

What It Means to Be a Teacher of God

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Part XXVIII

How Are Healing and Atonement Related? (M-22) (conclusion)

(5:1-2) When a teacher of God fails to heal, it is because he has forgotten Who he is. Another's sickness thus becomes his own.

This is the central principle of healing. I have failed to heal if I make your error real. If I see your sickness and your suffering as real, I have forgotten Who I am, and I am now as sick as you are, because I am identifying myself with my ego.

(5:3-5) In allowing this to happen, he has identified with another's ego, and has thus confused him with a body. In so doing, he has refused to accept the Atonement for himself, and can hardly offer it to his brother in Christ's Name. He will, in fact, be unable to recognize his brother at all, for his Father did not create bodies, and so he is seeing in his brother only the unreal.

This is another clear statement in the Course that just as God did not create the world, He did not create bodies. So if I am seeing you as a body—which I must be doing if I am seeing you as sick—I must not be seeing you as God has created you. I am seeing you as an illusion, which means I am seeing you as unreal because I want to see myself as unreal. I am afraid of the reality of Who I really am. I am afraid of love.

(5:6-10) Mistakes do not correct mistakes, and distorted perception does not heal. Step back now, teacher of God. You have been wrong. Lead not the way, for you have lost it. Turn quickly to your Teacher, and let yourself be healed.

This is a clear statement of the process. I become aware of when my ego has gotten in the way. And I know that by the distortions of perception, by seeing suffering and sickness as real, there must be something I am guilty over, something I do not want to look at, something I want to correct. So if there is anything I want to do something about, one way or another, my perception is sick. And therefore I need to step back from my ego and say, "There must be another way of looking at this. Please help."

(6:1-2) The offer of Atonement is universal. It is equally applicable to all individuals in all circumstances.

Again, there is no order of difficulty in miracles. This principle works no matter what is going on in the world, because there is no world outside my mind. It is all within my mind. And every problem that I perceive in the world, regardless of its form, arises because I first looked within my mind and perceived the problem there. And the problem is my guilt and my fear of God's punishment. So all I have to do is bring my mind back to that point where I chose guilt and fear and say, "It is not my ego that is correct; it

is the Holy Spirit. I can now make another choice." At that point all my problems disappear. Now the forms in which they appear in the world may not necessarily change, but the problems will disappear in my perception. Instead of seeing problems out there that have to be fixed, changed, healed, or solved, I see either an expression of love or a call for love, which are answered equally by the love in my mind. And that is all that I perceive.

(6:3) And in it is the power to heal all individuals of all forms of sickness.

Again, this is not referring to anything external or physical. The form of sickness is simply a mask that hides the sickness of guilt and separation in the mind. The goal of the healing is not to change the form. If you are physically sick, your sickness is coming from a sick thought of guilt in your mind. So when my mind is healed so that only love flows through it and that is all that I express to you, since your mind is joined with mine, then your mind is also healed. At that point, if you choose to accept that joining and that love, the form of your sickness will disappear. Whether you choose to accept it or not is your choice. That is the meaning of this passage.

So my mind heals the *thought*, not the *form*, of sickness in your mind. I cannot heal the form of sickness since it was your mind that made it. I did not make it. But I heal it by undoing the thought of sickness that made the form of sickness, and that thought of sickness in your mind is the thought of separation. If I join with you and accept the joining and the oneness that is there, then your mind is healed of that thought of separation. And you can either accept it or not. If you do, the form of sickness will disappear. If you do not, then both the form and the thought of separation remain. But the thought of healing also remains until the time you can accept it.

(6:4) Not to believe this is to be unfair to God, and thus unfaithful to Him.

Obviously, God does not perceive us as being unfair to Him, but *in our minds* we are unfair to God because our unbelief is an attack on Him. It is saying, "There is something in this world that has the power to withstand Your Love," or, as the text states, "There is a power past omnipotence" (T-29.VIII.6:2). There is a power in this world that is greater than the power of Love, and that would be the power of the ego.

(6:5-6) A sick person perceives himself as separate from God. Would you see him as separate from you?

All sickness comes from the basic belief that we are separate from God. Otherwise we would not be sick. Sickness is not defined by anything of the body. It is defined by a thought in the mind

(6:7-9) It is your task to heal the sense of separation that has made him sick. It is your function to recognize for him that what he believes about himself is not the truth. It is your forgiveness that must show him this.

And, again, it is not what we say or do. We are simply being a reminder of the truth—forgiveness does that. Forgiveness clears away all the impediments, obstacles, and blocks in our minds that would prevent the Love and the truth of God from flowing through us. Thus, this passage clearly affirms that all we need to do is forgive. Forgiveness makes all healing possible.

(6:10-14) Healing is very simple. Atonement is received and offered. Having been received, it must be accepted. It is in the receiving, then, that healing lies. All else must follow from this single purpose.

It is interesting that this does not say, "Atonement is offered and received." The reason it is reversed is that it is simultaneous. Healing is simple because I accept the Atonement within myself, I offer it to you, and you receive it. This is the other way of understanding these passages. I am the one who receives the Atonement and then I offer it to you. It can be understood either way.

(7:1) Who can limit the power of God Himself?

The ego says, "I can limit the power of God Himself." Sickness says, "I can limit the power of God Himself." This world says, "I can limit the power of God Himself." This entire world becomes a symbol of the anti-Christ in the sense that there is a power beyond the omnipotence of Heaven. When the ego says, "I can make up a world in which God cannot enter," it is asserting its belief that it has the power to keep God out.

