

Our Gratitude to God

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Part XVII

"Attainment of the Real World" (conclusion)

(T-13.VII.17:2) My task is not completed until I have lifted every voice with mine.

This makes it sound as if this is a task or function that Jesus has to fulfill, like the general who does not get paid until everyone is brought home. Obviously, this is a metaphor. What he is saying is that if we are all one, then in this world, the presence of love has not been fulfilled until everyone awakens from the dream. It is not that he saves some people and not others; that is the real point here. The traditional view of Jesus is that at the Last Judgment some are going to make it and some are not—the parable about the sheep and the goats. What he is saying here clearly is that *everyone* gets home, not just some.

(T-13.VII.17:3) And yet it is not mine [it is not Jesus' voice], **for as it is my gift to you, so was it the Father's gift to me, given me through His Spirit.**

It is really not his voice, because it is the voice of love, and the Voice of Love is God's. Yet each of us joins that voice. One of the images the Course uses from time to time is the hymn of a chorus singing. There is an especially beautiful passage at the very end of the text, which is a nice prayer of thanksgiving as well. Jesus addressing God:

I give You thanks for what my brothers are. And as each one elects to join with me, the song of thanks from earth to Heaven grows from tiny scattered threads of melody to one inclusive chorus from a world redeemed from hell, and giving thanks to You (T-31.VIII.11:4-5).

The idea is that the whole Sonship is a chorus that has been so fragmented into different voices that it seems almost impossible that it began as one chorus and will yet end as one chorus. Basically, Jesus is the chorus master who is going to draw together all these different voices and blend them into the unifying song of thanksgiving so that it is all one voice. That is called the song of prayer in the supplement of the same name. It is not my voice, it is not your voice; it is not his voice. It is the voice that when we are totally one, transcends the sum of its parts. The Course says elsewhere that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (T-4.III.1:6). What makes this chorus what it is is not each voice adding up one by one. It is a totally unifying element of all the voices, the blending together of one voice that transcends the sum of its separate parts, including Jesus' part.

(T-13.VII.17:4) The sound of it [the sound of this voice of love, or redemption's hymn] **will banish sorrow from the mind of God's most holy Son, where it cannot abide.**

What we all did in that original instant when we turned our back on the Holy Spirit and listened to the ego instead was welcome sorrow into our minds and banish joy. We basically drowned out this incredibly lovely hymn and chorus with a cacophonous sound filled with discordance and dissonances.

That is what we told ourselves was beautiful. What the Course explains in many different places, especially in "The Laws of Chaos" (T-23.II), is that in this world we believe these are laws of order. It is only when we really look at them and understand them that we realize this world is not founded upon laws that make sense—they are really laws of chaos. Things do not work perfectly. We have the illusion that they do, but that is a chaotic brain that has been programmed by a chaotic mind to believe that chaos is order. When chaos looks on itself, it thinks that is fine, because it is like looking on like.

To our chaotic mind and brain, predicated on guilt and disorder, the fact that we are no longer at one with God, which is a disordered thought, now seems comfortable, because that is what we are: a disordered thought. To a disordered mind, an ordered mind is disordered, which parallels the earlier statement that "to the ego, *the guiltless are guilty*" (T-13.II.4:2). To the ego, which is guilt, to be without guilt is seen as a tremendous threat. It is out of sync, not in harmony. What is in harmony with guilt is guilt. What is in harmony with fear is fear, and what is in harmony with chaos is chaos. What is in harmony with dissonance is dissonance. To a dissonant mind that is filled with cacophonous music, which is what this world and the sounds of the ego are, the unity of the song of prayer, the song of thanksgiving, makes no sense. That appears to be disharmony.

What we all chose in that instant was to drown out that single, gentle voice of love and replace it with a cacophonous sound of pain, sorrow, guilt, tumult, conflict, etc. Then we forgot that we did this, and we feel that is what is normal now. The point of the Course is to have us realize that it is not normal, and that there is another choice, another conductor or chorus master we can choose.

(T-13.VII.17:5) Healing in time is needed, for joy cannot establish its eternal reign where sorrow dwells.

