

# Study Guide and Commentary

## ACIM Text, Section 2.III

### The Altar of God

You may notice as you read this section that it is more unified and interwoven than many of the previous ones; the theme of the altar runs from beginning to end. The flow of the scribing of the Text is becoming smoother and less muddled.

This is a section about “The Altar of God.” We will understand it better if we know what the word altar symbolizes. It is talking about an inner altar (1:8; 2:1; 4:3), not a material altar in a material temple. We might think this refers to some specific part of our being, such as our spirit, our mind, or our will. I don’t think it does. It seems to represent something very abstract: our devotion, our valuing. Robert Perry, in *A Course Glossary*, quotes a later line that clarifies the term and he defines it like this:

The place in your mind that contains what you are devoted to, worship, consider sacred.  
“These altars are not things; they are devotions.” (T-5.II.8:7)

If you want a more traditional word to equate with altar, you might use heart, in the sense of, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Luke 12:34). In fact, since Jesus referred to this very line from the Gospels in the last section (T-2.II.1), it’s likely that he is using the image of the altar to represent the part of us that “holds” what we value or treasure, which we often also symbolize in the word heart. The imagery of paying attention to what you place on the altar is, almost certainly, a continuation of the discussion of paying attention to what we treasure (T-2.II.3:1–5). The connection between the two sections is apparent in the second sentence, which continues with the topic of “defenses” from Section II.

When this section speaks of placing something on the altar, then, it means recognizing that thing as of supreme value to us, or of supreme importance to us.

## Paragraph 1

1. <sup>1</sup>The Atonement can only be accepted within you by releasing the inner light. [Ur: The reinterpretation of defenses is essential to break open the *inner light*.] <sup>2</sup>Since the separation, defenses have been used almost entirely to defend *against* the Atonement, and thus maintain the separation. <sup>3</sup>This is generally seen as a need to protect the body. <sup>4</sup>The many body fantasies in which minds engage arise from the distorted belief that the body can be used as a means for attaining “atonement.” <sup>5</sup>Perceiving the body as a temple is only the first step in correcting this distortion, because it alters only part of it. [Ur: (HS scalded hand, and looked for butter to put on. It occurred to her that the Atonement was the cure. Burn appeared to be minimal, and caused little discomfort.) Seeing the body as the Temple alters part of the misperception, but not all of it.] <sup>6</sup>It *does* recognize that Atonement in physical terms is impossible [Ur: not

appropriate]. <sup>7</sup>The next step, however, is to realize that a temple is not a structure [Ur: building] at all. <sup>8</sup>Its true holiness lies at the inner altar around which the structure [Ur: building] is built. <sup>9</sup>The emphasis on beautiful structures [Ur: beautiful church buildings] is a sign of the fear of Atonement, and an unwillingness to reach the altar itself. <sup>10</sup>The real beauty of the temple cannot be seen with the physical eye. <sup>11</sup>Spiritual sight, on the other hand, cannot see the structure [Ur: building] at all because it is perfect vision. <sup>12</sup>It can, however, see the altar [within] with perfect clarity.

There is a whole line of thought in the Urtext, just before this paragraph, that is missing. I believe it was omitted because it was too closely interwoven with some personal details involving one of Helen's visions or dreams, in which she was offered a chalice to drink but mistook it for a chamber pot! The general tenor of the omitted material was that when one's defenses are disrupted, as must happen if the ego is to be undone, a period of disorientation occurs, "accompanied by fear, guilt, and usually vacillations between anxiety and depression." Jesus says that the process of the Course differs only in that the defenses are "not being disrupted, but re-interpreted, even though it may be experienced as the same thing." What is being re-interpreted is the use of our defenses for *attack*, rather than for true defense. Used in this single purpose, they become stronger, more dependable, and "no longer oppose the Atonement, but greatly facilitate it. The Atonement can only be accepted within you." (Notice that the last sentence is actually the first eight words of the first paragraph in the current section.) He then goes on to emphasize that the inner is more precious than the outer, and that the inner light is what must be broken open or released. For that, re-interpreting our defenses is essential.

Accepting the Atonement is closely connected with "releasing the inner light" (1:1). You accept Atonement within yourself which results in "releasing the inner light" (1:1). The meaning of the latter phrase is not entirely clear. Lesson 88 in the Workbook refers to "the light within our minds" (W-pI.188.9:4), which is close enough that it must be the same thing. There, it seems to be God's truth in us. I believe the inner light here is identical to the "inner radiance" referred to in T-2.I.2:4, where it is clearly associated with extension. So to release the inner light would be to let God's radiance shine out from us, or to extend healing and miracles to others. Thus, as we accept the Atonement we release this light, and we begin offering miracles. Accepting the Atonement and offering miracles are not cause and effect, but two sides of the same coin; you can't have one without the other.

