, for the purity of Your most holy Son, whom You have created guiltless forever.
13. Like you, my faith and my belief are centered on what I treasure. ² The difference is that I love *only* what God loves with me, and because of this I treasure you beyond the value that you set on yourself, even unto the worth that God has placed upon you. ³ I love all that He created, and all my faith and my belief I offer unto it. ⁴ My faith in you is as strong as all the love I give my Father. ⁵ My trust in you is without limit, and without the fear that you will hear me not. ⁶ I thank the Father for your loveliness, and for the many gifts that you will let me offer to the Kingdom in honor of its wholeness that is of God.
14. Praise be to you who make the Father One with His Own Son. ² Alone we are all lowly, but together we shine with brightness so intense that none of us alone can even think of it. ³ Before the glorious radiance of the Kingdom guilt melts away, and transformed into kindness will never more be what it was. ⁴ Every reaction you experience will be so purified that it is fitting as a hymn of praise unto your Father. ⁵ See only praise of Him in what He has created, for He will never cease His praise of you. ⁶ United in this praise we stand before the gates of Heaven where we will surely enter in our sinlessness. ⁷ God loves you. ⁸ Could I, then, lack faith in you and love Him perfectly?

III. The Decision for Guiltlessness

1. The happy learner cannot feel guilty about learning. ² This is so essential to learning that it should never be forgotten. ³ The guiltless learner learns easily because his thoughts are free. ⁴ Yet this entails the recognition that guilt is interference, not salvation, and serves no useful function at all.
2. Perhaps you are accustomed to using guiltlessness merely to offset the pain of guilt, and do not look upon it as having value in itself. ² You believe that guilt and guiltlessness are both of value, each representing an escape from what the other does not offer you. ³ You do not want either alone, for without both you do not see yourself as whole and therefore happy. ⁴ Yet you are whole only in your guiltlessness, and only in your guiltlessness can you be happy. ⁵ There is no conflict here. ⁶ To wish for guilt in any way, in any form, will lose appreciation of the value of your guiltlessness, and push it from your sight.
3. There is no compromise that you can make with guilt, and escape the pain that only guiltlessness allays. ² Learning is living here, as creating is being in Heaven. ³ Whenever the pain of guilt seems to attract you, remember that if you yield to it, you are deciding against your happiness, and will not learn how to be happy. ⁴ Say therefore, to yourself, gently, but with the conviction born of the Love of God and of His Son:

⁵ *What I experience I will make manifest.*

⁶ *If I am guiltless, I have nothing to fear.*

⁷ *I choose to testify to my acceptance of the Atonement, not to its rejection.*

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⁸ *I would accept my guiltlessness by making it manifest and sharing it.*

⁹ *Let me bring peace to God's Son from his Father.*

4. Each day, each hour and minute, even each second, you are deciding between the crucifixion and the resurrection; between the ego and the Holy Spirit. ² The ego is the choice for guilt; the Holy Spirit the choice for guiltlessness. ³ The power of decision is all that is yours. ⁴ What you can decide between is fixed, because there are no alternatives except truth and illusion. ⁵ And there is no overlap between them, because they are opposites which cannot be reconciled and cannot both be true. ⁶ You are guilty or guiltless, bound or free, unhappy or happy.
5. The miracle teaches you that you have chosen guiltlessness, freedom and joy. ² It is not a cause, but an effect. ³ It is the natural result of choosing right, attesting to your happiness that comes from choosing to be free of guilt. ⁴ Everyone you offer healing to returns it. ⁵ Everyone you attack keeps it and cherishes it by holding it against you. ⁶ Whether he does this or does it not will make no difference; you will think he does. ⁷ It is impossible to offer what you do not want without this penalty. ⁸ The cost of giving *is* receiving. ⁹ Either it is a penalty from which you suffer, or the happy purchase of a treasure to hold dear.
6. No penalty is ever asked of God's Son except by himself and of himself. ² Every chance given him to heal is another opportunity to replace darkness with light and fear with love. ³ If he refuses it he binds himself to darkness, because he did not choose to free his brother and enter light with him. ⁴ By giving power to nothing, he throws away the joyous opportunity to learn that nothing has no power. ⁵ And by not dispelling darkness, he became afraid of darkness and of light. ⁶ The joy of learning that darkness has no power over the Son of God is the happy lesson the Holy Spirit teaches, and would have you teach with Him. ⁷ It is His joy to teach it, as it will be yours.
7. The way to teach this simple lesson is merely this: Guiltlessness is invulnerability. ² Therefore, make your invulnerability manifest to everyone. ³ Teach him that, whatever he may try to do to you, your perfect freedom from the belief that you can be harmed shows him that he is guiltless. ⁴ He can do nothing that can hurt you, and by refusing to allow him to think he can, you teach him that the Atonement, which you have accepted for yourself, is also his. ⁵ There is nothing to forgive. ⁶ No one can hurt the Son of God. ⁷ His guilt is wholly without cause, and being without cause, cannot exist.
8. God is the only Cause, and guilt is not of Him. ² Teach no one he has hurt you, for if you do, you teach yourself that what is not of God has power over you. ³ *The causeless cannot be.* ⁴ Do not attest to it, and do not foster belief in it in any mind. ⁵ Remember always that mind is one, and cause is one. ⁶ You will learn communication with this oneness only when you learn to deny the causeless, and accept the Cause of God as yours. ⁷ The power that God has given to His Son *is* his, and nothing else can His Son see or choose to look upon without imposing on himself the penalty of guilt, in place of all the happy teaching the Holy Spirit would gladly offer him.
9. Whenever you choose to make decisions for yourself you are thinking destructively, and the decision will be wrong. ² It will hurt you because of the concept of decision that led to it. ³ It is not true that you can make decisions by yourself or for yourself alone. ⁴ No thought of God's Son can be separate or isolated in its effects. ⁵ Every decision is made for the whole Sonship, directed in and out, and influencing a constellation larger than anything you ever dreamed of.

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10. Those who accept the Atonement *are* invulnerable. ² But those who believe they are guilty will respond to guilt, because they think it is salvation, and will not refuse to see it and side with it. ³ They believe that increasing guilt is self-protection. ⁴ And they will fail to understand the simple fact that what they do not want must hurt them. ⁵ All this arises because they do not believe that what they want is good. ⁶ Yet will was given them because it is holy, and will bring to them all that they need, coming as naturally as peace that knows no limits. ⁷ There is nothing their will fails to provide that offers them anything of value. ⁸ Yet because they do not understand their will, the Holy Spirit quietly understands it for them, and gives them what they want without effort, strain, or the impossible burden of deciding what they want and need alone.
11. It will never happen that you must make decisions for yourself. ² You are not bereft of help, and Help that knows the answer. ³ Would you be content with little, which is all that you alone can offer yourself, when He Who gives you everything will simply offer it to you? ⁴ He will never ask what you have done to make you worthy of the gift of God. ⁵ Ask it not therefore of yourself. ⁶ Instead, accept His answer, for He knows that you are worthy of everything God wills for you. ⁷ Do not try to escape the gift of God He so freely and so gladly offers you. ⁸ He offers you but what God gave Him for you. ⁹ You need not decide whether or not you are deserving of it. ¹⁰ God knows you are.
12. Would you deny the truth of God's decision, and place your pitiful appraisal of yourself in place of His calm and unswerving value of His Son? ² Nothing can shake God's conviction of the perfect purity of everything that He created, for it *is* wholly pure. ³ Do not decide against it, for being of Him it must be true. ⁴ Peace abides in every mind that quietly accepts the plan God set for its Atonement, relinquishing its own. ⁵ You know not of salvation, for you do not understand it. ⁶ Make no decisions about what it is or where it lies, but ask the Holy Spirit everything, and leave all decisions to His gentle counsel.
13. The One Who knows the plan of God that God would have you follow can teach you what it is. ² Only His wisdom is capable of guiding you to follow it. ³ Every decision you undertake alone but signifies that you would define what salvation *is*, and what you would be saved *from*. ⁴ The Holy Spirit knows that all salvation is escape from guilt. ⁵ You have no other "enemy," and against this strange distortion of the purity of the Son of God the Holy Spirit is your only Friend. ⁶ He is the strong protector of the innocence that sets you free. ⁷ And it is His decision to undo everything that would obscure your innocence from your unclouded mind.
14. Let Him, therefore, be the only Guide that you would follow to salvation. ² He knows the way, and leads you gladly on it. ³ With Him you will not fail to learn that what God wills for you *is* your will. ⁴ Without His guidance you will think you know alone, and will decide against your peace as surely as you decided that salvation lay in you alone. ⁵ Salvation is of Him to Whom God gave it for you. ⁶ He has not forgotten it. ⁷ Forget Him not and He will make every decision for you, for your salvation and the peace of God in you.
15. Seek not to appraise the worth of God's Son whom He created holy, for to do so is to evaluate his Father and judge against Him. ² And you *will* feel guilty for this imagined crime, which no one in this world or Heaven could possibly commit. ³ The Holy Spirit teaches only that the "sin" of self-replacement on the throne of God is not a source of guilt. ⁴ What cannot happen can have no effects to fear. ⁵ Be quiet in your faith in Him Who loves you, and would lead you out of insanity. ⁶ Madness may be your choice, but not your reality. ⁷ Never forget the Love of God, Who has

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- remembered you. ⁸ For it is quite impossible that He could ever let His Son drop from the loving Mind wherein he was created, and where his abode was fixed in perfect peace forever.
16. Say to the Holy Spirit only, "Decide for me," and it is done. ² For His decisions are reflections of what God knows about you, and in this light, error of any kind becomes impossible. ³ Why would you struggle so frantically to anticipate all you cannot know, when all knowledge lies behind every decision the Holy Spirit makes for you? ⁴ Learn of His wisdom and His Love, and teach His answer to everyone who struggles in the dark. ⁵ For you decide for them and for yourself.
17. How gracious it is to decide all things through Him Whose equal Love is given equally to all alike! ² He leaves you no one outside you. ³ And so He gives you what is yours, because your Father would have you share it with Him. ⁴ In everything be led by Him, and do not reconsider. ⁵ Trust Him to answer quickly, surely, and with Love for everyone who will be touched in any way by the decision. ⁶ And everyone will be. ⁷ Would you take unto yourself the sole responsibility for deciding what can bring only good to everyone? ⁸ Would you know this?
18. You taught yourself the most unnatural habit of not communicating with your Creator. ² Yet you remain in close communication with Him, and with everything that is within Him, as it is within yourself. ³ Unlearn isolation through His loving guidance, and learn of all the happy communication that you have thrown away but could not lose.
19. Whenever you are in doubt what you should do, think of His Presence in you, and tell yourself this, and only this:

² *He leadeth me and knows the way, which I know not.*

³ *Yet He will never keep from me what He would have me learn.*

⁴ *And so I trust Him to communicate to me all that He knows for me.*

⁵ Then let Him teach you quietly how to perceive your guiltlessness, which is already there.

