

The Meaning of Judgment

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Kenneth Wapnick, Ph.D.

Part VII

"The Forgiving Dream" (T-29.IX) (conclusion)

We are ready for the third step of judgment, but let me summarize briefly before moving on. The first kind of judgment is the ego's dream of judgment, which is always based upon differences and attack. The second judgment is being able to look at that first judgment without judging it, being able to look at all the ugliness of our egos—all the viciousness, unkindness, hatred, murder, and cannibalism—and then say this is simply a toy. Looking at it implies understanding the *purpose* these dreams of judgment serve. We have unkind, judgmental, and hateful thoughts because we are terrified of the Love of God. It is the presence of Jesus in our minds that is driving us insane, and to defend against that loving presence we make up idols of specialness, and then we feel even guiltier. Thus, in this second form of judgment, which is really looking at the ego's judgment, we realize that judgment is a toy that a child's mind plays with. We judge because we are afraid of the real thought of love inside us. We substitute for that real thought of love the thought of guilt and the thought of judgment, and then we project that out and see it in others.

We need only look at that process, not with the goal of changing it, but simply with the goal of looking at it through Christ's vision. In looking at it through the eyes of Jesus, we realize that this is simply a silly child's game that we made up because we are afraid of the thought of hatred in our minds. But that thought of hatred is a defense against the thought of love, which means we are not despicable sinners; we are simply fearful. We are afraid of the love of Jesus. Yet, that is all we have to do. Once we do that completely and without any reservation, we will then find ourselves in the real world, which is what we will now discuss, as we continue with "The Forgiving Dream."

In the real world, I look at all my guilt without guilt and all my hate without hate, which means the guilt and hate will all disappear. If I look at the guilt and hate with Jesus next to me, and I no longer judge myself for having pushed him away, betrayed, and abandoned him, then my only reality will be his presence joined with mine, my presence joined with his. And in that joint love I will look upon a different world—not one that has physically changed, but one that I will see differently because /have changed. I will now look out on what the Course

refers to as the real world, which has nothing to do with what seems to be external. It is simply the judgment I make on myself that says I have done nothing wrong. As Jesus says earlier in the Course, "Son of God, you have not sinned, but you have been much mistaken" (T-10.V.6:1). And so I realize I have done nothing sinful. I have simply made a mistake, and the mistake is believing I could be separate from God. Now I realize I am not separate. And by joining with Jesus, the truth of that realization becomes reality for me. From that presence of love within me, I now look out on the world and all that I see are expressions of love or calls for love. There is only love within me, and so that is all that I can see outside me.

(T-29.IX.6:8-9) Yet is the real world unaffected by the world he thinks is real. Nor have its laws been changed because he does not understand.

My failure to understand what love is does not change love. My attacks on love do not change love. Love simply waits patiently within my mind until I return to it.

(7:1) The real world still is but a dream.

That is why this third step of judgment is not the last one. The fourth and final step is the total ending of the dream. In the real world we are still within the dream, but are fully aware that it is a dream. And so how could we be angry at another person's dream? We do not get angry at something we know is not real. We only get angry at something we believe has power over us. That is why Jesus did not get angry at the end of his life, and why he had no fear or guilt, and above all, no pain. He knew nothing was happening to him. He knew he was not his body.

(7:1-3) The real world still is but a dream. Except the figures have been changed. They are not seen as idols which betray.

This does not mean that the figures change physically. They change in terms of what they represent. Thus, I see you as an enemy only because I have first seen myself as an enemy: I believe I am the one who has betrayed and destroyed the Love of God. But if I now feel the love of Jesus within me, I will no longer see myself as an enemy. If I feel his love within me, then I know I have not killed love. And if I have not killed it, there is no sin, no guilt, and no need to protect myself by projecting the guilt outside my mind. So now I look out at the same person who is driving a nail into my body, but I no longer see him as betraying me. I see him as a brother in Christ who is fearful. And in the insanity of his fear he believes he becomes safe by destroying me. That is how Jesus perceived.

(7:4) It [the real world] is a dream in which no one is used to substitute for something else, nor interposed between the thoughts the mind conceives and what it sees.

I no longer need you to be a defense against these thoughts of judgment in my mind, or to stand between me and the vengeance of God. By projecting my guilt and judging you, my ego hopes that when God comes after the sinner who stole from Him, He will not see the sinner in

me, He will see it in you. So I am safe, for now God is going to get you instead of me. But once my guilt is gone, I no longer need that defense.

(7:5) No one is used for something he is not, for childish things have all been put away.

