

IV. Practicing the Holy Instant

1. This course is not beyond immediate learning, unless you believe that what God wills takes time. ² And this means only that you would rather delay the recognition that His Will is so. ³ The holy instant is this instant and every instant. ⁴ The one you want it to be it is. ⁵ The one you would not have it be is lost to you. ⁶ You must decide when it is. ⁷ Delay it not. ⁸ For beyond the past and future, where you will not find it, it stands in shimmering readiness for your acceptance. ⁹ Yet you cannot bring it into glad awareness while you do not want it, for it holds the whole release from littleness.
2. Your practice must therefore rest upon your willingness to let all littleness go. ² The instant in which magnitude dawns upon you is but as far away as your desire for it. ³ As long as you desire it not and cherish littleness instead, by so much is it far from you. ⁴ By so much as you want it will you bring it nearer. ⁵ Think not that you can find salvation in your own way and have it. ⁶ Give over every plan you have made for your salvation in exchange for God's. ⁷ His will content you, and nothing else can bring you peace. ⁸ For peace is of God, and no one beside Him.
3. Be humble before Him, and yet great *in* Him. ² And value no plan of the ego before the plan of God. ³ For you leave empty your place in His plan, which you must fill if you would join with me, by your decision to join in any plan but His. ⁴ I call you to fulfill your holy part in the plan that He has given to the world for its release from littleness. ⁵ God would have His host abide in perfect freedom. ⁶ Every allegiance to a plan of salvation apart from Him diminishes the value of His Will for you in your own mind. ⁷ And yet it is your mind that is the host to Him.
4. Would you learn how perfect and immaculate is the holy altar on which your Father has placed Himself? ² This you will recognize in the holy instant, in which you willingly and gladly give over every plan but His. ³ For there lies peace, perfectly clear because you have been willing to meet its conditions. ⁴ You can claim the holy instant any time and anywhere you want it. ⁵ In your practice, try to give over every plan you have accepted for finding magnitude in littleness. ⁶ *It is not there.* ⁷ Use the holy instant only to recognize that you alone cannot know where it is, and can only deceive yourself.
5. I stand within the holy instant, as clear as you would have me. ² And the extent to which you learn to accept me is the measure of the time in which the holy instant will be yours. ³ I call to you to make the holy instant yours at once, for the release from littleness in the mind of the host of God depends on willingness, and not on time.
6. The reason this course is simple is that truth is simple. ² Complexity is of the ego, and is nothing more than the ego's attempt to obscure the obvious. ³ You could live forever in the holy instant, beginning now and reaching to eternity, but for a very simple reason. ⁴ Do not obscure the simplicity of this reason, for if you do, it will be only because you prefer not to recognize it and not to let it go. ⁵ The simple reason, simply stated, is this: The holy instant is a time in which you receive and give perfect communication. ⁶ This means, however, that it is a time in which your mind is open, both to receive and give. ⁷ It is the recognition that all minds are in communication. ⁸ It therefore seeks to change nothing, but merely to accept everything.
7. How can you do this when you would prefer to have private thoughts and keep them? ² The only way you could do that would be to deny the perfect communication that makes the holy instant what

it is. ³ You believe you can harbor thoughts you would not share, and that salvation lies in keeping thoughts to yourself alone. ⁴ For in private thoughts, known only to yourself, you think you find a way to keep what you would have alone, and share what *you* would share. ⁵ And then you wonder why it is that you are not in full communication with those around you, and with God Who surrounds all of you together.

8. Every thought you would keep hidden shuts communication off, because you would have it so. ² It is impossible to recognize perfect communication while breaking communication holds value to you. ³ Ask yourself honestly, "Would I want to have perfect communication, and am I wholly willing to let everything that interferes with it go forever?" ⁴ If the answer is no, then the Holy Spirit's readiness to give it to you is not enough to make it yours, for you are not ready to share it with Him. ⁵ And it cannot come into a mind that has decided to oppose it. ⁶ For the holy instant is given and received with equal willingness, being the acceptance of the single Will that governs all thought.
9. The necessary condition for the holy instant does not require that you have no thoughts that are not pure. ² But it does require that you have none that you would keep. ³ Innocence is not of your making. ⁴ It is given you the instant you would have it. ⁵ Atonement would not be if there were no need for it. ⁶ You will not be able to accept perfect communication as long as you would hide it from yourself. ⁷ For what you would hide *is* hidden from you. ⁸ In your practice, then, try only to be vigilant against deception, and seek not to protect the thoughts you would keep to yourself. ⁹ Let the Holy Spirit's purity shine them away, and bring all your awareness to the readiness for purity He offers you. ¹⁰ Thus will He make you ready to acknowledge that you are host to God, and hostage to no one and to nothing.

