

**Jesus:
The Manifestation of the Holy Spirit**

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**Part XIII
Commentary on "Does Jesus Have a Special Place in Healing?" (M-23)**

Let me read now the section in the manual that deals specifically with Jesus, "Does Jesus Have a Special Place in Healing?" (M-23). The answer of course, as we shall see, is yes. It is a wonderful section for a number of reasons, one of which—as we shall see right at the beginning—is its discussion of the difference between magic and a miracle in terms of Jesus.

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Paragraph 1 - Sentence 1) God's gifts can rarely be received directly.

The reason is that we are terrified of them. This is the same reason we cannot go from nightmares to reality. We do not suddenly jump from the bottom rung of the ladder all the way to the top. Over and over again in the Course, Jesus speaks of this as a process. We are terrified of God's Love—our very existence is predicated on the belief that, in the presence of God's Love, we would be annihilated.

(Paragraph 1 - Sentences 2-3) Even the most advanced of God's teachers will give way to temptation in this world. Would it be fair if their pupils were denied healing because of this?

In other words, Jesus is saying that we need an intermediate step. We need someone who can guide us gently back, so that, step-by-step, our fear will be diminished.

(Paragraph 1 - Sentences 4-5) The Bible says, "Ask in the name of Jesus Christ." Is this merely an appeal to magic?

Most of the time the use of Jesus' name has been an appeal to magic. People have felt there is something sacred in the name Jesus Christ, that his name must not be uttered in vain. Doing so, many Christians have thought, would be blasphemy, as if there were something holy in the name. It is similar to how, as we talked about earlier, people think there is something holy in this physical book called *A Course in Miracles*. It is what the name points to or represents that is holy—the meaning, not the form; the reality, not the appearance. If we feel that asking in the name of Jesus Christ will get us something we want, that is magic—we believe we are lacking something; Jesus has it, and he will give it to us.

So, for example, if we pray for good health—that our cancer, or AIDS, or some other condition be healed—we are saying, "I lack good health. There is nothing I can do about it. But this wonderful Jesus will now take care of it for me." If Jesus intervened, as we discussed earlier, he would be tampering with a basic law of cause and effect, rendering our mind impotent. And then there would be no way we could be saved. The only way we can be saved is by allowing his love to remind us that we can make another

choice, for love instead of guilt. The guilt is the cause of the sickness—the sickness is simply the physical expression of the guilt. So Jesus heals by reminding us that we can choose against guilt.

As we shall see later in this section, to "ask in the name of Jesus Christ" does heal, as long as we understand what it means. It means asking in our own name, too. As we call upon his name, we are calling on the love that is represented by that symbol, which then reminds us that that same love is in us. That helps us to recognize that he may be different from us in time, but we are exactly the same in eternity.

(Paragraph 1 - Sentence 6) A name does not heal, nor does an invocation call forth any special power.

Jesus has no special power. The Holy Spirit does not have any special power. Sometimes people talk about the Holy Spirit as if He were a physical power they can feel coming through them. They believe, for example, that they can hold out their hands so others can feel something like a blast of hot air, and they call that the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit is not a blast of hot air—He is not an energy. All that is being felt through the hands is an electromagnetic field that has become excited. There may be a feeling of heat, but it has nothing whatsoever to do with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a Thought in the mind. Remember, as I mentioned earlier, one of the core Course teachings is that the mind is not in the body. If the Holy Spirit is a Thought in our minds, He is not in our bodies.

If people are trembling with the kundalini energy or with the "power of the Holy Spirit," it is the electromagnetic force field around them that is trembling—it is their own nervous agitation. The Holy Spirit does not tremble or get excited. He has no special power that comes into our bodies—the power is in our minds. And Jesus represents that power for us. The power is not in his mind alone, nor is it in our minds alone—the power is in the collective mind. And, as we shall see later on, the power is ours through our joining our minds with the mind of Jesus. It is not only Jesus who has all power in Heaven and earth—we have it as well.

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(Paragraph 2 - Sentences 7-8) There is now no limit on his power, because it is the power of God. So has his name become the Name of God, for he no longer sees himself as separate from Him.

God does not have a name. Obviously, once we give God a name we do not know His name. To talk about the Name of God is to talk about a symbol—a symbol for a reality that is totally one, a symbol for a Love that is not of this world that we are part of. As the workbook says, "I call upon God's Name and on my own" (W-pl.183). We share the same Name because we share one Self, one Love, one Being, one Will. So someone like Jesus—who has totally transcended his ego, knows that all this is a dream, knows the separation has never happened, knows that God's Love can never be split or attacked or killed, and so knows that he is one with Christ and one with God—shares that one Name. And he also knows that all of us who still believe the dream is real share that same Name. And there is no way we can awaken ourselves from that dream. We need that intermediate step—someone who reflects back to us the truth and the light and the Name.