I am using you as a part of my dream, thereby denying Who you are as Christ. I am denying your reality because I am seeing you as what I want you to be. By first denying my reality as Christ and seeing myself as a sinful, guilty ego, I must then deny your reality as Christ and see you as a sinful, guilty ego. The way I see myself automatically becomes the way I see you—it cannot be any other way. The world's only value is that it shows me that what I am seeing outside is a projection of what is inside. If I want to know whose hand I have taken—Jesus' or the ego's—I only have to monitor how I am experiencing the world. And if anything in the world either disturbs my peace or brings me peace, I know I have dropped Jesus' hand and taken the ego's.

(7:6) And what was once a dream of judgment now has changed into a dream where all is joy, because that is the purpose that it has.

This does not necessarily mean the world changes. We are not talking about an external shift. Jesus' external world certainly did not change for the better at the end. We are talking about the *purpose* we give to the world, changing from judgment and guilt to joy and peace. Our perception of the world will then change accordingly—it must.

(7:7) Only forgiving dreams can enter here, for time is almost over.

Time is not completely over because we are not at the end of the illusion; but we are at the end of the ego's use of the illusion. And so we are also at the end of all anxiety, fear, and pain.

(7:8) And the forms that enter in the dream are now perceived as brothers, not in judgment, but in love.

Again, nothing external changes. Only what is internal changes. And because my mind changes, now identifying with the love of Jesus instead of the hatred of the ego, I will automatically see everyone bathed in that love. But because I am still part of the dream world and the split mind, I will realize that everything within the mind is either a thought of love or a thought of fear. And so I will recognize that anything you do that may seem to be an attack and unloving is coming from fear, and is not really an attack. In other words, within the split mind there are only thoughts of fear and thoughts of love. The ego interprets thoughts of fear as thoughts of specialness, attack, murder, and cannibalism. But in my right mind I perceive them all as simply expressions of fear. And fear is really fear of the Love of God that has been denied by the ego's thought system of separation and guilt. That is all then that I am seeing. The images may be exactly the same, the forms of the dream may be exactly the same, but the meaning is entirely different.

(8:1-2) Forgiving dreams have little need to last. They are not made to separate the mind from what it thinks.

This is the correction for the ego's assertion that ideas leave their source (T-26.VII.12; W-pl.167.4)—that I can have a thought separate from my mind, which I could then project outside my mind. In the real world, through forgiveness, I realize everything is one. And I finally understand that not even Jesus is separate from me. Jesus and I are both thoughts that are part of the same love. Nothing is separate in my mind.

(8:3) They [forgiving dreams] do not seek to prove the dream is being dreamed by someone else.

That is what the ego is always attempting to prove: it is not *my* dream of judgment or *my* dream of betrayal. It is *your* dream of judgment and betrayal!

(8:4-6) And in these dreams a melody is heard that everyone remembers, though he has not heard it since before all time began. Forgiveness, once complete, brings timelessness so close the song of Heaven can be heard, not with the ears, but with the holiness that never left the altar that abides forever deep within the Son of God. And when he hears this song again, he knows he never heard it not.

This is what is called the song of prayer in the pamphlet of the same name (S-3.IV.1:10), and what, in the beautiful section at the beginning of Chapter 21 is referred to as the forgotten song (T-21.I), the song always present in our minds. It is not a song heard with one's ears. Jesus is speaking metaphorically about the experience of the unity of God's Love with Christ.

(8:7) And where is time, when dreams of judgment have been put away?

This statement makes very clear the reason we live in the world as we do: we do not want to remember the song. To remember that song, we must be willing to forget the ego's song. And what is the ego's song? That I exist as a separate person, that I have what I stole from God (the fourth law of chaos [T-23.II.9]), but someone else is responsible for it. We do not want to give up our specialness, our uniqueness, our individuality. People praise the wonderful world of differences that God has created. Everyone is uniquely different; no two objects are the same: we all have different fingerprints; each snowflake is unique. And we point to this as proof that this is God's world! But this is the ego's world. God's world is perfect Oneness. This is a world of perfect differences! That is the ego's song, and we do not want to give it up. We realize that to hear the song of Heaven—which is always singing in our minds because that is what the Holy Spirit reflects—means giving up the ego's song of specialness and individuality. We all want to have our cake and eat it too. We want both songs, which must compromise truth.

(9:1) Whenever you feel fear in any form—and you *are* fearful if you do not feel a deep content, a certainty of help, a calm assurance Heaven goes with you—be sure you made an idol, and believe it will betray you.

Any time we are not feeling a deep sense of contentment and certainty of help, and a calm assurance that God is always with us, we have made an idol of specialness. That idol is what we believe we have made of ourselves. We then project the idol out and believe it will come back and betray us.

(9:2) For beneath your hope that it [this idol] will save you lie the guilt and pain of self-betrayal and uncertainty, so deep and bitter that the dream cannot conceal completely all your sense of doom.