VI. The Light of Communication

1. The journey that we undertake together is the exchange of dark for light, of ignorance for understanding. ² Nothing you understand is fearful. ³ It is only in darkness and in ignorance that you perceive the frightening, and shrink away from it to further darkness. ⁴ And yet it is only the hidden that can terrify, not for what it is, but for its hiddenness. ⁵ The obscure is frightening because you do not understand its meaning. ⁶ If you did, it would be clear and you would be no longer in the dark. ⁷ Nothing has hidden value, for what is hidden cannot be shared, and so its value is unknown. ⁸ The hidden is kept apart, but value always lies in joint appreciation. ⁹ What is concealed cannot be loved, and so it must be feared.
2. The quiet light in which the Holy Spirit dwells within you is merely perfect openness, in which nothing is hidden and therefore nothing is fearful. ² Attack will always yield to love if it is brought to love, not hidden from it. ³ There is no darkness that the light of love will not dispel, unless it is concealed from love's beneficence. ⁴ What is kept apart from love cannot share its healing power, because it has been separated off and kept in darkness. ⁵ The sentinels of darkness watch over it carefully, and you who made these guardians of illusion out of nothing are now afraid of them.

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3. Would you continue to give imagined power to these strange ideas of safety? ² They are neither safe nor unsafe. ³ They do not protect; neither do they attack. ⁴ They do nothing at all, being nothing at all. ⁵ As guardians of darkness and of ignorance look to them only for fear, for what they keep obscure *is* fearful. ⁶ But let them go, and what was fearful will be so no longer. ⁷ Without protection of obscurity only the light of love remains, for only this has meaning and can live in light. ⁸ Everything else must disappear.
4. Death yields to life simply because destruction is not true. ² The light of guiltlessness shines guilt away because, when they are brought together, the truth of one must make the falsity of its opposite perfectly clear. ³ Keep not guilt and guiltlessness apart, for your belief that you can have them both is meaningless. ⁴ All you have done by keeping them apart is lose their meaning by confusing them with each other. ⁵ And so you do not realize that only one means anything. ⁶ The other is wholly without sense of any kind.
5. You have regarded the separation as a means for breaking your communication with your Father. ² The Holy Spirit reinterprets it as a means of re-establishing what was not broken, but *has* been made obscure. ³ All things you made have use to Him, for His most holy purpose. ⁴ He knows you are not separate from God, but He perceives much in your mind that lets you think you are. ⁵ All this and nothing else would He separate from you. ⁶ The power of decision, which you made in place of the power of creation, He would teach you how to use on your behalf. ⁷ You who made it to crucify yourself must learn of Him how to apply it to the holy cause of restoration.
6. You who speak in dark and devious symbols do not understand the language you have made. ² It has no meaning, for its purpose is not communication, but rather the disruption of communication. ³ If the purpose of language is communication, how can this tongue mean anything? ⁴ Yet even this strange and twisted effort to communicate through not communicating holds enough of love to make it meaningful if its Interpreter is not its maker. ⁵ You who made it are but expressing conflict, from which the Holy Spirit would release you. ⁶ Leave what you would communicate to Him. ⁷ He will interpret it to you with perfect clarity, for He knows with Whom you are in perfect communication.
7. You know not what you say, and so you know not what is said to you. ² Yet your Interpreter perceives the meaning in your alien language. ³ He will not attempt to communicate the meaningless. ⁴ But He will separate out all that has meaning, dropping off the rest and offering your true communication to those who would communicate as truly with you. ⁵ You speak two languages at once, and this must lead to unintelligibility. ⁶ Yet if one means nothing and the other everything, only that one is possible for purposes of communication. ⁷ The other but interferes with it.
8. The Holy Spirit's function is entirely communication. ² He therefore must remove whatever interferes with communication in order to restore it. ³ Therefore, keep no source of interference from His sight, for He will not attack your sentinels. ⁴ But bring them to Him and let His gentleness teach you that, in the light, they are not fearful, and cannot serve to guard the dark doors behind which nothing at all is carefully concealed. ⁵ We must open all doors and let the light come streaming through. ⁶ There are no hidden chambers in God's temple. ⁷ Its gates are open wide to greet His Son. ⁸ No one can fail to come where God has called him, if he close not the door himself upon his Father's welcome.

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IX. The Reflection of Holiness

1. The Atonement does not make holy. ² You were created holy. ³ It merely brings unholiness to holiness; or what you made to what you are. ⁴ Bringing illusion to truth, or the ego to God, is the Holy Spirit's only function. ⁵ Keep not your making from your Father, for hiding it has cost you knowledge of Him and of yourself. ⁶ The knowledge is safe, but where is your safety apart from it? ⁷ The making of time to take the place of timelessness lay in the decision to be not as you are. ⁸ Thus truth was made past, and the present was dedicated to illusion. ⁹ And the past, too, was changed and interposed between what always was and now. ¹⁰ The past that you remember never was, and represents only the denial of what always was.
2. Bringing the ego to God is but to bring error to truth, where it stands corrected because it is the opposite of what it meets. ² It is undone because the contradiction can no longer stand. ³ How long can contradiction stand when its impossible nature is clearly revealed? ⁴ What disappears in light is not attacked. ⁵ It merely vanishes because it is not true. ⁶ Different realities are meaningless, for reality must be one. ⁷ It cannot change with time or mood or chance. ⁸ Its changelessness is what makes it real. ⁹ This cannot be undone. ¹⁰ Undoing is for unreality. ¹¹ And this reality will do for you.
3. Merely by being what it is, does truth release you from everything that it is not. ² The Atonement is so gentle you need but whisper to it, and all its power will rush to your assistance and support. ³ You are not frail with God beside you. ⁴ Yet without Him you are nothing. ⁵ The Atonement offers you God. ⁶ The gift that you refused is held by Him in you. ⁷ The Holy Spirit holds it there for you. ⁸ God has not left His altar, though His worshippers placed other gods upon it. ⁹ The temple still is holy, for the Presence that dwells within it *is* Holiness.
4. In the temple, Holiness waits quietly for the return of them that love it. ² The Presence knows they will return to purity and to grace. ³ The graciousness of God will take them gently in, and cover all their sense of pain and loss with the immortal assurance of their Father's Love. ⁴ There, fear of death will be replaced with joy of life. ⁵ For God is life, and they abide in life. ⁶ Life is as holy as the Holiness by which it was created. ⁷ The Presence of Holiness lives in everything that lives, for Holiness created life, and leaves not what It created holy as Itself.
5. In this world you can become a spotless mirror, in which the Holiness of your Creator shines forth from you to all around you. ² You can reflect Heaven here. ³ Yet no reflections of the images of other gods must dim the mirror that would hold God's reflection in it. ⁴ Earth can reflect Heaven or hell; God or the ego. ⁵ You need but leave the mirror clean and clear of all the images of hidden darkness you have drawn upon it. ⁶ God will shine upon it of Himself. ⁷ Only the clear reflection of Himself can be perceived upon it.
6. Reflections are seen in light. ² In darkness they are obscure, and their meaning seems to lie only in shifting interpretations, rather than in themselves. ³ The reflection of God needs no interpretation. ⁴ It is clear. ⁵ Clean but the mirror, and the message that shines forth from what the mirror holds out for everyone to see, no one can fail to understand. ⁶ It is the message that the Holy Spirit is holding to the mirror that is in him. ⁷ He recognizes it because he has been taught his need for it, but knows not where to look to find it. ⁸ Let him, then, see it in you and share it with you.

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7. Could you but realize for a single instant the power of healing that the reflection of God, shining in you, can bring to all the world, you could not wait to make the mirror of your mind clean to receive the image of the holiness that heals the world. ² The image of holiness that shines in your mind is not obscure, and will not change. ³ Its meaning to those who look upon it is not obscure, for everyone perceives it as the same. ⁴ All bring their different problems to its healing light, and all their problems find but healing there.
8. The response of holiness to any form of error is always the same. ² There is no contradiction in what holiness calls forth. ³ Its one response is healing, without regard for what is brought to it. ⁴ Those who have learned to offer only healing, because of the reflection of holiness in them, are ready at last for Heaven. ⁵ There, holiness is not a reflection, but rather the actual condition of what was but reflected to them here. ⁶ God is no image, and His creations, as part of Him, hold Him in them in truth. ⁷ They do not merely reflect truth, for they *are* truth.

I. The Two Uses of Time

1. Can you imagine what it means to have no cares, no worries, no anxieties, but merely to be perfectly calm and quiet all the time? ² Yet that is what time is for; to learn just that and nothing more. ³ God's Teacher cannot be satisfied with His teaching until it constitutes all your learning. ⁴ He has not fulfilled His teaching function until you have become such a consistent learner that you learn only of Him. ⁵ When this has happened, you will no longer need a teacher or time in which to learn.
2. One source of perceived discouragement from which you may suffer is your belief that this takes time, and that the results of the Holy Spirit's teaching are far in the future. ² This is not so. ³ For the Holy Spirit uses time in His Own way, and is not bound by it. ⁴ Time is His friend in teaching. ⁵ It does not waste Him, as it does you. ⁶ And all the waste that time seems to bring with it is due but to your identification with the ego, which uses time to support its belief in destruction. ⁷ The ego, like the Holy Spirit, uses time to convince you of the inevitability of the goal and end of teaching. ⁸ To the ego the goal is death, which *is* its end. ⁹ But to the Holy Spirit the goal is life, which *has* no end.
3. The ego is an ally of time, but not a friend. ² For it is as mistrustful of death as it is of life, and what it wants for you it cannot tolerate. ³ The ego wants *you* dead, but not itself. ⁴ The outcome of its strange religion must therefore be the conviction that it can pursue you beyond the grave. ⁵ And out of its unwillingness for you to find peace even in death, it offers you immortality in hell. ⁶ It speaks to you of Heaven, but assures you that Heaven is not for you. ⁷ How can the guilty hope for Heaven?
4. The belief in hell is inescapable to those who identify with the ego. ² Their nightmares and their fears are all associated with it. ³ The ego teaches that hell is in the future, for this is what all its teaching is directed to. ⁴ Hell is its goal. ⁵ For although the ego aims at death and dissolution as an end, it does not believe it. ⁶ The goal of death, which it craves for you, leaves it unsatisfied. ⁷ No one who follows the ego's teaching is without the fear of death. ⁸ Yet if death were thought of merely as an end to pain, would it be feared? ⁹ We have seen this strange paradox in the ego's thought system before, but never so clearly as here. ¹⁰ For the ego must seem to keep fear from you to hold your allegiance. ¹¹ Yet it must engender fear in order to maintain itself. ¹² Again the ego tries, and all too frequently succeeds, in doing both, by using dissociation for holding its contradictory aims together

