

"I Will Forgive, but Never Forget"

Excerpts from the Academy class held at the
Foundation for A Course in Miracles
Temecula CA

Kenneth Wapnick, Ph.D.

Part VI Conclusion

Lesson 134 gets to the point of how we look at situations. Paragraph 6:

(W-pl.134.6) It is sin's unreality that makes forgiveness natural and wholly sane, a deep relief to those who offer it; a quiet blessing where it is received. It [forgiveness] does not countenance illusions, but collects them lightly, with a little laugh, and gently lays them at the feet of truth. And there they disappear entirely.

Forgiveness "does not countenance illusions"—it does not recognize illusions—"but collects them lightly, with a little laugh and gently lays them at the feet of truth." (That is nice alliteration: "lightly, with a little laugh.") This means forgiveness does not take illusions seriously. It is the idea of bringing illusions to the truth. When you look with Jesus at whatever occurs, whether it is a traffic accident, cancer, an earthquake, or a war, you look at it "lightly, with a little laugh" by bringing it to the truth. When you look at anything in this world—which is always some expression of darkness—next to this glorious light of who you are, the darkness, the situation, just pales into nothingness and disappears.

(W-pl-134.7) Forgiveness is the only thing that stands for truth in the illusions of the world. It sees their nothingness, and looks straight through the thousand forms in which they may appear. It looks on lies, but it is not deceived. It does not heed the self-accusing shrieks of sinners mad with guilt. It looks on them with quiet eyes, and merely says to them, "My brother, what you think is not the truth."

That is the attitude we are asked to have toward anything that goes on in our personal world or the world at large. Forgiveness does not give reality to or take seriously "the self-accusing shrieks of sinners mad with guilt." (There you have alliteration again: "self-accusing shrieks of sinners.") "It looks on them with quiet eyes" and simply says "what you think is not the truth"—not necessarily in words, but by your defenselessness, your peace, and your recognition that none of this means anything because none of it is true. This teaches other people not to take the illusion seriously either.

Thus, if you are in an accident and everyone is all hot and bothered and you are peaceful, you would be demonstrating this. This does not mean you would not do all the things you are supposed to do when an accident occurs. It just means you would do it all peacefully. You would not pay attention to the accusing "shrieks of sinners," whether they accuse themselves or you. You would become like the eye of the hurricane. You would be calm and peaceful in the midst of the swirling mass of energy, anger, fear, anxiety, pain, and hurt.

Again, we look at everything in the world "lightly, with a little laugh." We recognize an illusion is an illusion and has no power over the truth.

.....

Q: So then every decision on the level of form is just rendering unto Caesar—doing what needs to be done?

A: Yes. You render unto Caesar what is Caesar's. You do what the world says, but you know you are not subject to Caesar's laws. What that does is make every situation exactly the same. That's the key point. It makes every situation exactly the same. I have always said that if people really understood the first principle of miracles, they would not need the rest of the book, and they would not need a workbook. If we really understood right at the beginning why *there is no order of difficulty in miracles* (T-1.1:1), we would understand everything because that is what the Course is about. In a sense, the whole of *A Course in Miracles* is a variation of that basic theme. *There is no order of difficulty in miracles* because every problem is the same, because everything here is an illusion. The form is different, but the content is the same. An illusion is an illusion is an illusion. Therefore, all illusions, regardless of their form or seeming magnitude, are resolved in the same way: you bring them to the truth with a little laugh. That is why *there is no order of difficulty in miracles*. Every problem is the same; therefore every correction is the same. It is not the seeming magnitude of the form. It is not the form at all!

So too as I have been stressing, *what* we are thinking is not the problem; it is the fact that *we are thinking*. It is the fact that we are in this world taking it seriously that is the problem, not what goes on in the world. To say it another way, it is not the specifics of the world that are the problem. It is the fact that we believe in the world. The problem is not what our thoughts are. It is the simple fact that we believe we think. That is the problem. It is never the specifics. We are never upset for the reason we think (W-pl.5). We think we are upset for all kinds of specific reasons. The real reason we are upset is that we choose to be upset, because we take the *tiny, mad idea* seriously.

All Jesus does throughout this course is tap us on the shoulder and say, "My brother, what you think is not the truth." In Chapter 23 in the text he says, "And God thinks otherwise" (T-23.I.2:7). And so when we come to him with our stories, our anxieties, and our concerns, he says, "That is not what is bothering you. That is not the problem. What you are thinking is not the truth." Implicit in that is what he told Helen (see T-2.VI.4; VII.1): "Don't ask me to fix the problem here. There is no problem here. The problem is that you think there's a problem. The problem is not *what* you think, but that you think you *can* think. The problem is not that you are here. You are *not* here. The problem is that you think you are here. The problem is not that you are separated from God. The problem is that you think you are separated from God." That is a big, big distinction and it is very important.

This is why forgiveness is not about forgiving people for what they have done. Metaphysically, they have literally not done anything. On this level, they have not done anything because they have not taken your peace away from you. They may have taken pieces of your body away from you, but they have not

taken *you*; they have not taken *peace* away from you. So there is nothing to forgive. Nothing was done to you. Now this is a very difficult principle to live one hundred percent of the time, but you can at least realize that when you are unhappy, it is because you have chosen not to live under that principle. It is not a sin, but at least now you know what the problem is.

That explains why it is much easier for us to go to Jesus or the Holy Spirit with a problem and demand that they fix the problem than it is to go to Them for help without predetermining what the help would be. Again, Jesus would tell us, "My brother, what you think is not the truth. Don't ask me to help you with this problem, A, B, C, X, Y, or Z. Ask me to help you look at the fact that you *want* there to be a problem, because, in truth, you know there is no problem. This is the same as saying you want there to be a separated self, because on some level you know there is no separated self."

To briefly summarize our discussion: When we go to Jesus with a problem, we are really asking him to convince us that there is a problem, and therefore that we are real as individuals. It is as if we are begging him to make it real with us. And since he does not do that, what we do is fire him and hire another Jesus who does pay attention to our problems. Then we think that's the Jesus who wrote this book and who gives us answers. We do that because we do not like the answer the real Jesus of the Course gives, which is that there is no answer to give because there is no question and no problem. As I said earlier, there always is an answer to a specific problem, and that is because the answer is always the same, and that answer will take form in whatever way we can accept it.