• **Study Question** •

1. *The mention of perceiving the body as a temple (1:5) is actually another reference to the Bible: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [which is] in you...?" (I Corinthians 6:19) The Course says this concept is "only the first step," and goes on to speak of "the next step" (1:7). Later passages add more to this image of a temple (T-8.VII.9:7; T-20.VI.5:1). Read those passages now. How would you summarize what the image of "temple" means in the Course?*

The ego's defenses focus on protecting the body in some way; they are actually protecting the

ego. Protecting our body seems so natural and necessary. Little do we realize that our underlying reason for doing so is that we are protecting the ego against the Atonement in order to maintain separation (1:2). The mention of “body fantasies” is another reference to an earlier section (T-1.VII), showing that an underlying thread of thought runs through all these sections. Again, in the Urtext there are references to specific kinds of sexual fantasies. The fantasies are one aspect of the ego’s defenses. In a mistaken belief that we are bodies, we attempt to find completion in and with our bodies. Such attempts are no more than empty fantasies, and the “atonement” they envision does not exist; “Atonement in physical terms is impossible” (1:6).

The first step in correcting this distortion (another word repeated from earlier sections) is to perceive the body as a temple (5); we can realize we are something more than a body, that there is a spirit within the structure of the body. But this is only a beginning because it does not alter the entire distortion (5). It recognizes that “Atonement in physical terms is impossible” (1:6) it acknowledges that we are more than physical. It fails, however, to break our identification with the body. The truth is, “the temple is not a structure at all” (1:7), or, in more direct terms, “I am not a body at all.”

What we are, the essence of us, cannot be seen with the physical eye (1:10). Conversely, our body (“the structure” in 1:11) cannot be seen with spiritual sight. Instead, spiritual sight sees the altar, which is the place of devotion within us. It sees the altar because the true holiness of what we are arises from, and is centered in, our devotion to God.

The mention of “emphasis on beautiful structures” seems deliberately ambiguous. The topic of discussion has been bodies as the temple, so clearly this phrase could refer to an emphasis on beautiful bodies, an attempt to find satisfaction and completion through the careful nurture of one’s own body and the acquisition of other beautiful bodies. Yet in the Urtext it is a very clear reference to the emphasis that many institutional churches have on elaborate and ornate *buildings*; indeed, as you can see from the Urtext additions above, the word *building* was originally used, not the word *structure*. Emphasizing beautiful bodies and emphasizing beautiful buildings are both ways of trying to find salvation through external means; both represent, in reality, a fear of the Atonement, a turning away from that which is drawing us inward, into spirit. Neither beautiful bodies nor beautiful buildings are inherently harmful, but an *emphasis* on either one is indicative of a mind that is resisting the call of the Holy Spirit within. Little do we realize that our external attempts to find “atonement” are really a defense against true Atonement.

If I were to attempt to put the message of this paragraph in less symbolic terms, I would say it is this: You cannot find completion in physical terms, either through the body or as a body. You are more than a body; in fact you are not a body at all, really. What defines you is an inner holiness, a luminous essence that arises from your relationship with God, and it is this which must become central in your mind.

## Paragraph 2

2. <sup>1</sup>For perfect effectiveness the [Ur: chalice of the] Atonement belongs at the

center of the inner altar, where it undoes the separation and restores the wholeness of the mind. <sup>2</sup>Before the separation the mind was invulnerable to fear, because fear did not exist. <sup>3</sup>Both the separation and the fear are miscreations [*miscreations of the mind*] that must be undone for the restoration of the temple, and for the opening of the altar to receive the Atonement. [Ur: This is what the Bible means by the "Restoration of the Temple". It *does not* mean the restoration of the building, but it *does* mean the opening of the altar to receive the Atonement.] <sup>4</sup>This heals the separation by placing within you the one effective defense against all separation thoughts and making you perfectly invulnerable.