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- so that they seem to be reconciled. ¹³ The ego teaches thus: Death is the end as far as hope of Heaven goes. ¹⁴ Yet because you and the ego cannot be separated, and because it cannot conceive of its own death, it will pursue you still, because guilt is eternal. ¹⁵ Such is the ego's version of immortality. ¹⁶ And it is this the ego's version of time supports.
5. The ego teaches that Heaven is here and now because the future is hell. ² Even when it attacks so savagely that it tries to take the life of someone who thinks its is the only voice, it speaks of hell even to him. ³ For it tells him hell is here as well, and bids him leap from hell into oblivion. ⁴ The only time the ego allows anyone to look upon with equanimity is the past. ⁵ And even there, its only value is that it is no more.
 6. How bleak and despairing is the ego's use of time! ² And how terrifying! ³ For underneath its fanatical insistence that the past and future be the same is hidden a far more insidious threat to peace. ⁴ The ego does not advertise its final threat, for it would have its worshippers still believe that it can offer them escape. ⁵ But the belief in guilt must lead to the belief in hell, and always does. ⁶ The only way in which the ego allows the fear of hell to be experienced is to bring hell here, but always as a foretaste of the future. ⁷ For no one who considers himself as deserving of hell can believe that punishment will end in peace.
 7. The Holy Spirit teaches thus: There is no hell. ² Hell is only what the ego has made of the present. ³ The belief in hell is what prevents you from understanding the present, because you are afraid of it. ⁴ The Holy Spirit leads as steadily to Heaven as the ego drives to hell. ⁵ For the Holy Spirit, Who knows only the present, uses it to undo the fear by which the ego would make the present useless. ⁶ There is no escape from fear in the ego's use of time. ⁷ For time, according to its teaching, is nothing but a teaching device for compounding guilt until it becomes all-encompassing, demanding vengeance forever.
 8. The Holy Spirit would undo all of this *now*. ² Fear is not of the present, but only of the past and future, which do not exist. ³ There is no fear in the present when each instant stands clear and separated from the past, without its shadow reaching out into the future. ⁴ Each instant is a clean, untarnished birth, in which the Son of God emerges from the past into the present. ⁵ And the present extends forever. ⁶ It is so beautiful and so clean and free of guilt that nothing but happiness is there. ⁷ No darkness is remembered, and immortality and joy are now.
 9. This lesson takes no time. ² For what is time without a past and future? ³ It has taken time to misguide you so completely, but it takes no time at all to be what you are. ⁴ Begin to practice the Holy Spirit's use of time as a teaching aid to happiness and peace. ⁵ Take this very instant, now, and think of it as all there is of time. ⁶ Nothing can reach you here out of the past, and it is here that you are completely absolved, completely free and wholly without condemnation. ⁷ From this holy instant wherein holiness was born again you will go forth in time without fear, and with no sense of change with time.
 10. Time is inconceivable without change, yet holiness does not change. ² Learn from this instant more than merely that hell does not exist. ³ In this redeeming instant lies Heaven. ⁴ And Heaven will not change, for the birth into the holy present is salvation from change. ⁵ Change is an illusion, taught by those who cannot see themselves as guiltless. ⁶ There is no change in Heaven because there is no change in God. ⁷ In the holy instant, in which you see yourself as bright with freedom, you will remember God. ⁸ For remembering Him *is* to remember freedom.

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11. If you are tempted to be dispirited by thinking how long it would take to change your mind so completely, ask yourself, "How long is an instant?" ² Could you not give so short a time to the Holy Spirit for your salvation? ³ He asks no more, for He has no need of more. ⁴ It takes far longer to teach you to be willing to give Him this than for Him to use this tiny instant to offer you the whole of Heaven. ⁵ In exchange for this instant He stands ready to give you the remembrance of eternity.
12. You will never give this holy instant to the Holy Spirit on behalf of your release while you are unwilling to give it to your brothers on behalf of theirs. ² For the instant of holiness is shared, and cannot be yours alone. ³ Remember, then, when you are tempted to attack a brother, that his instant of release is yours. ⁴ Miracles are the instants of release you offer, and will receive. ⁵ They attest to your willingness to *be* released, and to offer time to the Holy Spirit for His use of it.
13. How long is an instant? ² It is as short for your brother as it is for you. ³ Practice giving this blessed instant of freedom to all who are enslaved by time, and thus make time their friend for them. ⁴ The Holy Spirit gives their blessed instant to you through your giving it. ⁵ As you give it, He offers it to you. ⁶ Be not unwilling to give what you would receive of Him, for you join with Him in giving. ⁷ In the crystal cleanness of the release you give is your instantaneous escape from guilt. ⁸ You must be holy if you offer holiness.
14. How long is an instant? ² As long as it takes to re-establish perfect sanity, perfect peace and perfect love for everyone, for God and for yourself. ³ As long as it takes to remember immortality, and your immortal creations who share it with you. ⁴ As long as it takes to exchange hell for Heaven. ⁵ Long enough to transcend all of the ego's making, and ascend unto your Father.
15. Time is your friend, if you leave it to the Holy Spirit to use. ² He needs but very little to restore God's whole power to you. ³ He Who transcends time for you understands what time is for. ⁴ Holiness lies not in time, but in eternity. ⁵ There never was an instant in which God's Son could lose his purity. ⁶ His changeless state is beyond time, for his purity remains forever beyond attack and without variability. ⁷ Time stands still in his holiness, and changes not. ⁸ And so it is no longer time at all. ⁹ For caught in the single instant of the eternal sanctity of God's creation, it is transformed into forever. ¹⁰ Give the eternal instant, that eternity may be remembered for you, in that shining instant of perfect release. ¹¹ Offer the miracle of the holy instant through the Holy Spirit, and leave His giving it to you to Him.

VII. The Needless Sacrifice

1. Beyond the poor attraction of the special love relationship, and always obscured by it, is the powerful attraction of the Father for His Son. ² There is no other love that can satisfy you, because there *is* no other love. ³ This is the only love that is fully given and fully returned. ⁴ Being complete, it asks nothing. ⁵ Being wholly pure, everyone joined in it has everything. ⁶ This is not the basis for any relationship in which the ego enters. ⁷ For every relationship on which the ego embarks *is* special.
2. The ego establishes relationships only to get something. ² And it would keep the giver bound to itself through guilt. ³ It is impossible for the ego to enter into any relationship without anger, for the ego believes that anger makes friends. ⁴ This is not its statement, but it *is* its purpose. ⁵ For the ego

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really believes that it can get and keep *by making guilty*.⁶ This is its one attraction; an attraction so weak that it would have no hold at all, except that no one recognizes it.⁷ For the ego always seems to attract through love, and has no attraction at all to anyone who perceives that it attracts through guilt.

3. The sick attraction of guilt must be recognized for what it is.² For having been made real to you, it is essential to look at it clearly, and by withdrawing your investment in it, to learn to let it go.³ No one would choose to let go what he believes has value.⁴ Yet the attraction of guilt has value to you only because you have not looked at what it is, and have judged it completely in the dark.⁵ As we bring it to light, your only question will be why it was you ever wanted it.⁶ You have nothing to lose by looking open-eyed, for ugliness such as this belongs not in your holy mind.⁷ This host of God can have no real investment here.
4. We said before that the ego attempts to maintain and increase guilt, but in such a way that you do not recognize what it would do to you.² For it is the ego's fundamental doctrine that what you do to others you have escaped.³ The ego wishes no one well.⁴ Yet its survival depends on your belief that you are exempt from its evil intentions.⁵ It counsels, therefore, that if you are host to it, it will enable you to direct its anger outward, thus protecting you.⁶ And thus it embarks on an endless, unrewarding chain of special relationships, forged out of anger and dedicated to but one insane belief; that the more anger you invest outside yourself, the safer you become.
5. It is this chain that binds the Son of God to guilt, and it is this chain the Holy Spirit would remove from his holy mind.² For the chain of savagery belongs not around the chosen host of God, who cannot make himself host to the ego.³ In the name of his release, and in the Name of Him Who would release him, let us look more closely at the relationships the ego contrives, and let the Holy Spirit judge them truly.⁴ For it is certain that if you will look at them, you will offer them gladly to Him.⁵ What He can make of them you do not know, but you will become willing to find out, if you are willing first to perceive what you have made of them.
6. In one way or another, every relationship the ego makes is based on the idea that by sacrificing itself, it becomes bigger.² The "sacrifice," which it regards as purification, is actually the root of its bitter resentment.³ For it would prefer to attack directly, and avoid delaying what it really wants.⁴ Yet the ego acknowledges "reality" as it sees it, and recognizes that no one could interpret direct attack as love.⁵ Yet to make guilty *is* direct attack, although it does not seem to be.⁶ For the guilty expect attack, and having asked for it they are attracted to it.
7. In such insane relationships, the attraction of what you do not want seems to be much stronger than the attraction of what you do want.² For each one thinks that he has sacrificed something to the other, and hates him for it.³ Yet this is what he thinks he wants.⁴ He is not in love with the other at all.⁵ He merely believes he is in love with sacrifice.⁶ And for this sacrifice, which he demands of himself, he demands that the other accept the guilt and sacrifice himself as well.⁷ Forgiveness becomes impossible, for the ego believes that to forgive another is to lose him.⁸ It is only by attack without forgiveness that the ego can ensure the guilt that holds all its relationships together.
8. Yet they only *seem* to be together.² For relationships, to the ego, mean only that bodies are together.³ It is always this that the ego demands, and it does not object where the mind goes or what it thinks, for this seems unimportant.⁴ As long as the body is there to receive its sacrifice, it is content.⁵ To the ego the mind is private, and only the body can be shared.⁶ Ideas are basically of no

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- concern, except as they bring the body of another closer or farther. ⁷ And it is in these terms that it evaluates ideas as good or bad. ⁸ What makes another guilty and holds him through guilt is "good." ⁹ What releases him from guilt is "bad," because he would no longer believe that bodies communicate, and so he would be "gone."
9. Suffering and sacrifice are the gifts with which the ego would "bless" all unions. ² And those who are united at its altar accept suffering and sacrifice as the price of union. ³ In their angry alliances, born of the fear of loneliness and yet dedicated to the continuance of loneliness, each seeks relief from guilt by increasing it in the other. ⁴ For each believes that this decreases guilt in him. ⁵ The other seems always to be attacking and wounding him, perhaps in little ways, perhaps "unconsciously," yet never without demand of sacrifice. ⁶ The fury of those joined at the ego's altar far exceeds your awareness of it. ⁷ For what the ego really wants you do not realize.
 10. Whenever you are angry, you can be sure that you have formed a special relationship which the ego has "blessed," for anger *is* its blessing. ² Anger takes many forms, but it cannot long deceive those who will learn that love brings no guilt at all, and what brings guilt cannot be love and *must* be anger. ³ All anger is nothing more than an attempt to make someone feel guilty, and this attempt is the only basis the ego accepts for special relationships. ⁴ Guilt is the only need the ego has, and as long as you identify with it, guilt will remain attractive to you. ⁵ Yet remember this; to be with a body is not communication. ⁶ And if you think it is, you will feel guilty about communication and will be afraid to hear the Holy Spirit, recognizing in His Voice your own need to communicate.
 11. The Holy Spirit cannot teach through fear. ² And how can He communicate with you, while you believe that to communicate is to make yourself alone? ³ It is clearly insane to believe that by communicating you will be abandoned. ⁴ And yet many do believe it. ⁵ For they think their minds must be kept private or they will lose them, but if their bodies are together their minds remain their own. ⁶ The union of bodies thus becomes the way in which they would keep minds apart. ⁷ For bodies cannot forgive. ⁸ They can only do as the mind directs.
 12. The illusion of the autonomy of the body and its ability to overcome loneliness is but the working of the ego's plan to establish its own autonomy. ² As long as you believe that to be with a body is companionship, you will be compelled to attempt to keep your brother in his body, held there by guilt. ³ And you will see safety in guilt and danger in communication. ⁴ For the ego will always teach that loneliness is solved by guilt, and that communication is the cause of loneliness. ⁵ And despite the evident insanity of this lesson, many have learned it.
 13. Forgiveness lies in communication as surely as damnation lies in guilt. ² It is the Holy Spirit's teaching function to instruct those who believe communication to be damnation that communication is salvation. ³ And He will do so, for the power of God in Him and you is joined in a real relationship so holy and so strong, that it can overcome even this without fear.
 14. It is through the holy instant that what seems impossible is accomplished, making it evident that it is not impossible. ² In the holy instant guilt holds no attraction, since communication has been restored. ³ And guilt, whose only purpose is to disrupt communication, has no function here. ⁴ Here there is no concealment, and no private thoughts. ⁵ The willingness to communicate attracts communication to it, and overcomes loneliness completely. ⁶ There is complete forgiveness here, for there is no desire to exclude anyone from your completion, in sudden recognition of the value of his part in it. ⁷ In the protection of your wholeness, all are invited and made welcome. ⁸ And you

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understand that your completion is God's, Whose only need is to have you be complete. ⁹ For your completion makes you His in your awareness. ¹⁰ And here it is that you experience yourself as you were created, and as you are.