You do not need healing in Heaven. That is what *A Course in Miracles* means in saying that our function in Heaven is creation, but our function on earth is healing or forgiveness (see for example, T-25.VI, W-pl.192). This is the same idea as saying that we do not have to be grateful in Heaven. In Heaven, which is an awareness of the perfect Oneness of God and Christ, there is no Self that can be grateful to another Self. Gratitude and healing are necessary here because of the ingratitude we feel. Since perfect love casts out fear, and light casts out darkness, it is also true that in the presence of darkness, there is no light; and in the presence of fear, the presence of love is obscured. As long as we have chosen sorrow, we will not be aware of the joy of God's Love. That means we have to make the choice against the sorrow, to deny the reality of the sorrow or pain in our minds. Once we do that, then the love and joy that was always there is restored to our awareness.

(T-13.VII.17:6-7) You dwell not here, but in eternity. You travel but in dreams, while safe at home.

This reflects the Course's earlier saying that we are "at home in God, dreaming of exile" (T-10.I.2:1). That is what the presence of the Holy Spirit is always saying to us; namely, that where we are is nothing more than a dream; this place, this world, is not our home. There is a perfectly lovely lesson, "I will be still an instant and go home" (W-pl.182), that very powerfully and beautifully talks about the alienation that everyone feels here, knowing that this world is not our home and that we do not belong here. But we have lost our way, and we do not know the way back.

The Course's way to lead us back is to forgive, because it is by changing my perception of you that I am changing my perception of me. We are all terribly lost because we have identified with that thought

system in the left-hand chair in our theater and have forgotten that there is any other choice. Somewhere inside us we know that this chair does not fit—we are not really comfortable here, but we do not know anything else. The ego might begrudgingly admit that, but then it gives us the idea that the devil we know is better than the devil we do not know. We may not be totally happy in this body, and we may not be totally happy in this world, but that sure is better than that Holy Spirit guy over there, because that is the real devil. We may not like it here, but it is much better than roasting in hell. Of course the ego never tells us that where we are is hell, and the other choice is really Heaven. We do not know we have another choice. That is why choosing again is such a major theme in the Course. We really believe that we dwell here, that this world is reality, and that eternity is a dream. The answer to how we awaken from the dream is in these two final statements:

(T-13.VII.17:8) Give thanks to every part of you that you have taught how to remember you.

The "every part of you" would be everyone in our lives, because we are all part of the one mind. We are all part of the Sonship. You are not separate from me. That is another way of understanding the gratitude being taught toward each other. It is not that I am grateful for what you have done, but I am grateful because you are part of me. You, then, become the reminder that we are all one. My gratitude to you is simply an acceptance of the fact that you and I are both one. We seem to be separate, but we are both one. Again, it is not a gratitude for something you have done. It is a gratitude born of the acceptance of the fact that we are one.

Then the expression of gratitude is that I would not have that memory of the Oneness of Christ if it were not for you in my life, and were it not for the temptation to first kick you out of that unity and exclude you from the Sonship by saying you are different from me. Once I make that judgment and I am aware that it is a judgment I have made not on *you* but on myself, I can now change my mind about you. By letting you off the hook and not holding on to the grievance against you, I am really recognizing, whether I am conscious of it or not, that you and I are one and the same. We do not share separate interests, and if I want to return home and awaken from the dream, I must do so with the awareness that you are coming with me. Whether *you* choose to do that or not is irrelevant. Obviously, most of the world did not choose to awaken with Jesus. But in his mind, he did not exclude anyone. He respects the power of our mind to delay that awakening. Whether in the eyes of the world it is a year, a thousand years, or a millions years, it does not make any difference because there is no time.

Again, what we are talking about here is my expression of gratitude to you: "Give thanks to every part of you that you have taught how to remember you." The way that I teach you how to remember the *you* that is this oneness is an idea that we will see in the teacher's manual. The love and the peace within me is a reminder to you that there is another choice, and that other choice is not separation, but is unity. By teaching and reminding you of that, I am doing the very same thing for myself. That is how I remember God, and that is what the last sentence is saying.

(T-13.VII.17:9) Thus does the Son of God give thanks unto His father for his purity.

It is not really a gratitude to God in the real sense, as if there were a God outside to Whom we have to be grateful. Just as I express gratitude to you because you and I are one, I also am expressing gratitude to God because He and I are one. That is the undoing of the original ego thought of ingratitude that God is the Creator and I am not, and that difference is an attack on me. Why should I feel grateful to Him just because He claims He is the Creator? The experience of gratitude for our Oneness is the undoing of that,

which restores to us the awareness that we are indeed one. But I cannot know that God and I are one unless I first recognize that with you. Recall the lines from near the end of Chapter 27 that say that our brother represents God to us, Who represents life and death (T-27.VII.15:7). That is the choice.