• **Study Question** •

2. *Sentence 2 speaks of "before the separation." What else has been said in earlier sections about the state before the separation?*

Just as T-1.I.30 spoke of making spirit the center of our being, 2:1 speaks of placing the Atonement (symbolized by a chalice from which we may drink) at the center of the altar, which means making the Atonement the thing your mind is devoted to. Fundamentally, it is calling for a radical revision of our value system. When the Course talks about realigning the various parts of our being, and putting spirit at the center, it talks about mind becoming the servant of spirit (T-1.IV.2:10–11), the means by which spirit creates (T-1.V.5:4), rather than becoming merely a servant of the body (T-22.VI.2:1). A similar image is used here (4:5) about bringing the mind into the service of spiritual vision as it perceives the defiled altar and acts to "cleanse" it by restoring the Atonement to its central place. The mind dedicates itself to applying Atonement (which is the idea that the separation did not happen) to every instance of ego thinking and fear. The theme of the mind as servant, either of the spirit (right mind) or of the body (ego), runs all through the Course. We are being asked to look beyond our body and our bodily identity and to recognize the reality of our being as God created us.

Placing the Atonement at the center of altar means that we renounce our devotion to separation, and instead devote ourselves to the truth of our oneness with God. We dedicate ourselves to seek out and to correct every error of thought that opposes that truth. We acknowledge that "all real pleasure comes from doing God's Will" (T-1.VII.1:4), and we refuse to continue to seek outside ourselves for something to fill our illusory emptiness.

The Atonement is our chosen "effective defense against all separation thoughts" (4). Notice how the ego wants us to use our minds to defend the body and the ego against things that threaten them; the Holy Spirit wants us to use our minds to defend themselves against separation thoughts. Prior to the separation the mind was invulnerable (2), and under the Atonement, it is again invulnerable.

Accepting the Atonement must become the central purpose of our lives. Only this can undo all thoughts of separation and fear.

NOTE: "Temple" in 2:3 probably refers to more than the body, but in the context you may be uncertain of what it does refer to. We know that "a temple is not a structure at all" (1:7), and its real beauty "cannot be seen with the physical eye" (1:10). It must be something greater than a body; something non-physical. In 2:1, Jesus says that Atonement "undoes the separation and restores the wholeness of the mind." In 2:3, he says that "the separation and the fear are *miscreations of the mind* that must be undone for the restoration of the temple." In one sentence, the mind is being restored; in the other, it is the temple. The temple, then, is the mind, and the altar is its place of devotion, its heart. Restoring the temple means restoring the mind's awareness of its undamaged wholeness, and its purpose: to be a dwelling place of God. It is interesting to note that the Course rejects any literal interpretation of restoring the actual temple in Jerusalem, and states that the intended meaning is "the opening of the altar to receive the Atonement".

## Paragraphs 3 & 4

3. <sup>1</sup>The acceptance of the Atonement by everyone is only a matter of time. [Ur: In fact, both *time* and *matter* were created for this purpose.] <sup>2</sup>This may appear to contradict free will because of the inevitability of the final decision, but this is not so. [Ur: Everything is limited in some way by the manner of its creation.] <sup>3</sup>You can temporize and you are capable of enormous procrastination, but you cannot depart entirely from your Creator, Who set the limits on your ability to miscreate. <sup>4</sup>An imprisoned will [Ur: the misuse of will] engenders a situation which, in the extreme, becomes altogether intolerable. <sup>5</sup>Tolerance for pain may be high, but it is not without limit. <sup>6</sup>Eventually everyone begins to recognize, however dimly, that there *must* be a better way. <sup>7</sup>As this recognition becomes more firmly established, it becomes a [Ur: perceptual] turning-point. <sup>8</sup>This ultimately reawakens spiritual vision, simultaneously weakening the investment in physical sight. <sup>9</sup>The alternating investment in the two levels of perception is usually experienced as conflict [Ur: for a long time], which can become very acute. <sup>10</sup>But the outcome is as certain as God.

4. <sup>1</sup>Spiritual vision literally cannot see error, and merely looks for Atonement. <sup>2</sup>All solutions the physical eye seeks dissolve [Ur: in its sight]. <sup>3</sup>Spiritual vision looks within and recognizes immediately that the altar has been defiled and needs to be repaired and protected. <sup>4</sup>Perfectly aware of the right defense it passes over all others, looking past error to truth. <sup>5</sup>Because of the strength of its vision, it brings the mind into its service. <sup>6</sup>This re-establishes the power of the mind and makes it increasingly unable to tolerate delay, realizing that it only adds unnecessary pain. <sup>7</sup>As a result, the mind becomes increasingly sensitive to what it would once have regarded as very minor intrusions of discomfort.

