

**Special Relationships:
The Home of Guilt**

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**Part XIII
"Release from Guilt"**

Let us now move to the next section, "Release from Guilt." We will see here, even though Jesus does not use the term "special relationships," that he is beginning his discussion of it. The in-depth discussion of special relationships does not begin until the middle of Chapter 15, but he is already leading up to it, as we will see in a moment.

(T-13.X.1:1) You are accustomed to the notion that the mind can see the source of pain where it is not.

That is what this whole world is about. The source of pain is in our mind's *decision* to be guilty, but we are accustomed, conditionally trained—because that is how we made the world—to see the source of guilt and pain somewhere in the world. Earlier I referred to a line from Chapter 27 that says that of all the many causes of our pain, never once did we think that our guilt was among them (T-27.VII.7:4). That is what Jesus is saying here.

T-13.X.1:2) The doubtful service of such displacement is to hide the real source of guilt, and keep from your awareness the full perception that it is insane.

The ego does not want us to see that guilt is insane. That is why it never wants us to get back into our minds, because if we did and we looked a second time at our decision to make guilt real, we would say this is crazy. To ensure that never happens again, the ego devised this brilliant strategy of making us mindless. Again, that is why there is a physical universe. Purpose is everything. The purpose the world serves is to hide from us the source of our discomfort, which is not really our guilt but our *decision* to be guilty.

(T-13.X.1:3) Displacement always is maintained by the illusion that the source of guilt, from which attention is diverted [the mind], must be true; and must be fearful, or you would not have displaced the guilt onto what you believed to be less fearful.

This, in a sense, is the same thing I was saying earlier, "defenses *do* what they would defend" (T-17.IV.7:1). The very fact that I have to defend my guilt by projecting it onto you is telling me this guilt inside me is awful, it is terribly fearful, and must be avoided at all costs. It reinforces the very thing I am trying to shield myself from.

(T-13.X.1:4) You are therefore willing to look upon all kinds of "sources"...

And "sources" is put in quotes because the sources we are willing to look on are not the sources. Sources are always seen as being in the world: thus we are sick not because of guilt but because of a disease, because of a germ; I am upset not because of my guilt, but because of what you just said to me.

(T-13.X.1:4) You are therefore willing to look upon all kinds of "sources," provided they are not the deeper source to which they bear no real relationship at all.

The ego smiles with great approval and gives lots of grant money for all kinds of people in all walks of life and for government and science to study this world in all shapes and forms, and to find all the sources of our disharmony, discontent, disease, displeasure, discomfort, etc. The reason is that all of these further the ego's purpose of keeping us away from the real source of our guilt and our pain, which, once again, is the mind's *decision* to be guilty.

(T-13.X.2:1-2) Insane ideas have no real relationships, for that is why they are insane. No real relationship can rest on guilt, or even hold one spot of it to mar its purity.

What Jesus is contrasting now are real relationships—later on called holy relationships—and unreal relationships, which are special relationships. A special relationship is unreal because there is no real relationship between the two people. The people are seen as separate and as existing on a battleground—they may not actually be seen that way, but certainly that is what Jesus means: I have what you want and you have what I want, so let us sit down and negotiate and see who can get the most by giving up the least. That is what relationships are. In Chapter 16 in the section "The Choice for Completion," Jesus describes this altar where people sit down and bargain with each other, trying to seize the self of the other. It is awful! You know indeed that is what all negotiations are in business and in politics. They are all an attempt to give up as little as possible and get as much as possible in return. There are some people who are very good at this and other people who are not, but it is always the same thing. That is what specialness is.

Basically what happens in all special relationships, regardless of their form, is that I want to get rid of my guilt, which is what I am harboring deep within myself, and the only way I can get rid of it is to give it to you. And when I give it to you, you become guilty, and as we have already seen, I then become guiltless, because it is *one or the other*. The word "same" does not exist in the ego's vocabulary; the word "different" does—just as in the Holy Spirit's vocabulary the word "different" does not appear, but "same" does. In the ego world we are not the same. You have it or I have it, but we both do not have it, for we both cannot have it. It has to be that you have it and I do not, or I have it and you do not. The secret treasure, the "priceless pearl"—that is the biblical term used in "The Laws of Chaos" section in Chapter 23—is "innocence" or specialness, because it is not real innocence. I want the innocence, but how can I be innocent when I am guilty? Therefore I project the guilt onto you and by so doing I take your innocence. Now you are guilty and I am innocent. And of course what makes relationships fascinating is that you are doing the same thing to me. There could be times when we both think that we have won, but there is no relationship between two people. That is the point Jesus is making here, because we are not sharing anything.

The holy relationship only has to exist in the mind of one of the two people because it does not exist between two bodies—there aren't two bodies. It is only in the mind. In the holy relationship, the

relationship is *perceived* as being between two people who share the same interest. In the special or unreal or unholy relationship, the two people are perceived as having the identical opposite interests. It is the same, but it is expressed as opposite; we both want the same thing but we both cannot have it: I want your innocence; you want my innocence, which means we always are perceived as different. In the holy relationship, we are perceived as wanting the same thing: the true innocence of Christ that does not see separation.