IV. The Illusion and the Reality of Love

1. Be not afraid to look upon the special hate relationship, for freedom lies in looking at it. ² It would be impossible not to know the meaning of love, except for this. ³ For the special love relationship, in which the meaning of love is hidden, is undertaken solely to offset the hate, but not to let it go. ⁴ Your salvation will rise clearly before your open eyes as you look on this. ⁵ You cannot limit hate. ⁶ The special love relationship will not offset it, but will merely drive it underground and out of sight. ⁷ It is essential to bring it into sight, and to make no attempt to hide it. ⁸ For it is the attempt to balance hate with love that makes love meaningless to you. ⁹ The extent of the split that lies in this you do not realize. ¹⁰ And until you do, the split will remain unrecognized, and therefore unhealed.
2. The symbols of hate against the symbols of love play out a conflict that does not exist. ² For symbols stand for something else, and the symbol of love is without meaning if love is everything. ³ You will go through this last undoing quite unharmed, and will at last emerge as yourself. ⁴ This is the last step in the readiness for God. ⁵ Be not unwilling now; you are too near, and you will cross the bridge in perfect safety, translated quietly from war to peace. ⁶ For the illusion of love will never satisfy, but its reality, which awaits you on the other side, will give you everything.
3. The special love relationship is an attempt to limit the destructive effects of hate by finding a haven in the storm of guilt. ² It makes no attempt to rise above the storm, into the sunlight. ³ On the contrary, it emphasizes the guilt outside the haven by attempting to build barricades against it, and keep within them. ⁴ The special love relationship is not perceived as a value in itself, but as a place of safety from which hatred is split off and kept apart. ⁵ The special love partner is acceptable only as long as he serves this purpose. ⁶ Hatred can enter, and indeed is welcome in some aspects of the relationship, but it is still held together by the illusion of love. ⁷ If the illusion goes, the relationship is broken or becomes unsatisfying on the grounds of disillusionment.
4. Love is not an illusion. ² It is a fact. ³ Where disillusionment is possible, there was not love but hate. ⁴ For hate *is* an illusion, and what can change was never love. ⁵ It is sure that those who select certain ones as partners in any aspect of living, and use them for any purpose which they would not share with others, are trying to live with guilt rather than die of it. ⁶ This is the choice they see. ⁷ And love, to them, is only an escape from death. ⁸ They seek it desperately, but not in the peace in which it would gladly come quietly to them. ⁹ And when they find the fear of death is still upon them, the love relationship loses the illusion that it is what it is not. ¹⁰ When the barricades against it are broken, fear rushes in and hatred triumphs.
5. There are no triumphs of love. ² Only hate is at all concerned with the "triumph of love." ³ The illusion of love can triumph over the illusion of hate, but always at the price of making both illusions. ⁴ As long as the illusion of hatred lasts, so long will love be an illusion to you. ⁵ And then the only choice remaining possible is which illusion you prefer. ⁶ There *is* no conflict in the choice between truth and illusion. ⁷ Seen in these terms, no one would hesitate. ⁸ But conflict enters the instant the choice seems to be one between illusions, but this choice does not matter. ⁹ Where one choice is as dangerous as the other, the decision must be one of despair.

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6. Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all of the barriers within yourself that you have built against it. ² It is not necessary to seek for what is true, but it *is* necessary to seek for what is false. ³ Every illusion is one of fear, whatever form it takes. ⁴ And the attempt to escape from one illusion into another must fail. ⁵ If you seek love outside yourself you can be certain that you perceive hatred within, and are afraid of it. ⁶ Yet peace will never come from the illusion of love, but only from its reality.
7. Recognize this, for it is true, and truth must be recognized if it is to be distinguished from illusion: The special love relationship is an attempt to bring love into separation. ² And, as such, it is nothing more than an attempt to bring love into fear, and make it real in fear. ³ In fundamental violation of love's one condition, the special love relationship would accomplish the impossible. ⁴ How but in illusion could this be done? ⁵ It is essential that we look very closely at exactly what it is you think you can do to solve the dilemma which seems very real to you, but which does not exist. ⁶ You have come close to truth, and only this stands between you and the bridge that leads you into it.
8. Heaven waits silently, and your creations are holding out their hands to help you cross and welcome them. ² For it is they you seek. ³ You seek but for your own completion, and it is they who render you complete. ⁴ The special love relationship is but a shabby substitute for what makes you whole in truth, not in illusion. ⁵ Your relationship with them is without guilt, and this enables you to look on all your brothers with gratitude, because your creations were created in union with them. ⁶ Acceptance of your creations is the acceptance of the Oneness of creation, without which you could never be complete. ⁷ No specialness can offer you what God has given, and what you are joined with Him in giving.
9. Across the bridge is your completion, for you will be wholly in God, willing for nothing special, but only to be wholly like to Him, completing Him by your completion. ² Fear not to cross to the abode of peace and perfect holiness. ³ Only there is the completion of God and of His Son established forever. ⁴ Seek not for this in the bleak world of illusion, where nothing is certain and where everything fails to satisfy. ⁵ In the Name of God, be wholly willing to abandon all illusions. ⁶ In any relationship in which you are wholly willing to accept completion, and only this, there is God completed, and His Son with Him.
10. The bridge that leads to union in yourself *must* lead to knowledge, for it was built with God beside you, and will lead you straight to Him where your completion rests, wholly compatible with His. ² Every illusion you accept into your mind by judging it to be attainable removes your own sense of completion, and thus denies the Wholeness of your Father. ³ Every fantasy, be it of love or hate, deprives you of knowledge for fantasies are the veil behind which truth is hidden. ⁴ To lift the veil that seems so dark and heavy, it is only needful to value truth beyond all fantasy, and to be entirely unwilling to settle for illusion in place of truth.
11. Would you not go through fear to love? ² For such the journey seems to be. ³ Love calls, but hate would have you stay. ⁴ Hear not the call of hate, and see no fantasies. ⁵ For your completion lies in truth, and nowhere else. ⁶ See in the call of hate, and in every fantasy that rises to delay you, but the call for help that rises ceaselessly from you to your Creator. ⁷ Would He not answer you whose completion is His? ⁸ He loves you, wholly without illusion, as you must love. ⁹ For love *is* wholly without illusion, and therefore wholly without fear. ¹⁰ Whom God remembers must be whole. ¹¹ And God has never forgotten what makes Him whole. ¹² In your completion lie the memory of His

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Wholeness and His gratitude to you for His completion. ¹³ In His link with you lie both His inability to forget and your ability to remember. ¹⁴ In Him are joined your willingness to love and all the Love of God, Who forgot you not.

12. Your Father can no more forget the truth in you than you can fail to remember it. ² The Holy Spirit is the Bridge to Him, made from your willingness to unite with Him and created by His joy in union with you. ³ The journey that seemed endless is almost complete, for what *is* endless is very near. ⁴ You have almost recognized it. ⁵ Turn with me firmly away from all illusions now, and let nothing stand in the way of truth. ⁶ We will take the last useless journey away from truth together, and then together we go straight to God, in joyous answer to His Call for His completion.
13. If special relationships of any kind would hinder God's completion, can they have any value to you? ² What would interfere with God must interfere with you. ³ Only in time does interference in God's completion seem to be possible. ⁴ The bridge that He would carry you across lifts you from time into eternity. ⁵ Waken from time, and answer fearlessly the Call of Him Who gave eternity to you in your creation. ⁶ On this side of the bridge to timelessness you understand nothing. ⁷ But as you step lightly across it, upheld *by* timelessness, you are directed straight to the Heart of God. ⁸ At its center, and only there, you are safe forever, because you are complete forever. ⁹ There is no veil the Love of God in us together cannot lift. ¹⁰ The way to truth is open. ¹¹ Follow it with me.

V. The Choice for Completion

1. In looking at the special relationship, it is necessary first to realize that it involves a great amount of pain. ² Anxiety, despair, guilt and attack all enter into it, broken into by periods in which they seem to be gone. ³ All these must be understood for what they are. ⁴ Whatever form they take, they are always an attack on the self to make the other guilty. ⁵ I have spoken of this before, but there are some aspects of what is really being attempted that have not been touched upon.
2. Very simply, the attempt to make guilty is always directed against God. ² For the ego would have you see Him, and Him alone, as guilty, leaving the Sonship open to attack and unprotected from it. ³ The special love relationship is the ego's chief weapon for keeping you from Heaven. ⁴ It does not appear to be a weapon, but if you consider how you value it and why, you will realize what it must be.
3. The special love relationship is the ego's most boasted gift, and one which has the most appeal to those unwilling to relinquish guilt. ² The "dynamics" of the ego are clearest here, for counting on the attraction of this offering, the fantasies that center around it are often quite overt. ³ Here they are usually judged to be acceptable and even natural. ⁴ No one considers it bizarre to love and hate together, and even those who believe that hate is sin merely feel guilty, but do not correct it. ⁵ This is the "natural" condition of the separation, and those who learn that it is not natural at all seem to be the unnatural ones. ⁶ For this world *is* the opposite of Heaven, being made to be its opposite, and everything here takes a direction exactly opposite of what is true. ⁷ In Heaven, where the meaning of love is known, love is the same as union. ⁸ Here, where the illusion of love is accepted in love's place, love is perceived as separation and exclusion.
4. It is in the special relationship, born of the hidden wish for special love from God, that the ego's hatred triumphs. ² For the special relationship is the renunciation of the Love of God, and the