• **Study Question** •

3. *Spend some time in meditation or prayer based on sentences 1 and 10. How do these lines make you feel? Think of individuals for whom you have felt deep concern, or even worry, that they may not find God, insert their names into these sentences, and speak them aloud several times. Try this with your own name as well. For instance:*  
The acceptance of the Atonement by Allen Watson is only a matter of time. The outcome for Allen Watson is as certain as God.

After being told that we need to place the Atonement at the center of our inner altar, to literally devote ourselves to using the Atonement to defend against all thoughts of fear and separation, we might become concerned that so much must be done to “restore the temple” to its pristine purity that it will never happen. Perhaps I am making all this effort, but it seems like most people are not! I have doubts about ever cleansing just the one little temple of my own mind. How will the whole Sonship ever find its way home? It can be a depressing line of thought.

How wonderful that Jesus anticipates just this kind of ego reaction, and says, “The acceptance of the Atonement by everyone is only a matter of time” (3:1). He doesn’t argue with us about this. He just says it flat out. He knows. He sees with spiritual vision, and that vision already sees the perfection that lies, untouched, at the heart of every one of us. Our accepting the Atonement is as sure as the emergence of the oak tree from the acorn; it is its nature. It is “as certain as God” (3:10), because God created us like Himself and that cannot change. It is inevitable that we make this final choice, as he says in sentence 2. I like to remind myself of this when I start worrying about my rate of spiritual progress. I like to remind myself of this when I think of people I have met who seem to be ruining their lives, or even people who have taken their own lives. “The outcome is as certain as God; everyone will accept the Atonement.” The last chapter has not yet been written, the story is not over, and when it is, everyone will be home again! Hallelujah!

The Urtext states here, and in a few other places, that both time and matter “were created for this purpose,” that is, the acceptance of the Atonement. This implies that God did create the physical world as a tool to help us find our way home. Later in the Course, it very clearly states that *we* made the world as a separation device, and that the Holy Spirit now can *remake* it as a correction device to help us get home. (See T-31.I.3:1-3; T-31.IV.2:6; T-25.III.3:3-4:1; W-pI.pII.3.2:1-4; and W-pI.pII.3.3:1-3.) This latter understanding is repeated far more often than the earlier one, which possibly entered in because Helen was reading Edgar Cayce at the time she began scribing the Course, and Cayce viewed the world as a tool for redemption created by God. She did choose to remove these references and, in this case at least, I believe she was right in doing so. I believe the later teaching, that we made the world, is the Course’s ultimate understanding of how the world came into being.

I pointed out how Jesus anticipated our doubts. Now, he anticipates our reaction to his answer! Maybe this “inevitable” thing sounds worrisome in itself: What happened to our free will? If I have free will, doesn’t that mean I have the freedom to choose differently, to choose not to accept

the Atonement? And basically, Jesus answers by saying our free will is limited. We can choose “procrastination,” but all that does is put off the inevitable. As he said in 2.I.2:8, creation requires free will. When truly free, that will “cannot miscreate” (T-2.II.2:7); it can only miscreate while imprisoned. Since that imprisoned state denies the will’s true nature, the will cannot remain there indefinitely. It must break free to find its true expression:

It still remains within you, however, to extend as God extended His Spirit to you. In reality this is your only choice, because your free will was given you for your joy in creating the perfect. (T-2.I.3:9–10)

We are free to choose when we accept, but not whether we accept. We can put it off. We can push farther and farther into miscreation, but as we do, we encounter more and more pain. Eventually, we reach a limit; the pain becomes intolerable and we cannot go any farther. “Eventually everyone begins to recognize, however dimly, that there must be a better way” (T-2.III.3:6).

NOTE: “A better way,” of course, is a reference to the incident which gave birth to the Course, in which Bill Thetford launched into an impassioned speech about the terrible state of the interpersonal relationships at the place where he and Helen Schucman worked, ending with the words, “There must be another way!” Helen responded, saying she agreed and that she would help him find that “better way.” Shortly after, dreams and visions began to come to her, culminating in her beginning to hear the words of the Course. The incident is an example of the “intolerable” pain the Course refers to here, and its outcome an example of the turning point that awakens spiritual vision.

The idea is that your will was given you by God, and it is a will to create. Now your will is imprisoned. And your will won't tolerate being imprisoned forever. Eventually, you have to realize that there must be some way out of this intolerable situation. You will then freely choose to get out, and this is synonymous with choosing to free your will. You will not be forced to accept the Atonement, but you will choose to because it is the only direction that makes any sense, the only thing that is in accord with your nature. An acorn “must” develop into an oak tree, and yet such development is also its freedom. Even so, our acceptance of the Atonement and fulfilling of our function of creation is the ultimate expression of our freedom. It is the choice to wholly accept and extend every fiber of our being.