The sense of doom, despair, dread, and hopelessness that we all feel—and everyone in this world feels it because we all will die—is really coming from that thought within each of us that says, "I killed God and that's irrevocable. I can never get back to where I left." Of course I can never get back because I don't want to give up what keeps me from going back: my individuality. The ego's secret wish, again, is to keep what it stole but to blame someone else for it.

(9:3) Your self-betrayal must result in fear, for fear is judgment, leading surely to the frantic search for idols and for death.

The self-betrayal is our belief that we have betrayed Who we really are as Christ. That is the guilt we feel, which automatically leads to fear, which comes from the judgment that what we have done is sinful and wrong. We must then project the sin outside our minds and believe there is something out there, from which we now must hide. And so the problem is no longer in our minds, it is outside us.

(10:1) Forgiving dreams remind you that you live in safety and have not attacked yourself.

That is what Jesus demonstrated to us, and still teaches us. The separation thought is unreal—it never happened. I never attacked God. I never attacked Christ. No one was attacked. It was all a dream. And so there is no guilt and no fear that I will be attacked in return. When we feel ourselves to be in the presence of God's Love, absolutely nothing can hurt or affect us. That does not mean we do not respond to what goes on in the world, but the response will come from love. It does not come from fear or from separate interests or self-interest.

(10:2) So do your childish terrors melt away, and dreams become a sign that you have made a new beginning, not another try to worship idols and to keep attack.

"The New Beginning" is the title of the next chapter, so this looks ahead to that. When we begin to forgive, we suddenly realize there is hope—that we finally have made a new

beginning. The purpose of *A Course in Miracles* is to help us with this new beginning. The new beginning means I no longer fight against my ego. I simply step back, with Jesus next to me, and look at my ego thoughts in action without justifying them, rationalizing them, spiritualizing them, or denying or projecting them. I simply look at them and realize, "Yes, this is what I am doing. And I am doing it because I am afraid of love." And if I can look at my fear of love with love next to me, I am beginning to learn that love is no longer my enemy.

(10:3-4) Forgiving dreams are kind to everyone who figures in the dream. And so they bring the dreamer full release from dreams of fear.

Forgiveness is not something we do externally. Let me requote the line I mentioned earlier: "Forgiveness . . . is still and quietly does nothing. It merely looks and waits and judges not" (W-pII.1.4:1,3). Forgiveness does not do anything. We forgive our brother for what he has not done (T-30.IV.7:3). Forgiveness is not active. I do not do something to you, with you, or for you. Forgiveness is not something my body does. It is something my mind does by going back within itself and looking at my unforgiving, judgmental thoughts. Forgiveness simply looks at those thoughts without judging them. "It merely looks, and waits, and judges not"—that is the key idea. *Then* my body may do something—I may say something. But forgiveness is not an action. It is an *undoing* of a thought, and even more to the point, it is looking with a gentle smile at the ugliness of the ego's thought system.

(10:5) He [the dreamer] does not fear his judgment for he has judged no one, nor has sought to be released through judgment from what judgment must impose.

I no longer have to be afraid of what I have called my judgment, and the projection of my judgment onto you, because I have not done anything. Judgment must impose punishment and pain, and I have tried to avoid my own punishment by judging you: "You are the one who is sinful, not me; so I am not the one who ought to be punished." I thus have tried to escape from what my judgment tells me I must receive, by insisting that I am not the one who has judged; it is you who have judged and attacked.

(10:6) And all the while he is remembering what he forgot, when judgment seemed to be the way to save him from its penalty.

We are remembering the Love of God, which is what we forgot. Judgment of others seemed to be the way I would save myself from the penalty of my self-hatred. But while I was judging, the Love of God rested safely within me, waiting patiently for my return. I simply have to call upon Jesus—not in a magical way, but by simply looking with him at my ego thoughts, at what my ego has done and made in the world, and say, "I've done this only because I was afraid of you." And if I can learn to say that to him more and more, without being afraid of his judgment, I will learn that there is no judgment. Ultimately, nothing has happened.

To close the workshop, I thought we would read a short lesson from the workbook, Lesson 352. It makes a nice end because it reflects the final step of judgment, God's judgment, which says nothing has happened. The title can almost stand alone as a lesson. The lesson itself is a prayer from us to God the Father.

**Judgment and love are opposites. From one
Come all the sorrows of the world. But from
The other comes the peace of God Himself**

*Forgiveness looks on sinlessness alone, and judges not. Through this I come to You.
Judgment will bind my eyes and make me blind. Yet love, reflected in forgiveness here,
reminds me You have given me a way to find Your peace again. I am redeemed when I elect to
follow in this way. You have not left me comfortless. I have within me both the memory of
You, and One Who leads me to it. Father, I would hear Your Voice and find Your peace today.
For I would love my own Identity, and find in It the memory of You.*