VI. The Holy Instant and the Laws of God

1. It is impossible to use one relationship at the expense of another and not to suffer guilt. ² And it is equally impossible to condemn part of a relationship and find peace within it. ³ Under the Holy Spirit's teaching all relationships are seen as total commitments, yet they do not conflict with one another in any way. ⁴ Perfect faith in each one, for its ability to satisfy you completely, arises only from perfect faith in yourself. ⁵ And this you cannot have while guilt remains. ⁶ And there will be guilt as long as you accept the possibility, and cherish it, that you can make a brother into what he is not, because you would have him so.
2. You have so little faith in yourself because you are unwilling to accept the fact that perfect love is in you. ² And so you seek without for what you cannot find without. ³ I offer you my perfect faith in you, in place of all your doubts. ⁴ But forget not that my faith must be as perfect in all your brothers as it is in you, or it would be a limited gift to you. ⁵ In the holy instant we share our faith in God's Son because we recognize, together, that he is wholly worthy of it, and in our appreciation of his worth we cannot doubt his holiness. ⁶ And so we love him.
3. All separation vanishes as holiness is shared. ² For holiness is power, and by sharing it, it gains in strength. ³ If you seek for satisfaction in gratifying your needs as you perceive them, you must believe that strength comes from another, and what you gain he loses. ⁴ Someone must always lose if you perceive yourself as weak. ⁵ Yet there is another interpretation of relationships that transcends the concept of loss of power completely.
4. You do not find it difficult to believe that when another calls on God for love, your call remains as

strong. ² Nor do you think that when God answers him, your hope of answer is diminished. ³ On the contrary, you are more inclined to regard his success as witness to the possibility of yours. ⁴ That is because you recognize, however dimly, that God is an idea, and so your faith in Him is strengthened by sharing. ⁵ What you find difficult to accept is the fact that, like your Father, *you* are an idea. ⁶ And like Him, you can give yourself completely, wholly without loss and only with gain. ⁷ Herein lies peace, for here there *is* no conflict.

5. In the world of scarcity, love has no meaning and peace is impossible. ² For gain and loss are both accepted, and so no one is aware that perfect love is in him. ³ In the holy instant you recognize the idea of love in you, and unite this idea with the Mind that thought it, and could not relinquish it. ⁴ By holding it within itself, there *is* no loss. ⁵ The holy instant thus becomes a lesson in how to hold all of your brothers in your mind, experiencing not loss but completion. ⁶ From this it follows you can only give. ⁷ And this *is* love, for this alone is natural under the laws of God. ⁸ In the holy instant the laws of God prevail, and only they have meaning. ⁹ The laws of this world cease to hold any meaning at all. ¹⁰ When the Son of God accepts the laws of God as what he gladly wills, it is impossible that he be bound, or limited in any way. ¹¹ In that instant he is as free as God would have him be. ¹² For the instant he refuses to be bound, he is not bound.
6. In the holy instant nothing happens that has not always been. ² Only the veil that has been drawn across reality is lifted. ³ Nothing has changed. ⁴ Yet the awareness of changelessness comes swiftly as the veil of time is pushed aside. ⁵ No one who has not yet experienced the lifting of the veil, and felt himself drawn irresistibly into the light behind it, can have faith in love without fear. ⁶ Yet the Holy Spirit gives you this faith, because He offered it to me and I accepted it. ⁷ Fear not the holy instant will be denied you, for I denied it not. ⁸ And through me the Holy Spirit gives it unto you, as you will give it. ⁹ Let no need you perceive obscure your need of this. ¹⁰ For in the holy instant you will recognize the only need the Sons of God share equally, and by this recognition you will join with me in offering what is needed.
7. It is through *us* that peace will come. ² Join me in the idea of peace, for in ideas minds can communicate. ³ If you would give yourself as your Father gives His Self, you will learn to understand Selfhood. ⁴ And therein is love's meaning understood. ⁵ But remember that understanding is of the mind, and only of the mind. ⁶ Knowledge is therefore of the mind, and its conditions are in the mind with it. ⁷ If you were not an idea, and nothing but an idea, you could not be in full communication with all that ever was. ⁸ Yet as long as you prefer to be something else, or would attempt to be nothing else and something else together, you will not remember the language of communication, which you know perfectly.
8. In the holy instant God is remembered, and the language of communication with all your brothers is remembered with Him. ² For communication is remembered together, as is truth. ³ There is no exclusion in the holy instant because the past is gone, and with it goes the whole basis for exclusion. ⁴ Without its source exclusion vanishes. ⁵ And this permits your Source, and that of all your brothers, to replace it in your awareness. ⁶ God and the power of God will take Their rightful place in you, and you will experience the full communication of ideas with ideas. ⁷ Through your ability to do this you will learn what you must be, for you will begin to understand what your Creator is, and what His creation is along with Him.
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 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 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."

6. In the Holy Spirit alone lies the awareness of what God cannot know, and what you do not understand. ² It is His holy function to accept them both, and by removing every element of disagreement, to join them into one. ³ He will do this because it is His function. ⁴ Leave, then, what seems to you to be impossible, to Him Who knows it must be possible because it is the Will of God. ⁵ And let Him Whose teaching is only of God teach you the only meaning of relationships. ⁶ For God created the only relationship that has meaning, and that is His relationship with you.