In these two paragraphs, there is another succinct picture of our spiritual journey, with more detail than was given in T-1.IV.1.

### **1. The Imprisoned Will**

We begin in prison. Our will is in bondage. We have blocked off its true impulse to freely express itself in creation. Instead, we engage in illusory projections that promise satisfaction but leave us forever wanting. The mind’s true power to choose to create has been shackled. In this situation, our pain increases until it finally reaches a level we refuse to tolerate. For some, this seems much higher than for others, but in the end, everyone reaches their limit.

## 2. A Turning Point

Reaching our limit for pain, we realize something is amiss; there must be a better way. We may only dimly realize it, but as this realization becomes firm, we have ended our journey away from home, turned around, and begun our journey home.

## 3. A Period of Conflict

The result of turning around and accepting a new goal is, initially, conflict, because both old and new goals are still in our minds—"alternating investment in two levels of perception" (3:9). Christ's vision has awakened in us, but we still tend to trust in physical sight to teach us what is real and important. The conflict can become "acute" (3:9). The unhappy fact that our journey may begin with acute conflict is stated several more times in the Course, for instance, T-6.V(A). 6:6. Spiritual vision helps to dissolve the conflict. It looks within, sees the need for healing, and overlooks (looks beyond) error to see the truth. This vision draws the mind to choose the Atonement, and so move beyond the conflict (4:1-5).

## 4. Vigilance of Mind

Responding favorably to the results of accepting the Atonement, the mind begins to support the process. Its power is re-established as it begins to choose the Atonement more and more consistently. Before, the mind was imprisoned. It didn't know it could exercise its will and choose its way out of pain. It didn't think it had the power to do anything about its unhappy condition. Now, it realizes it has the power. Therefore, when discomfort arises, it becomes "increasingly sensitive to what it would once have regarded as very minor intrusions" (4:7), and thus quicker to turn to the Atonement for relief. The word "increasingly" occurs twice in 4:6-7, showing that this is a process of growth. Notice what increases: our unwillingness to tolerate delay and our sensitivity to intrusions of discomfort.

### • Study Question •

4. *Reflect on your own experience, and see if you can identify one or more instance that was, or was part of, your turning point.*
5. *Try to describe in your own words what the actual practice would look like, in your life, that is symbolized here by looking within, recognizing the altar is defiled and needs to be repaired and protected, and looking past error to truth.*

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## Paragraph 5

5. <sup>1</sup>The children of God are entitled to the perfect comfort that comes from perfect trust. <sup>2</sup>Until they achieve this, they waste themselves and their true creative powers on useless attempts to make themselves more comfortable by inappropriate means. <sup>3</sup>But the real means are already provided, and do not involve any effort at all on their part. [Ur: Their egocentricity usually misperceives this as personally insulting, an interpretation which obviously arises from their misperception of themselves. Egocentricity and communion cannot coexist.] Even the terms themselves are

contradictory.<sup>4</sup>The Atonement is the only gift that is worthy of being offered at the altar of God, because of the [Ur: inestimable] value of the altar itself. <sup>5</sup>It was created perfect and is entirely worthy of receiving perfection. <sup>6</sup>God and His creations are completely dependent on each other. <sup>7</sup>He depends on them *because* He created them perfect. <sup>8</sup>He gave them His peace so they could not be shaken and could not be deceived. <sup>9</sup>Whenever you are afraid you *are* deceived, and your mind cannot serve the Holy Spirit [Ur: your Soul]. <sup>10</sup>This starves you by denying you your daily bread. <sup>11</sup>God is lonely without His Sons, and they are lonely without Him. <sup>12</sup>They must learn to look upon the world as a means of healing the separation. <sup>13</sup>The Atonement is the guarantee that they will ultimately succeed.

As you read over this paragraph, recall what has been said previously about the relationship between fear and miracles:

I have asked you to perform miracles, and have made it clear that miracles are natural....There is nothing they cannot do, but they cannot be performed in the spirit of doubt or fear. (T-2.II.1:2-3)

Both the separation and the fear are miscreations that must be undone for the restoration of the temple, and for the opening of the altar to receive the Atonement.(T-2.III.2:3)

In case you haven't noticed, a lot of these early chapters deal with freeing us from fear. Remember that the first stage of the spiritual journey, according to T-1.IV.1:2, "usually entails fear." For us to assume our place as miracle workers, we must be freed from our fears. As this paragraph puts it, "Whenever you are afraid you are deceived, and your mind cannot serve the Holy Spirit" (5:9).