Now the truth is that God cannot enter this world because *there is no world*. How can God enter into an illusion? But that is not what the ego tells us. The ego tells us that we will make a world and God cannot enter because we are more powerful than God. So basically, then, God is impotent.

The ego says, "You see, we can do all these terrible things in the world and God doesn't intervene. That just shows you how powerful this great God of yours is! He can do nothing!" The real power of God is that He does not intervene because there is nothing here that He can intervene with. The power of God is that He is only truth and reality, and therefore He does not know of anything outside Him. That is God's power. The ego turns that around and asserts that God is impotent and the ego is all powerful.

(7:2-3) Who, then, can say which one can be healed of what, and what must remain beyond God's power to forgive? This is insanity indeed.

Yet this is what we all say. We say some people are resistant to healing, some sicknesses can not be healed, etc. In other words, we make a hierarchy of illusions: "There *is* an order of difficulty in miracles. God's Love can help in some places, with some people, with some problems, but not with all of them." We say this because we actually believe there is a world here.

God's Love heals everything because there is only one problem—the belief that there is a problem and that there is a place outside this Love. God's Love is the statement that says that there is nothing outside. In that principle, in the acceptance of that truth, all problems disappear.

But we make up laws of healing and laws of God. We make up laws of what God's Love will do and what God's punishment will be. All theologies do that. These are the ego's attempt to control God and basically to play God. We tell God what He should think and what He should do. The section "The Laws of Chaos" (T-23.II) is probably the clearest statement in the Course on the insanity of this.

(7:4) It is not up to God's teachers to set limits upon Him, because it is not up to them to judge His Son.

Judgment is something the ego made. We are judging when we take sides, or say one problem is worse than another.

(7:5-6) And to judge His Son is to limit his Father. Both are equally meaningless.

Like father, like son. If we say God's Son is limited or God's Son is a body, then we must be saying that God is limited or He is a body, too. The idea that we could judge God's Son and the idea that we could limit God are equally meaningless.

(7:7) Yet this will not be understood until God's teacher recognizes that they are the same mistake.

Now to understand that both are the same mistake means that recognizing that making any aspect of the world real by judging aspects of the Sonship—some are sick, some are well; some are handsome, some are ugly; some are old, some are young; some are born, some are dead; some are good, some are evil—is to limit God.

That is not how the world usually thinks. But that is what the Course is saying. The Son must be like the Father. If God is total unity, perfect and all Love, then His Son, Christ, must be exactly the same—without any differences, without any exception. So if I see the Son as limited and fragmented, then I must be saying exactly the same about God. However, if I say God is perfect and all-loving, then the same must be true of Christ. It follows then that anything that I perceive that is different from that love and perfection must be unreal because it can not be of God.

That is the meaning of these lines—I recognize that what I say about God must be true about His Son, and what I say about His Son must be true about God. And if I believe that the Son can be sick and die, then I must be saying the same is true of God—God can be limited, and God can be attacked.

(7:8) Herein does he receive Atonement, for he withdraws his judgment from the Son of God, accepting him as God created him.

When I recognize that the Son must be like the Father, that is the Atonement. I am saying that if God is perfect Love and unity, then His Son, who is like Him, must be also. The ego has denied that, saying, "The Son is *unlike* God's creation. He is not like what God created. He is limited, fragmented, guilty, separated." So to accept the Atonement for myself means to accept my Identity as God's Son, as He has created me—perfect, loving, and one with Him. And this means that everything I see in this world must be an illusion, because, obviously, this world is not like God.

(7:9) No longer does he stand apart from God, determining where healing should be given and where it should be withheld.

This, of course, is what we all do. We choose up sides.

(7:10) Now can he say with God, "This is my beloved Son, created perfect and forever so."

We say this to each and every seemingly fragmented part of the Sonship—including ourselves. And so I no longer see sickness, death, pain, specialness, or differences as real. I see everyone here as simply like a frightened child, pulling a veil or a blanket over its eyes to keep this truth hidden from itself—that we are as God has created us. We are perfect and that perfection can never be changed.

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I thought we would conclude with a reading from the very end of the manual for teachers (M-29.7-8), including the lovely closing poem, which expresses very beautifully what it means to be a teacher of

God. The first person in these passages, of course, is Jesus: speaking to us and thanking us for our willingness to join with him so that together with him we can be the expressions of God's Voice in the world.

(7:1-11) Remember you are His completion and His Love. Remember your weakness is His strength. But do not read this hastily or wrongly. If His strength is in you, what you perceive as your weakness is but illusion. And He has given you the means to prove it so. Ask all things of His Teacher, and all things are given you. Not in the future but immediately; now. God does not wait, for waiting implies time and He is timeless. Forget your foolish images, your sense of frailty and your fear of harm, your dreams of danger and selected "wrongs." God knows but His Son, and as he was created so he is. In confidence I place you in His hands, and I give thanks for you that this is so.

**(8:1-8) And now in all your doings be you blessed.
God turns to you for help to save the world.
Teacher of God, His thanks He offers you,
And all the world stands silent in the grace
You bring from Him. You are the Son He loves,
And it is given you to be the means
Through which His Voice is heard around the world,
To close all things of time; to end the sight
Of all things visible; and to undo
All things that change. Through you is ushered in
A world unseen, unheard, yet truly there.
Holy are you, and in your light the world
Reflects your holiness, for you are not
Alone and friendless. I give thanks for you,
And join your efforts on behalf of God,
Knowing they are on my behalf as well,
And for all those who walk to God with me.**

AMEN