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- attempt to secure for the self the specialness that He denied. ³ It is essential to the preservation of the ego that you believe this specialness is not hell, but Heaven. ⁴ For the ego would never have you see that separation could only be loss, being the one condition in which Heaven could not be.
5. To everyone Heaven is completion. ² There can be no disagreement on this, because both the ego and the Holy Spirit accept it. ³ They are, however, in complete disagreement on what completion is, and how it is accomplished. ⁴ The Holy Spirit knows that completion lies first in union, and then in the extension of union. ⁵ To the ego completion lies in triumph, and in the extension of the "victory" even to the final triumph over God. ⁶ In this it sees the ultimate freedom of the self, for nothing would remain to interfere with the ego. ⁷ This is its idea of Heaven. ⁸ And therefore union, which is a condition in which the ego cannot interfere, must be hell.
 6. The special relationship is a strange and unnatural ego device for joining hell and Heaven, and making them indistinguishable. ² And the attempt to find the imagined "best" of both worlds has merely led to fantasies of both, and to the inability to perceive either as it is. ³ The special relationship is the triumph of this confusion. ⁴ It is a kind of union from which union is excluded, and the basis for the attempt at union rests on exclusion. ⁵ What better example could there be of the ego's maxim, "Seek but do not find"?
 7. Most curious of all is the concept of the self which the ego fosters in the special relationship. ² This "self" seeks the relationship to make itself complete. ³ Yet when it finds the special relationship in which it thinks it can accomplish this it gives itself away, and tries to "trade" itself for the self of another. ⁴ This is not union, for there is no increase and no extension. ⁵ Each partner tries to sacrifice the self he does not want for one he thinks he would prefer. ⁶ And he feels guilty for the "sin" of taking, and of giving nothing of value in return. ⁷ How much value can he place upon a self that he would give away to get a "better" one?
 8. The "better" self the ego seeks is always one that is more special. ² And whoever seems to possess a special self is "loved" for what can be taken from him. ³ Where both partners see this special self in each other, the ego sees "a union made in Heaven." ⁴ For neither one will recognize that he has asked for hell, and so he will not interfere with the ego's illusion of Heaven, which it offered him to interfere with Heaven. ⁵ Yet if all illusions are of fear, and they can be of nothing else, the illusion of Heaven is nothing more than an "attractive" form of fear, in which the guilt is buried deep and rises in the form of "love."
 9. The appeal of hell lies only in the terrible attraction of guilt, which the ego holds out to those who place their faith in littleness. ² The conviction of littleness lies in every special relationship, for only the deprived could value specialness. ³ The demand for specialness, and the perception of the giving of specialness as an act of love, would make love hateful. ⁴ The real purpose of the special relationship, in strict accordance with the ego's goals, is to destroy reality and substitute illusion. ⁵ For the ego is itself an illusion, and only illusions can be the witnesses to its "reality."
 10. If you perceived the special relationship as a triumph over God, would you want it? ² Let us not think of its fearful nature, nor of the guilt it must entail, nor of the sadness and the loneliness. ³ For these are only attributes of the whole religion of separation, and of the total context in which it is thought to occur. ⁴ The central theme in its litany to sacrifice is that God must die so you can live. ⁵ And it is this theme that is acted out in the special relationship. ⁶ Through the death of your self you think you can attack another self, and snatch it from the other to replace the self that you despise. ⁷

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- And you despise it because you do not think it offers the specialness that you demand. ⁸ And hating it you have made it little and unworthy, because you are afraid of it.
11. How can you grant unlimited power to what you think you have attacked? ² So fearful has the truth become to you that unless it is weak and little, and unworthy of value, you would not dare to look upon it. ³ You think it safer to endow the little self you made with power you wrested from truth, triumphing over it and leaving it helpless. ⁴ See how exactly is this ritual enacted in the special relationship. ⁵ An altar is erected in between two separate people, on which each seeks to kill his self, and on his body raise another self to take its power from his death. ⁶ Over and over and over this ritual is enacted. ⁷ And it is never completed, nor ever will be completed. ⁸ The ritual of completion cannot complete, for life arises not from death, nor Heaven from hell.
 12. Whenever any form of special relationship tempts you to seek for love in ritual, remember love is content, and not form of any kind. ² The special relationship is a ritual of form, aimed at raising the form to take the place of God at the expense of content. ³ There is no meaning in the form, and there will never be. ⁴ The special relationship must be recognized for what it is; a senseless ritual in which strength is extracted from the death of God, and invested in His killer as the sign that form has triumphed over content, and love has lost its meaning. ⁵ Would you want this to be possible, even apart from its evident impossibility? ⁶ If it were possible, you would have made yourself helpless. ⁷ God is not angry. ⁸ He merely could not let this happen. ⁹ You cannot change His Mind. ¹⁰ No rituals that you have set up in which the dance of death delights you can bring death to the eternal. ¹¹ Nor can your chosen substitute for the Wholeness of God have any influence at all upon it.
 13. See in the special relationship nothing more than a meaningless attempt to raise other gods before Him, and by worshipping them to obscure their tininess and His greatness. ² In the name of your completion you do not want this. ³ For every idol that you raise to place before Him stands before *you*, in place of what you are.
 14. Salvation lies in the simple fact that illusions are not fearful because they are not true. ² They but seem to be fearful to the extent to which you fail to recognize them for what they are; and you will fail to do this to the extent to which you *want* them to be true. ³ And to the same extent you are denying truth, and so are failing to make the simple choice between truth and illusion; God and fantasy. ⁴ Remember this, and you will have no difficulty in perceiving the decision as just what it is, and nothing more.
 15. The core of the separation illusion lies simply in the fantasy of destruction of love's meaning. ² And unless love's meaning is restored to you, you cannot know yourself who share its meaning. ³ Separation is only the decision *not* to know yourself. ⁴ This whole thought system is a carefully contrived learning experience, designed to lead away from truth and into fantasy. ⁵ Yet for every learning that would hurt you, God offers you correction and complete escape from all its consequences.
 16. The decision whether or not to listen to this course and follow it is but the choice between truth and illusion. ² For here is truth, separated from illusion and not confused with it at all. ³ How simple does this choice become when it is perceived as only what it is. ⁴ For only fantasies make confusion in choosing possible, and they are totally unreal.
 17. This year is thus the time to make the easiest decision that ever confronted you, and also the only

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one. ² You will cross the bridge into reality simply because you will recognize that God is on the other side, and nothing at all is here. ³ It is impossible not to make the natural decision as this is realized.

VI. The Bridge to the Real World

1. The search for the special relationship is the sign that you equate yourself with the ego and not with God. ² For the special relationship has value only to the ego. ³ To the ego, unless a relationship has special value it has no meaning, for it perceives all love as special. ⁴ Yet this cannot be natural, for it is unlike the relationship of God and His Son, and all relationships that are unlike this one *must* be unnatural. ⁵ For God created love as He would have it be, and gave it as it is. ⁶ Love has no meaning except as its Creator defined it by His Will. ⁷ It is impossible to define it otherwise and understand it.
2. Love is freedom. ² To look for it by placing yourself in bondage is to separate yourself from it. ³ For the Love of God, no longer seek for union in separation, nor for freedom in bondage! ⁴ As you release, so will you be released. ⁵ Forget this not, or Love will be unable to find you and comfort you.
3. There is a way in which the Holy Spirit asks your help, if you would have His. ² The holy instant is His most helpful aid in protecting you from the attraction of guilt, the real lure in the special relationship. ³ You do not recognize that this is its real appeal, for the ego has taught you that freedom lies in it. ⁴ Yet the closer you look at the special relationship, the more apparent it becomes that it must foster guilt and therefore must imprison.
4. The special relationship is totally meaningless without a body. ² If you value it, you must also value the body. ³ And what you value you will keep. ⁴ The special relationship is a device for limiting your self to a body, and for limiting your perception of others to theirs. ⁵ The Great Rays would establish the total lack of value of the special relationship, if they were seen. ⁶ For in seeing them the body would disappear, because its value would be lost. ⁷ And so your whole investment in seeing it would be withdrawn from it.
5. You see the world you value. ² On this side of the bridge you see the world of separate bodies, seeking to join each other in separate unions and to become one by losing. ³ When two individuals seek to become one, they are trying to decrease their magnitude. ⁴ Each would deny his power, for the separate union excludes the universe. ⁵ Far more is left outside than would be taken in, for God is left without and *nothing* taken in. ⁶ If one such union were made in perfect faith, the universe would enter into it. ⁷ Yet the special relationship the ego seeks does not include even one whole individual. ⁸ The ego wants but part of him, and sees only this part and nothing else.
6. Across the bridge it is so different! ² For a time the body is still seen, but not exclusively, as it is seen here. ³ The little spark that holds the Great Rays within it is also visible, and this spark cannot be limited long to littleness. ⁴ Once you have crossed the bridge, the value of the body is so diminished in your sight that you will see no need at all to magnify it. ⁵ For you will realize that the only value the body has is to enable you to bring your brothers to the bridge with you, and to be released together there.

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7. The bridge itself is nothing more than a transition in the perspective of reality. ² On this side, everything you see is grossly distorted and completely out of perspective. ³ What is little and insignificant is magnified, and what is strong and powerful cut down to littleness. ⁴ In the transition there is a period of confusion, in which a sense of actual disorientation may occur. ⁵ But fear it not, for it means only that you have been willing to let go your hold on the distorted frame of reference that seemed to hold your world together. ⁶ This frame of reference is built around the special relationship. ⁷ Without this illusion there could be no meaning you would still seek here.
8. Fear not that you will be abruptly lifted up and hurled into reality. ² Time is kind, and if you use it on behalf of reality, it will keep gentle pace with you in your transition. ³ The urgency is only in dislodging your mind from its fixed position here. ⁴ This will not leave you homeless and without a frame of reference. ⁵ The period of disorientation, which precedes the actual transition, is far shorter than the time it took to fix your mind so firmly on illusions. ⁶ Delay will hurt you now more than before, only because you realize it *is* delay, and that escape from pain is really possible. ⁷ Find hope and comfort, rather than despair, in this: You could not long find even the illusion of love in any special relationship here. ⁸ For you are no longer wholly insane, and you would soon recognize the guilt of self-betrayal for what it is.
9. Nothing you seek to strengthen in the special relationship is really part of you. ² And you cannot keep part of the thought system that taught you it was real, and understand the Thought that *knows* what you are. ³ You have allowed the Thought of your reality to enter your mind, and because you invited it, it will abide with you. ⁴ Your love for it will not allow you to betray yourself, and you could not enter into a relationship where it could not go with you, for you would not want to be apart from it.
10. Be glad you have escaped the mockery of salvation the ego offered you, and look not back with longing on the travesty it made of your relationships. ² Now no one need suffer, for you have come too far to yield to the illusion of the beauty and holiness of guilt. ³ Only the wholly insane could look on death and suffering, sickness and despair, and see it thus. ⁴ What guilt has wrought is ugly, fearful and very dangerous. ⁵ See no illusion of truth and beauty there. ⁶ And be you thankful that there *is* a place where truth and beauty wait for you. ⁷ Go on to meet them gladly, and learn how much awaits you for the simple willingness to give up nothing *because* it is nothing.
11. The new perspective you will gain from crossing over will be the understanding of where Heaven *is*. ² From this side, it seems to be outside and across the bridge. ³ Yet as you cross to join it, it will join with you and become one with you. ⁴ And you will think, in glad astonishment, that for all this you gave up *nothing!* ⁵ The joy of Heaven, which has no limit, is increased with each light that returns to take its rightful place within it. ⁶ Wait no longer, for the Love of God and *you*. ⁷ And may the holy instant speed you on the way, as it will surely do if you but let it come to you.
12. The Holy Spirit asks only this little help of you: Whenever your thoughts wander to a special relationship which still attracts you, enter with Him into a holy instant, and there let Him release you. ² He needs only your willingness to share His perspective to give it to you completely. ³ And your willingness need not be complete because His is perfect. ⁴ It is His task to atone for your unwillingness by His perfect faith, and it is His faith you share with Him there. ⁵ Out of your recognition of your unwillingness for your release, His perfect willingness is given you. ⁶ Call upon Him, for Heaven is at His Call. ⁷ And let Him call on Heaven for you.