And we are "entitled to...perfect comfort," but perfect comfort comes only from "perfect trust" (5:1), which is the opposite of fear. Trust is what we are learning; the Manual for Teachers has a section on "The Development of Trust" that comes right at the beginning of its description of the characteristics of a true teacher of God; trust is foundational.

Until we "achieve this" (5:2) perfect trust, we try to find comfort in external things of the world ("inappropriate means"), or by protecting our bodies (1:3)—basically any means besides accepting the Atonement, which wastes time and starves us of our true nourishment (5:10). What we are learning is to use the world for nothing except healing the separation; that is the only way we will find perfect comfort.

• **Study Question** •

6. *If the world's only purpose is the healing of the separation, what is the relevance of other goals we may have?*

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We waste our creative powers on inappropriate means of seeking comfort, but "the real means are already provided" (5:3), that is, miracles and the Atonement. This means involves no effort

on our part; our involvement with the Atonement is simply to accept it. We don't need to offer great sacrifices on God's altar; in fact, "the Atonement is the only gift that is worthy of being offered" (5:4). The altar itself is valuable and "entirely worthy of receiving perfection" (5:5). If we understand the altar to be our heart, the place in which we hold our treasure, what this is saying is that our heart is perfect and worthy of God's perfect gifts; we do not need to expend any effort to make ourselves worthy. We can relax, open the altar to the Atonement, and receive God's gifts.

Sentences 6 to 10 are actually transported into the middle of this paragraph from about 8 pages earlier. They seem to fit fairly well, though.

The Atonement teaches us that in our creation, God gave us His peace so that we cannot be shaken or deceived (5:8). This section uses many terms to describe the things from which the Atonement protects the mind: lack of peace, fear, discomfort, pain, imprisoned will, separation, separation thoughts, inner starvation, and loneliness. The Atonement is there to protect us from all these things, if we will just place it as the only gift upon our inner altar.

Our daily bread comes from serving the Holy Spirit (5:9–10); we are fed as we offer miracles to others, and starved when we allow fear to block that offering. Only the Atonement can defend us against such fear, and release us to fulfill our function. Our role as miracle workers is crucial to us, and somehow it is also crucial to God Himself; Jesus says God depends on His creations (5:6–7) and is "lonely without His Sons" (5:11). God's loneliness must be a figure of speech; I cannot imagine God as actually feeling lonely. That does not fit with God's perfection and completion. But figures of speech, although they are not to be taken literally, do symbolize something true. There is some sense in which God experiences our "absence" from Him, and responds to it (see, for another instance, T-6.V.1:5–8). Yet in the idea that God depends on us, there is a strong element of confidence and faith. God depends on us because He created us perfect (5:7), so therefore He knows we can be depended on. We cannot fail, in the long run. "The Atonement is the guarantee that they will ultimately succeed" (5:13).

## Answer Key

1. The Course uses the image of “temple” in a number of ways, though always retaining the meaning of a temple as a dwelling place of holiness. It is a beginning see the body as a temple containing the Voice of the Holy Spirit, which directs the uses to which the body is put, but eventually we need to realize that the temple is not anything physical. Rather, the temple is “a relationship” (T-20.VI.5:1). To experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit, we have to go beyond individuality.
2. Before the separation:
  - Nothing was lacking (T-1.VI.1:6);
  - we did not believe we could change God’s creations and distort them, including ourselves (T-2.I.2:1–2);
  - there was no belief in space and time, therefore no acts, and no Atonement, which is an act of Love in response to the separation (T-2.II.4);
  - the mind was invulnerable to fear (T-2.III.2:2).
3. No written answer is expected.
4. No written answer is expected.
5. I watch my mind for ego thoughts—thoughts of separation, guilt and fear—and when I notice them, I immediately turn to the Holy Spirit in my mind, bringing these thoughts to Him for healing, and asking to share his vision of my perfect innocence and safety in spirit. This can be as simple as becoming aware of the dark thoughts and saying, “God, here I am,” or, “Jesus, help me see this differently.”
6. Other goals we may have besides healing the separation all become secondary or irrelevant. Either they aid us in attaining our primary goal of healing the separation in some way, or they are meaningless.