(Paragraph 3 - Sentences 1-3) What does this mean for you? It means that in remembering Jesus you are remembering God. The whole relationship of the Son to the Father lies in him.

In remembering Jesus, we are remembering God, because Jesus is now one with God. He is the symbol of the Atonement principle. He is the symbol that we never left God. The Holy Spirit is also that symbol, but the Holy Spirit is abstract. Jesus is specific and concrete, because we live in a specific and concrete world. And so in identifying with Jesus, in calling upon his name—not as a magical incantation or formula or mantra—we are remembering that his name is ours. That remembering is the key—the bridge that leads us back home. In remembering Jesus, we are not only remembering God, we are also remembering Who we are as Christ. That is why it is so important that we not accentuate the difference between him and us. And that is why Jesus always plays down that difference in the Course. He is different only in that he has awakened from the dream, and so he is wiser than we are. But he has no power that we do not have. He can not heal sickness. All he can do is remind us that we have the power to heal sickness, because we are the ones who made the sickness.

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(Paragraph 3 - Sentence 4) His part in the Sonship is also yours [there is no difference], and his completed learning guarantees your own success.

The fact that Jesus completed his part and is a thought within the mind of the Sonship means that we all will also succeed. His purpose is to remind us that the Atonement is not a dream. The ego turned everything upside-down, telling us the separation is reality, and the Atonement is the dream. This world then becomes the seemingly living proof that the ego is right—the Atonement is a dream. The world seems very real and obviously is a world of fragmentation, separation, and death, which seems to prove that the ego's story is correct and the Holy Spirit is a liar. Jesus shows us that it is the other way around. The separation is the dream, and the Atonement thought—namely, that the separation never happened—is the truth.

Jesus is exceedingly important for us within the dream, but only because he reminds us that we are all the same. It is so important to keep in mind because, as I have taught so often, we cannot love someone we perceive as different—it is impossible. It is really hatred. In fact, in one line in the text Jesus says, "What is not love is murder" (T-23.IV.1:10). If we cannot love someone who is different, what does that mean? It means we hate him, and want to kill him and steal from him what we believe he took from us. So, again, Jesus represents for us the reminder that we are all one in Christ. And our prayer is that we change our minds so that we can see in him a reflection of ourselves.

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(Paragraph 3 - Sentences 8-9) Can God fail his Son? And can one who is one with God [and that would be Jesus] be unlike Him?

If God cannot fail His Son because God's Love does not fail—God's Love is perfect and always is—then we must believe we are the ones who have failed God: we are the ones who have been ungrateful to Him, betrayed His Love, walked out on Him, rejected Him, and abandoned Love. Of course we project those thoughts out and believe that God or Jesus or others have done those things to us, are doing them to us now, and will continue to do so. But God has not failed us—His Love is all there is and we are part

of that Love. Since Jesus is now one with God—he is the symbol of God's Love—then, obviously, his promises are just as sure. But each of us always wants to prove either that he is a liar who does not keep his promises, or that he keeps his promises to everyone but me, because I am so terrible.

And so we set him up to fail us. We do that when we call upon his name for magical purposes—"Please, Lord Jesus, do this for me." Sometimes we may get what we ask for, but sometimes we do not. And when we do not, a part of our minds is ebullient, leaping for joy and saying, "Ah, I finally caught you." My ego wants to catch Jesus, because that proves my ego is right. It is always a setup when we ask Jesus or the Holy Spirit for things. If we get what we ask for, then we feel the same kind of warmth and happiness and ecstasy that we feel when our special love partner gives us what we want and need. But underneath that, of course, is the hate when we do not get what we want. That same idea underlies the psychological axiom that dependency breeds contempt. We end up hating those people we are dependent on. Jesus wants us to be dependent on him only as a reminder that we are alike and that we already have everything that we need, which is totally different from saying that we lack something and he is going to supply it for us.

(Paragraph 3 - Sentences 10-11) Who transcends the body has transcended limitation. Would the greatest teacher be unavailable to those who follow him?