(T-13.X.2:3) For all relationships that guilt has touched are used but to avoid the person *and* the guilt.

I am not interested in you as my brother or sister in Christ; I am only interested in giving you my guilt so you will have it and I will not. That is the purpose. That is why we made the world the way we did. Right at the beginning, physical life starts with our being born absolutely pure and innocent, at least that is what the mythology says, and then we are made to be miserable. We are made to be petty, selfish, grasping, manipulative, and on and on—all those "wonderful" things. But we convince ourselves that the world made us that way because we believe we were born angelic and innocent; someone else makes us guilty. Now we are justified in giving that guilt back and reclaiming our innocence. That is what the whole world is about. That is what "life" is all about, as long as we follow what the ego says.

(T-13.X.2:4-5) What strange relationships you have made for this strange purpose! And you forgot that real relationships are holy, and cannot be used by you at all.

The real relationship is simply the acceptance of the Holiness of Christ in you and the Holiness of Christ in me. What comes first, of course, is that I accept the insane ego in you and the insane ego in me—and it is the same insane ego. Thus, we both share the same insanity and we both share the same need to awaken from the dream of insanity. Only then will we realize that we all share the same Christ, the same nature as spirit.

(T-13.X.2:6) They are used only by the Holy Spirit, and it is that which makes them pure.

The Holy Spirit uses them as classrooms. In special relationships, I am using you: I want to get something from you and pay as little as possible for it. The holy relationship occurs when I ask the Holy Spirit for help to transform my special relationship. He uses that as the classroom for helping me realize that what I am perceiving in you is a projection of what I first made real in myself.

(T-13.X.2:7-8) If you displace your guilt upon them, the Holy Spirit cannot use them. For, by pre-empting for your own ends what you should have given Him, He cannot use it for your release.

This is a plea from Jesus to all of us: "Please ask me to help you with your relationships because I cannot help you otherwise." All relationships are awful, and we make them increasingly awful. So he is saying, "Please come to me and let me help you use them as classrooms in which you can learn to be healed yourself, which will also then act as an instrument of healing for the other person. Let me help you look at the situation and the relationship differently." This whole course is an expression of what he wants to teach us. He wants each of us to study what he gives here, understand what the principles are, and then ask him to help us use and implement these principles in our everyday relationships. Otherwise it means absolutely nothing.

(T-13.X.2:9-10) No one who would unite in any way with anyone for his individual salvation will find it in that strange relationship. It is not shared, and so it is not real.

In other words, salvation is not individual. As the workbook says, "When I am healed I am not healed alone" (W-pl.137). Whatever it is that I want to be saved from in myself must be shared with you. Now what I want to be saved from, from my ego's view, is my pain—the pain of my loneliness, my sickness, my depression, whatever it is. And so I use you, and the "you" could be a person, an animal, a thing, a substance, or anything in the world. I use you as the means of achieving this individual salvation from my pain. I am not interested in you; I am interested only in what you can do for me. Now sometimes this is very subtle; other times it is right out in the open. What Jesus is saying is that this will never work, and he cannot help us with this. He can help us only through our willingness, understanding, and acceptance of the fact that interests must be shared; otherwise they will never make us happy. We all share the same need—the release from guilt—to awaken from this insane dream of pain.

We must realize that this must be done by our not attacking others. The relationship is not worked out between two separate people. This is not marital counseling or couple therapy or anything like that. It is worked out between each of us and the Holy Spirit or Jesus. That is where it is worked out in the context of a relationship with another person. That is what will enable us to generalize very quickly from the healing of one relationship to where all the relationships will be healed because we will realize it is all the same problem. We bring that same problem to the same Teacher inside and His answer is always the same. Do not see the other person's interest as being separate from yours.

A Course in Miracles helps us to have a theoretical context for why this is so. The entire thought system of the ego began with the belief in separate interests. It may be in God's best interest to have me stay with Him, but it is in my best interest for me *not* to stay with Him. It is one or the other: since I do not care about Him, I care only about me, I am going to take care of me, and so I do, and I begin this whole awful, awful dream. That is what started it and that is what keeps the whole thing going. It is always one or the other.

So when Jesus says, it is "together, or not at all" (T-19.IV-D.12:8), or salvation is a collaborative venture" (T-4.VI.8:2), or "the ark of peace is entered two by two" (T-20.IV.6:5), he is not talking about literally having to have another person with you. What he means is your mind cannot remember Heaven at someone else's expense. You cannot find peace by bludgeoning someone else or using or manipulating someone. In your mind, you must *go with* your brother. There is no way you could find the peace of God and remember Who you are as God's Son if you exclude anyone, because to exclude one part of the Sonship is to exclude the whole. That is very nice to say, and it is a lovely sentiment, but it is very difficult, as we all know, to really live that.

And the idea, once again, is not to feel guilty when you do not live it, but to be very aware that you are not living it. The Course gives you the understanding of why you are not living it—it is the fear of what it means to be back in the light. When you are in the light no one is excluded. The circle of Atonement embraces all people, not just the good ones. It has to embrace all people if it is truly corrective and healing.