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VII. The End of Illusions

1. It is impossible to let the past go without relinquishing the special relationship. ² For the special relationship is an attempt to re-enact the past and change it. ³ Imagined slights, remembered pain, past disappointments, perceived injustices and deprivations all enter into the special relationship, which becomes a way in which you seek to restore your wounded self-esteem. ⁴ What basis would you have for choosing a special partner without the past? ⁵ Every such choice is made because of something "evil" in the past to which you cling, and for which must someone else atone.
2. The special relationship takes vengeance on the past. ² By seeking to remove suffering in the past, it overlooks the present in its preoccupation with the past and its total commitment to it. ³ No special relationship is experienced in the present. ⁴ Shades of the past envelop it, and make it what it is. ⁵ It has no meaning in the present, and if it means nothing now, it cannot have any real meaning at all. ⁶ How can you change the past except in fantasy? ⁷ And who can give you what you think the past deprived you of? ⁸ The past is nothing. ⁹ Do not seek to lay the blame for deprivation on it, for the past is gone. ¹⁰ You cannot really *not* let go what has already gone. ¹¹ It must be, therefore, that you are maintaining the illusion that it has not gone because you think it serves some purpose that you want fulfilled. ¹² And it must also be that this purpose could not be fulfilled in the present, but only in the past.
3. Do not underestimate the intensity of the ego's drive for vengeance on the past. ² It is completely savage and completely insane. ³ For the ego remembers everything you have done that has offended it, and seeks retribution of you. ⁴ The fantasies it brings to its chosen relationships in which to act out its hate are fantasies of your destruction. ⁵ For the ego holds the past against you, and in your escape from the past it sees itself deprived of the vengeance it believes you so justly merit. ⁶ Yet without your alliance in your own destruction, the ego could not hold you to the past. ⁷ In the special relationship you are allowing your destruction to be. ⁸ That this is insane is obvious. ⁹ But what is less obvious is that the present is useless to you while you pursue the ego's goal as its ally.
4. The past is gone; seek not to preserve it in the special relationship that binds you to it, and would teach you salvation is past and so you must return to the past to find salvation. ² There is no fantasy that does not contain the dream of retribution for the past. ³ Would you act out the dream, or let it go?
5. In the special relationship it does not seem to be an acting out of vengeance that you seek. ² And even when the hatred and the savagery break briefly through, the illusion of love is not profoundly shaken. ³ Yet the one thing the ego never allows to reach awareness is that the special relationship is the acting out of vengeance on yourself. ⁴ Yet what else could it be? ⁵ In seeking the special relationship, you look not for glory in yourself. ⁶ You have denied that it is there, and the relationship becomes your substitute for it. ⁷ And vengeance becomes your substitute for Atonement, and the escape from vengeance becomes your loss.
6. Against the ego's insane notion of salvation the Holy Spirit gently lays the holy instant. ² We said before that the Holy Spirit must teach through comparisons, and uses opposites to point to truth. ³ The holy instant is the opposite of the ego's fixed belief in salvation through vengeance for the past. ⁴ In the holy instant it is understood that the past is gone, and with its passing the drive for

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- vengeance has been uprooted and has disappeared. ⁵ The stillness and the peace of *now* enfold you in perfect gentleness. ⁶ Everything is gone except the truth.
7. For a time you may attempt to bring illusions into the holy instant, to hinder your full awareness of the complete difference, in all respects, between your experience of truth and illusion. ² Yet you will not attempt this long. ³ In the holy instant the power of the Holy Spirit will prevail, because you joined Him. ⁴ The illusions you bring with you will weaken the experience of Him for a while, and will prevent you from keeping the experience in your mind. ⁵ Yet the holy instant is eternal, and your illusions of time will not prevent the timeless from being what it is, nor you from experiencing it as it is.
 8. What God has given you is truly given, and will be truly received. ² For God's gifts have no reality apart from your receiving them. ³ Your receiving completes His giving. ⁴ You will receive *because* it is His Will to give. ⁵ He gave the holy instant to be given you, and it is impossible that you receive it not *because* He gave it. ⁶ When He willed that His Son be free, His Son *was* free. ⁷ In the holy instant is His reminder that His Son will always be exactly as he was created. ⁸ And everything the Holy Spirit teaches is to remind you that you have received what God has given you.
 9. There is nothing you can hold against reality. ² All that must be forgiven are the illusions you have held against your brothers. ³ Their reality has no past, and only illusions can be forgiven. ⁴ God holds nothing against anyone, for He is incapable of illusions of any kind. ⁵ Release your brothers from the slavery of their illusions by forgiving them for the illusions you perceive in them. ⁶ Thus will you learn that you have been forgiven, for it is you who offered them illusions. ⁷ In the holy instant this is done for you in time, to bring you the true condition of Heaven.
 10. Remember that you always choose between truth and illusion; between the real Atonement that would heal and the ego's "atonement" that would destroy. ² The power of God and all His Love, without limit, will support you as you seek only your place in the plan of Atonement arising from His Love. ³ Be an ally of God and not the ego in seeking how Atonement can come to you. ⁴ His help suffices, for His Messenger understands how to restore the Kingdom to you, and to place all your investment in salvation in your relationship with Him.
 11. Seek and find His message in the holy instant, where all illusions are forgiven. ² From there the miracle extends to bless everyone and to resolve all problems, be they perceived as great or small, possible or impossible. ³ There is nothing that will not give place to Him and to His Majesty. ⁴ To join in close relationship with Him is to accept relationships as real, and through their reality to give over all illusions for the reality of your relationship with God. ⁵ Praise be to your relationship with Him and to no other. ⁶ The truth lies there and nowhere else. ⁷ You choose this or nothing.
 12. *Forgive us our illusions, Father, and help us to accept our true relationship with You, in which there are no illusions, and where none can ever enter. ² Our holiness is Yours. ³ What can there be in us that needs forgiveness when Yours is perfect? ⁴ The sleep of forgetfulness is only the unwillingness to remember Your forgiveness and Your Love. ⁵ Let us not wander into temptation, for the temptation of the Son of God is not Your Will. ⁶ And let us receive only what You have given, and accept but this into the minds which You created and which You love. ⁷ Amen.*

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I. Bringing Fantasy to Truth

1. The betrayal of the Son of God lies only in illusions, and all his "sins" are but his own imagining.
2 His reality is forever sinless. 3 He need not be forgiven but awakened. 4 In his dreams he has betrayed himself, his brothers and his God. 5 Yet what is done in dreams has not been really done. 6 It is impossible to convince the dreamer that this is so, for dreams are what they are *because* of their illusion of reality. 7 Only in waking is the full release from them, for only then does it become perfectly apparent that they had no effect upon reality at all, and did not change it. 8 Fantasies change reality. 9 That is their purpose. 10 They cannot do so in reality, but they *can* do so in the mind that would have reality be different.
2. It is, then, only your wish to change reality that is fearful, because by your wish you think you have accomplished what you wish. 2 This strange position, in a sense, acknowledges your power. 3 Yet by distorting it and devoting it to "evil," it also makes it unreal. 4 You cannot be faithful to two masters who ask conflicting things of you. 5 What you use in fantasy you deny to truth. 6 Yet what you give to truth to use for you is safe from fantasy.
3. When you maintain that there must be an order of difficulty in miracles, all you mean is that there are some things you would withhold from truth. 2 You believe truth cannot deal with them only because you would keep them from truth. 3 Very simply, your lack of faith in the power that heals all pain arises from your wish to retain some aspects of reality for fantasy. 4 If you but realized what this must do to your appreciation of the whole! 5 What you reserve for yourself, you take away from Him Who would release you. 6 Unless you give it back, it is inevitable that your perspective on reality be warped and uncorrected.
4. As long as you would have it so, so long will the illusion of an order of difficulty in miracles remain with you. 2 For you have established this order in reality by giving some of it to one teacher, and some to another. 3 And so you learn to deal with part of the truth in one way, and in another way the other part. 4 To fragment truth is to destroy it by rendering it meaningless. 5 Orders of reality is a perspective without understanding; a frame of reference for reality to which it cannot really be compared at all.
5. Think you that you can bring truth to fantasy, and learn what truth means from the perspective of illusions? 2 Truth *has* no meaning in illusion. 3 The frame of reference for its meaning must be itself. 4 When you try to bring truth to illusions, you are trying to make illusions real, and keep them by justifying your belief in them. 5 But to give illusions to truth is to enable truth to teach that the illusions are unreal, and thus enable you to escape from them. 6 Reserve not one idea aside from truth, or you establish orders of reality that must imprison you. 7 There is no order in reality, because everything there is true.
6. Be willing, then, to give all you have held outside the truth to Him Who knows the truth, and in Whom all is brought to truth. 2 Salvation from separation would be complete, or will not be at all. 3 Be not concerned with anything except your willingness to have this be accomplished. 4 He will accomplish it; not you. 5 But forget not this: When you become disturbed and lose your peace of mind because another is attempting to solve his problems through fantasy, you are refusing to forgive yourself for just this same attempt. 6 And you are holding both of you away from truth and from salvation. 7 As you forgive him, you restore to truth what was denied by both of you. 8 And you

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will see forgiveness where you have given it.

III. Shadows of the Past

1. To forgive is merely to remember only the loving thoughts you gave in the past, and those that were given you. ² All the rest must be forgotten. ³ Forgiveness is a selective remembering, based not on your selection. ⁴ For the shadow figures you would make immortal are "enemies" of reality. ⁵ Be willing to forgive the Son of God for what he did not do. ⁶ The shadow figures are the witnesses you bring with you to demonstrate he did what he did not. ⁷ Because you bring them, you will hear them. ⁸ And you who keep them by your own selection do not understand how they came into your mind, and what their purpose is. ⁹ They represent the evil that you think was done to you. ¹⁰ You bring them with you only that you may return evil for evil, hoping that their witness will enable you to think guiltily of another and not harm yourself. ¹¹ They speak so clearly for the separation that no one not obsessed with keeping separation could hear them. ¹² They offer you the "reasons" why you should enter into unholy alliances to support the ego's goals, and make your relationships the witness to its power.
2. It is these shadow figures that would make the ego holy in your sight, and teach you what you do to keep it safe is really love. ² The shadow figures always speak for vengeance, and all relationships into which they enter are totally insane. ³ Without exception, these relationships have as their purpose the exclusion of the truth about the other, and of yourself. ⁴ This is why you see in both what is not there, and make of both the slaves of vengeance. ⁵ And why whatever reminds you of your past grievances attracts you, and seems to go by the name of love, no matter how distorted the associations by which you arrive at the connection may be. ⁶ And finally, why all such relationships become attempts at union through the body, for only bodies can be seen as means for vengeance. ⁷ That bodies are central to all unholy relationships is evident. ⁸ Your own experience has taught you this. ⁹ But what you may not realize are all the reasons that go to make the relationship unholy. ¹⁰ For unholiness seeks to reinforce itself, as holiness does, by gathering to itself what it perceives as like itself.
3. In the unholy relationship, it is not the body of the other with which union is attempted, but the bodies of those who are not there. ² For even the body of the other, already a severely limited perception of him, is not the central focus as it is, or in entirety. ³ What can be used for fantasies of vengeance, and what can be most readily associated with those on whom vengeance is really sought, is centered on and separated off as being the only parts of value. ⁴ Every step taken in the making, the maintaining and the breaking off of the unholy relationship is a move toward further fragmentation and unreality. ⁵ The shadow figures enter more and more, and the one in whom they seem to be decreases in importance.
4. Time is indeed unkind to the unholy relationship. ² For time *is* cruel in the ego's hands, as it is kind when used for gentleness. ³ The attraction of the unholy relationship begins to fade and to be questioned almost at once. ⁴ Once it is formed, doubt must enter in, because its purpose is impossible. ⁵ The "ideal" of the unholy relationship thus becomes one in which the reality of the other does not enter at all to "spoil" the dream. ⁶ And the less the other really brings to the relationship, the "better" it becomes. ⁷ Thus, the attempt at union becomes a way of excluding even the one with whom the union was sought. ⁸ For it was formed to get him out of it, and join with fantasies in uninterrupted "bliss."