This is Jesus' way of assuring us that he is always there for us. We are not always there for him—and that is why our guilt is so great. Jesus only wants us to be honest about our fear of him—we are always dropping his hand and running away from him. He wants us to look at that without being afraid or upset or guilty. In other words, we want to be able to look with his love next to us at the fact that we are afraid of him. The more we can do that, the clearer we will be that we are forgiven for our sins, which never happened. But our guilt is so enormous because, not only have we rejected God's Love, but we have also rejected the symbol of His Love within the dream. That is the major reason people have so much difficulty with the person of Jesus.

(Paragraph 4 - Sentences 1-2) The name of Jesus Christ as such is but a symbol. But it stands for love that is not of this world.

His name is not the reality. A symbol is not reality. Reality—the Love of God—is above this purple line on the chart. Everything underneath that is a symbol. And the Love of God can be symbolized either by the ego or by the Holy Spirit. The name of Jesus Christ is actually a symbol of a symbol. His name becomes a symbol of the concept of the Atonement thought, so it is twice removed from reality. Jesus is not the Love of God. His name is not the Love of God. They are *symbols* for the Love of God. And it is the Love of God that we want. We want the song, not the echo or the reflection of the song. We want to experience His Love, which transcends everything of this world. But we cannot go from the special love of the ego to the Love of God. Again, we need an intermediate step. Jesus then becomes for us that intermediate step, that symbol. But in the end it is not the symbol that we want, we want what the symbol points to. Someone once said that Jesus came and pointed his finger to Heaven where God is. And then people started worshipping his finger.

(Paragraph 4 - Sentence 3) It is a symbol that is safely used as a replacement for the many names of all the gods to which you pray.

So Jesus becomes a symbol that for us represents the real God. And by calling upon his name, identifying with his name and taking his hand, we are really dropping the hand of the ego and letting go of our identification with all the names we have given to the little gods we have made as substitutes for the real God. One meaning of *specialness* is that it is the worshipping of idols. An idol is a substitute for God, one of the terms used in the Course to define a special relationship. A special relationship is a substitute. We are saying to God, "What you give me is not enough. This other person gives me more." And we are telling Jesus, "Your hand to hold is not enough—I want another's hand. Your love is not enough—I want this person's love."

So that person, or an object or substance in the world that we believe we need, becomes an idol, which we say will give us the love, the peace, the comfort, and the security that God or Jesus cannot give us. And that is where all of our guilt lies. Specialness is a powerful weapon in the ego's arsenal. By worshipping others for what we can get from them, or worshipping things in the world, we are reinforcing the original guilt over telling God that we did not need Him, that we could make things up for ourselves to satisfy our own needs because He would not do it for us. So each time we become attracted to, or identified with, or addicted to someone or something in the world, we are sticking our hand in God's face, pushing Him away, and saying, "I will take over for myself." That is why the guilt is so great. And so the way out of guilt is to drop the ego's hand and take Jesus' hand instead.

(Paragraph 4 - Sentence 4) It [the Name of Jesus Christ] becomes the shining symbol for the Word of God, so close to what it stands for that the little space between the two is lost, the moment that the Name is called to mind.

The Word of God is a phrase in the Course that refers almost always to some expression of the Atonement. It is used for the idea of the Atonement, the plan of the Atonement, the Holy Spirit, forgiveness, salvation, etc.—anything that represents the expression of the truth (within the dream) that we have never separated from God. So Jesus becomes a symbol of the Word of God, of the Atonement principle. In him the Love of God is clearly experienced, telling us that we have not separated from that Love. The love is not experienced in the body of Jesus—it is experienced in his mind. And we are all part of that mind.

So recalling the name of Jesus to mind is a way of taking him as our model for learning. By identifying with him, we are identifying with the principle that the separation from God never happened. Thus, for example—and we will elaborate on this later—if something occurs in my day and I begin to feel upset or anxious, obviously I am feeling separated. I am feeling that something "out there," which I perceive as real, can affect me. Clearly, I believe the something out there is separate from me. Or if I feel guilty, it involves some aspect of separation, something I have done wrong. It will be something associated with my body—whether my physical body or my personality—something I have done or said or thought.

If, however, I can remember at that moment to turn to Jesus, join with him, and experience his love, I am undoing all the thoughts of separation that were the cause of my distress. Remember, the Atonement principle is that the separation from God never happened. By joining with Jesus, who represents God's Love for me, I am joining with that principle and saying that it is true. And that undoes the cause of all the anxiety, distress, and upset. Again, this passage is not about calling upon Jesus' name

as an affirmation or as a magical formula. We call upon his name to remind ourselves of the truth that his name represents. And that truth is not in him or in me—it is in both of us. But because I have forgotten it, Jesus functions as a symbol to remind me.