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5. How can the Holy Spirit bring His interpretation of the body as a means of communication into relationships whose only purpose is separation from reality? ² What forgiveness *is* enables Him to do so. ³ If all but loving thoughts have been forgotten, what remains is eternal. ⁴ And the transformed past is made like the present. ⁵ No longer does the past conflict with *now*. ⁶ This continuity extends the present by increasing its reality and its value in your perception of it. ⁷ In these loving thoughts is the spark of beauty hidden in the ugliness of the unholy relationship where hatred is remembered; yet there to come alive as the relationship is given to Him Who gives it life and beauty. ⁸ That is why Atonement centers on the past, which is the source of separation, and where it must be undone. ⁹ For separation must be corrected where it was made.
6. The ego seeks to "resolve" its problems, not at their source, but where they were not made. ² And thus it seeks to guarantee there will be no solution. ³ The Holy Spirit wants only to make His resolutions complete and perfect, and so He seeks and finds the source of problems where it is, and there undoes it. ⁴ And with each step in His undoing is the separation more and more undone, and union brought closer. ⁵ He is not at all confused by any "reasons" for separation. ⁶ All He perceives in separation is that it must be undone. ⁷ Let Him uncover the hidden spark of beauty in your relationships, and show it to you. ⁸ Its loveliness will so attract you that you will be unwilling ever to lose the sight of it again. ⁹ And you will let this spark transform the relationship so you can see it more and more. ¹⁰ For you will want it more and more, and become increasingly unwilling to let it be hidden from you. ¹¹ And you will learn to seek for and establish the conditions in which this beauty can be seen.
7. All this you will do gladly, if you but let Him hold the spark before you, to light your way and make it clear to you. ² God's Son is One. ³ Whom God has joined as one, the ego cannot put asunder. ⁴ The spark of holiness must be safe, however hidden it may be, in every relationship. ⁵ For the Creator of the one relationship has left no part of it without Himself. ⁶ This is the only part of the relationship the Holy Spirit sees, because He knows that only this is true. ⁷ You have made the relationship unreal, and therefore unholy, by seeing it where it is not and as it is not. ⁸ Give the past to Him Who can change your mind about it for you. ⁹ But first, be sure you fully realize what you have made the past to represent, and why.
8. The past becomes the justification for entering into a continuing, unholy alliance with the ego against the present. ² For the present *is* forgiveness. ³ Therefore, the relationships the unholy alliance dictates are not perceived nor felt as *now*. ⁴ Yet the frame of reference to which the present is referred for meaning is an *illusion* of the past, in which those elements that fit the purpose of the unholy alliance are retained, and all the rest let go. ⁵ And what is thus let go is all the truth the past could ever offer to the present as witnesses for its reality. ⁶ What is kept but witnesses to the reality of dreams.
9. It is still up to you to choose to join with truth or with illusion. ² But remember that to choose one is to let the other go. ³ Which one you choose you will endow with beauty and reality, because the choice depends on which you value more. ⁴ The spark of beauty or the veil of ugliness, the real world or the world of guilt and fear, truth or illusion, freedom or slavery—it is all the same. ⁵ For you can never choose except between God and the ego. ⁶ Thought systems are but true or false, and all their attributes come simply from what they are. ⁷ Only the Thoughts of God are true. ⁸ And all that follows from them comes from what they are, and is as true as is the holy Source from which they came.

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10. My holy brother, I would enter into all your relationships, and step between you and your fantasies. ² Let my relationship to you be real to you, and let me bring reality to your perception of your brothers. ³ They were not created to enable you to hurt yourself through them. ⁴ They were created to create with you. ⁵ This is the truth that I would interpose between you and your goal of madness. ⁶ Be not separate from me, and let not the holy purpose of Atonement be lost to you in dreams of vengeance. ⁷ Relationships in which such dreams are cherished have excluded me. ⁸ Let me enter in the Name of God and bring you peace, that you may offer peace to me.

IV. The Two Pictures

1. God established His relationship with you to make you happy, and nothing you do that does not share His purpose can be real. ² The purpose God ascribed to anything is its only function. ³ Because of His reason for creating His relationship with you, the function of relationships became forever "to make happy." ⁴ *And nothing else.* ⁵ To fulfill this function you relate to your creations as God to His. ⁶ For nothing God created is apart from happiness, and nothing God created but would extend happiness as its Creator did. ⁷ Whatever does not fulfill this function cannot be real.
2. In this world it is impossible to create. ² Yet it *is* possible to make happy. ³ I have said repeatedly that the Holy Spirit would not deprive you of your special relationships, but would transform them. ⁴ And all that is meant by that is that He will restore to them the function given them by God. ⁵ The function you have given them is clearly not to make happy. ⁶ But the holy relationship shares God's purpose, rather than aiming to make a substitute for it. ⁷ Every special relationship you have made is a substitute for God's Will, and glorifies yours instead of His because of the illusion that they are different.
3. You have made very real relationships even in this world. ² Yet you do not recognize them because you have raised their substitutes to such predominance that, when truth calls to you, as it does constantly, you answer with a substitute. ³ Every special relationship you have made has, as its fundamental purpose, the aim of occupying your mind so completely that you will not hear the call of truth.
4. In a sense, the special relationship was the ego's answer to the creation of the Holy Spirit, Who was God's Answer to the separation. ² For although the ego did not understand what had been created, it was aware of threat. ³ The whole defense system the ego evolved to protect the separation from the Holy Spirit was in response to the gift with which God blessed it, and by His blessing enabled it to be healed. ⁴ This blessing holds within itself the truth about everything. ⁵ And the truth is that the Holy Spirit is in close relationship with you, because in Him is your relationship with God restored to you. ⁶ The relationship with Him has never been broken, because the Holy Spirit has not been separate from anyone since the separation. ⁷ And through Him have all your holy relationships been carefully preserved, to serve God's purpose for you.
5. The ego is always alert to threat, and the part of your mind into which the ego was accepted is very anxious to preserve its reason, as it sees it. ² It does not realize that it is totally insane. ³ And you must realize just what this means if you would be restored to sanity. ⁴ The insane protect their thought systems, but they do so insanely. ⁵ And all their defenses are as insane as what they are supposed to protect. ⁶ The separation has nothing in it, no part, no "reason," and no attribute that is

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- not insane. ⁷ And its "protection" is part of it, as insane as the whole. ⁸ The special relationship, which is its chief defense, must therefore be insane.
6. You have but little difficulty now in realizing that the thought system the special relationship protects is but a system of delusions. ² You recognize, at least in general terms, that the ego is insane. ³ Yet the special relationship still seems to you somehow to be "different." ⁴ Yet we have looked at it far closer than we have at many other aspects of the ego's thought system that you have been more willing to let go. ⁵ While this one remains, you will not let the others go. ⁶ For this one is not different. ⁷ Retain this one, and you have retained the whole.
 7. It is essential to realize that all defenses *do* what they would defend. ² The underlying basis for their effectiveness is that they offer what they defend. ³ What they defend is placed in them for safe-keeping, and as they operate they bring it to you. ⁴ Every defense operates by giving gifts, and the gift is always a miniature of the thought system the defense protects, set in a golden frame. ⁵ The frame is very elaborate, all set with jewels, and deeply carved and polished. ⁶ Its purpose is to be of value *in itself*, and to divert your attention from what it encloses. ⁷ But the frame without the picture you cannot have. ⁸ Defenses operate to make you think you can.
 8. The special relationship has the most imposing and deceptive frame of all the defenses the ego uses. ² Its thought system is offered here, surrounded by a frame so heavy and so elaborate that the picture is almost obliterated by its imposing structure. ³ Into the frame are woven all sorts of fanciful and fragmented illusions of love, set with dreams of sacrifice and self-aggrandizement, and interlaced with gilded threads of self-destruction. ⁴ The glitter of blood shines like rubies, and the tears are faceted like diamonds and gleam in the dim light in which the offering is made.
 9. Look at the *picture*. ² Do not let the frame distract you. ³ This gift is given you for your damnation, and if you take it you will believe that you *are* damned. ⁴ You cannot have the frame without the picture. ⁵ What you value is the frame, for there you see no conflict. ⁶ Yet the frame is only the wrapping for the gift of conflict. ⁷ The frame is not the gift. ⁸ Be not deceived by the most superficial aspects of this thought system, for these aspects enclose the whole, complete in every aspect. ⁹ Death lies in this glittering gift. ¹⁰ Let not your gaze dwell on the hypnotic gleaming of the frame. ¹¹ Look at the picture, and realize that death is offered you.
 10. That is why the holy instant is so important in the defense of truth. ² The truth itself needs no defense, but you do need defense against your acceptance of the gift of death. ³ When you who are truth accept an idea so dangerous to truth, you threaten truth with destruction. ⁴ And your defense must now be undertaken, to keep truth whole. ⁵ The power of Heaven, the Love of God, the tears of Christ, and the joy of His eternal Spirit are marshalled to defend you from your own attack. ⁶ For you attack Them, being part of Them, and They must save you, for They love Themselves.
 11. The holy instant is a miniature of Heaven, sent you *from* Heaven. ² It is a picture, too, set in a frame. ³ Yet if you accept this gift you will not see the frame at all, because the gift can only be accepted through your willingness to focus all your attention on the picture. ⁴ The holy instant is a miniature of eternity. ⁵ It is a picture of timelessness, set in a frame of time. ⁶ If you focus on the picture, you will realize that it was only the frame that made you think it *was* a picture. ⁷ Without the frame, the picture is seen as what it represents. ⁸ For as the whole thought system of the ego lies in its gifts, so the whole of Heaven lies in this instant, borrowed from eternity and set in time for you.

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12. Two gifts are offered you. ² Each is complete, and cannot be partially accepted. ³ Each is a picture of all that you can have, seen very differently. ⁴ You cannot compare their value by comparing a picture to a frame. ⁵ It must be the pictures only that you compare, or the comparison is wholly without meaning. ⁶ Remember that it is the picture that is the gift. ⁷ And only on this basis are you really free to choose. ⁸ Look at the pictures. ⁹ Both of them. ¹⁰ One is a tiny picture, hard to see at all beneath the heavy shadows of its enormous and disproportionate enclosure. ¹¹ The other is lightly framed and hung in light, lovely to look upon for what it is.
13. You who have tried so hard, and are still trying, to fit the better picture into the wrong frame and so combine what cannot be combined, accept this and be glad: These pictures are each framed perfectly for what they represent. ² One is framed to be out of focus and not seen. ³ The other is framed for perfect clarity. ⁴ The picture of darkness and of death grows less convincing as you search it out amid its wrappings. ⁵ As each senseless stone that seems to shine from the frame in darkness is exposed to light, it becomes dull and lifeless, and ceases to distract you from the picture. ⁶ And finally you look upon the picture itself, seeing at last that, unprotected by the frame, it has no meaning.
14. The other picture is lightly framed, for time cannot contain eternity. ² There is no distraction here. ³ The picture of Heaven and eternity grows more convincing as you look at it. ⁴ And now, by real comparison, a transformation of both pictures can at last occur. ⁵ And each is given its rightful place when both are seen in relation to each other. ⁶ The dark picture, brought to light, is not perceived as fearful, but the fact that it is just a picture is brought home at last. ⁷ And what you see there you will recognize as what it is; a picture of what you thought was real, and nothing more. ⁸ For beyond this picture you will see nothing.
15. The picture of light, in clear-cut and unmistakable contrast, is transformed into what lies beyond the picture. ² As you look on this, you realize that it is not a picture, but a reality. ³ This is no figured representation of a thought system, but the Thought itself. ⁴ What it represents is there. ⁵ The frame fades gently and God rises to your remembrance, offering you the whole of creation in exchange for your little picture, wholly without value and entirely deprived of meaning.
16. As God ascends into His rightful place and you to yours, you will experience again the meaning of relationship and know it to be true. ² Let us ascend in peace together to the Father, by giving Him ascendance in our minds. ³ We will gain everything by giving Him the power and the glory, and keeping no illusions of where they are. ⁴ They are in us, through His ascendance. ⁵ What He has given is His. ⁶ It shines in every part of Him, as in the whole. ⁷ The whole reality of your relationship with Him lies in our relationship to one another. ⁸ The holy instant shines alike on all relationships, for in it they *are* one. ⁹ For here is only healing, already complete and perfect. ¹⁰ For here is God, and where He is only the perfect and complete can be.

VI. Setting the Goal

1. The practical application of the Holy Spirit's purpose is extremely simple, but it is unequivocal. ² In fact, in order to be simple it *must* be unequivocal. ³ The simple is merely what is easily understood, and for this it is apparent that it must be clear. ⁴ The setting of the Holy Spirit's goal is general. ⁵ Now He will work with you to make it specific, for application *is* specific. ⁶ There are

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certain very specific guidelines He provides for any situation, but remember that you do not yet realize their universal application. ⁷ Therefore, it is essential at this point to use them in each situation separately, until you can more safely look beyond each situation, in an understanding far broader than you now possess.

2. In any situation in which you are uncertain, the first thing to consider, very simply, is "What do I want to come of this? ² What is it *for*?" ³ The clarification of the goal belongs at the beginning, for it is this which will determine the outcome. ⁴ In the ego's procedure this is reversed. ⁵ The situation becomes the determiner of the outcome, which can be anything. ⁶ The reason for this disorganized approach is evident. ⁷ The ego does not know what it wants to come of the situation. ⁸ It is aware of what it does not want, but only that. ⁹ It has no positive goal at all.
3. Without a clear-cut, positive goal, set at the outset, the situation just seems to happen, and makes no sense until it has already happened. ² Then you look back at it, and try to piece together what it must have meant. ³ And you will be wrong. ⁴ Not only is your judgment in the past, but you have no idea what should happen. ⁵ No goal was set with which to bring the means in line. ⁶ And now the only judgment left to make is whether or not the ego likes it; is it acceptable, or does it call for vengeance? ⁷ The absence of a criterion for outcome, set in advance, makes understanding doubtful and evaluation impossible.
4. The value of deciding in advance what you want to happen is simply that you will perceive the situation as a means to *make* it happen. ² You will therefore make every effort to overlook what interferes with the accomplishment of your objective, and concentrate on everything that helps you meet it. ³ It is quite noticeable that this approach has brought you closer to the Holy Spirit's sorting out of truth and falsity. ⁴ The true becomes what can be used to meet the goal. ⁵ The false becomes the useless from this point of view. ⁶ The situation now has meaning, but only because the goal has made it meaningful.
5. The goal of truth has further practical advantages. ² If the situation is used for truth and sanity, its outcome must be peace. ³ And this is quite apart from what the outcome *is*. ⁴ If peace is the condition of truth and sanity, and cannot be without them, where peace is they must be. ⁵ Truth comes of itself. ⁶ If you experience peace, it is because the truth has come to you and you will see the outcome truly, for deception cannot prevail against you. ⁷ You will recognize the outcome *because* you are at peace. ⁸ Here again you see the opposite of the ego's way of looking, for the ego believes the situation brings the experience. ⁹ The Holy Spirit knows that the situation is as the goal determines it, and is experienced according to the goal.
6. The goal of truth requires faith. ² Faith is implicit in the acceptance of the Holy Spirit's purpose, and this faith is all-inclusive. ³ Where the goal of truth is set, there faith must be. ⁴ The Holy Spirit sees the situation as a whole. ⁵ The goal establishes the fact that everyone involved in it will play his part in its accomplishment. ⁶ This is inevitable. ⁷ No one will fail in anything. ⁸ This seems to ask for faith beyond you, and beyond what you can give. ⁹ Yet this is so only from the viewpoint of the ego, for the ego believes in "solving" conflict through fragmentation, and does not perceive the situation as a whole. ¹⁰ Therefore, it seeks to split off segments of the situation and deal with them separately, for it has faith in separation and not in wholeness.
7. Confronted with any aspect of the situation that seems to be difficult, the ego will attempt to take this aspect elsewhere, and resolve it there. ² And it will seem to be successful, except that this

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attempt conflicts with unity, and must obscure the goal of truth. ³ And peace will not be experienced except in fantasy. ⁴ Truth has not come because faith has been denied, being withheld from where it rightfully belonged. ⁵ Thus do you lose the understanding of the situation the goal of truth would bring. ⁶ For fantasy solutions bring but the illusion of experience, and the illusion of peace is not the condition in which truth can enter.

VII. The Call for Faith

1. The substitutes for aspects of the situation are the witnesses to your lack of faith. ² They demonstrate that you did not believe the situation and the problem were in the same place. ³ The problem *was* the lack of faith, and it is this you demonstrate when you remove it from its source and place it elsewhere. ⁴ As a result, you do not see the problem. ⁵ Had you not lacked faith that it could be solved, the problem would be gone. ⁶ And the situation would have been meaningful to you, because the interference in the way of understanding would have been removed. ⁷ To remove the problem elsewhere is to keep it, for you remove yourself from it and make it unsolvable.
2. There is no problem in any situation that faith will not solve. ² There is no shift in any aspect of the problem but will make solution impossible. ³ For if you shift part of the problem elsewhere the meaning of the problem must be lost, and the solution to the problem is inherent in its meaning. ⁴ Is it not possible that all your problems have been solved, but you have removed yourself from the solution? ⁵ Yet faith must be where something has been done, and where you see it done.
3. A situation is a relationship, being the joining of thoughts. ² If problems are perceived, it is because the thoughts are judged to be in conflict. ³ But if the goal is truth, this is impossible. ⁴ Some idea of bodies must have entered, for minds cannot attack. ⁵ The thought of bodies is the sign of faithlessness, for bodies cannot solve anything. ⁶ It is their intrusion on the relationship, an error in your thoughts about the situation, which then becomes the justification for your lack of faith. ⁷ You will make this error, but be not at all concerned with that. ⁸ The error does not matter. ⁹ Faithlessness brought to faith will never interfere with truth. ¹⁰ But faithlessness used *against* truth will always destroy faith. ¹¹ If you lack faith, ask that it be restored where it was lost, and seek not to have it made up to you elsewhere, as if you had been unjustly deprived of it.
4. Only what *you* have not given can be lacking in any situation. ² But remember this; the goal of holiness was set for your relationship, and not by you. ³ You did not set it because holiness cannot be seen except through faith, and your relationship was not holy because your faith in your brother was so limited and little. ⁴ Your faith must grow to meet the goal that has been set. ⁵ The goal's reality will call this forth, for you will see that peace and faith will not come separately. ⁶ What situation can you be in without faith, and remain faithful to your brother?
5. Every situation in which you find yourself is but a means to meet the purpose set for your relationship. ² See it as something else and you are faithless. ³ Use not your faithlessness. ⁴ Let it enter and look upon it calmly, but do not use it. ⁵ Faithlessness is the servant of illusion, and wholly faithful to its master. ⁶ Use it, and it will carry you straight to illusions. ⁷ Be tempted not by what it offers you. ⁸ It interferes, not with the goal, but with the value of the goal to you. ⁹ Accept not the illusion of peace it offers, but look upon its offering and recognize it *is* illusion.
6. The goal of illusion is as closely tied to faithlessness as faith to truth. ² If you lack faith in anyone

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to fulfill, and perfectly, his part in any situation dedicated in advance to truth, your dedication is divided. ³ And so you have been faithless to your brother, and used your faithlessness against him. ⁴ No relationship is holy unless its holiness goes with it everywhere. ⁵ As holiness and faith go hand in hand, so must its faith go everywhere with it. ⁶ The goal's reality will call forth and accomplish every miracle needed for its fulfillment. ⁷ Nothing too small or too enormous, too weak or too compelling, but will be gently turned to its use and purpose. ⁸ The universe will serve it gladly, as it serves the universe. ⁹ But do not interfere.

7. The power set in you in whom the Holy Spirit's goal has been established is so far beyond your little conception of the infinite that you have no idea how great the strength that goes with you. ² And you can use *this* in perfect safety. ³ Yet for all its might, so great it reaches past the stars and to the universe that lies beyond them, your little faithlessness can make it useless, if you would use the faithlessness instead.
8. Yet think on this, and learn the cause of faithlessness: You think you hold against your brother what he has done to you. ² But what you really blame him for is what *you* did to *him*. ³ It is not his past but yours you hold against him. ⁴ And you lack faith in him because of what you were. ⁵ Yet you are as innocent of what you were as he is. ⁶ What never was is causeless, and is not there to interfere with truth. ⁷ There is no cause for faithlessness, but there *is* Cause for faith. ⁸ That Cause has entered any situation that shares Its purpose. ⁹ The light of truth shines from the center of the situation, and touches everyone to whom the situation's purpose calls. ¹⁰ It calls to everyone. ¹¹ There is no situation that does not involve your whole relationship, in every aspect and complete in every part. ¹² You can leave nothing of yourself outside it and keep the situation holy. ¹³ For it shares the purpose of your whole relationship, and derives its meaning from it.
9. Enter each situation with the faith you give your brother, or you are faithless to your own relationship. ² Your faith will call the others to share your purpose, as the same purpose called forth the faith in you. ³ And you will see the means you once employed to lead you to illusions transformed to means for truth. ⁴ Truth calls for faith, and faith makes room for truth. ⁵ When the Holy Spirit changed the purpose of your relationship by exchanging yours for His, the goal He placed there was extended to every situation in which you enter, or will ever enter. ⁶ And every situation was thus made free of the past, which would have made it purposeless.
10. You call for faith because of Him Who walks with you in every situation. ² You are no longer wholly insane, nor no longer alone. ³ For loneliness in God must be a dream. ⁴ You whose relationship shares the Holy Spirit's goal are set apart from loneliness because the truth has come. ⁵ Its call for faith is strong. ⁶ Use not your faithlessness against it, for it calls you to salvation and to peace.