

Study Guide and Commentary ACIM® Text, Chapter 5, Section II

The Voice for God

Overview of the Section

This chapter combines two themes: The first is the Holy Spirit, Who He is and what He does; the second is the inter-personal nature of healing, or the need to *share* what we have, to give it away to others. The two themes come together in several places, for instance, this sentence from the end of Section II:

Child of God, my message is for you, to hear and give away as you answer the Holy Spirit within you. (T-5.II.12:6)

and this, from Section III:

The idea of the Holy Spirit...is strengthened by being given away. (T-5.III.2:5-6)

The way we receive the Holy Spirit is to give Him away. The way we recognize the Spirit in ourselves is through recognizing Him in others. The chapter is titled “Healing and Wholeness,” and it says that we find our own wholeness when we perceive wholeness in another. As it says in Workbook Lesson 159, “You understand that you are healed when you give healing... You recognize your brother as yourself, and thus do you perceive that you are whole” (W-159.2:1, 3).

You cannot talk about the Holy Spirit without talking about sharing and giving, because the Holy Spirit *is* “the shared inspiration of all the Sonship” (T-5.I.7.1). The decision for the Holy Spirit “itself *is* the decision to share” (T-5.II.9.4). “Listening to one Voice implies the decision to share It in order to hear It yourself” (T-5.IV.4.2). Being an idea, the Holy Spirit within us is strengthened by being given away (T-5.I.2:2, T-5.III.2:6). “The Voice of the Holy Spirit is weak in you. That is why you must share it. It must be increased in strength before you can hear It” (T-5.III.4:1-3). “The idea of the Holy Spirit...increases in you as you give it to your brother” (T-5.III.2:5, 7).

This makes perfect sense when you remember that, while the ego speaks for separation and individuality, the Holy Spirit counters with union and joining. He *is* the thought of non-separation. Therefore, all that He is and speaks of *must be shared* and is known only in the sharing.

If the ego is “the part of the mind that believes your existence is defined by separation,” (T-4.VII.1:5) then the Holy Spirit is “in the part of the mind that always speaks for the right choice” (T-5.II.8:2), that is, the part of the mind which knows that your existence is defined by what you share in common with all creation.

Paragraph 1

1. ¹Healing is not creating; it is reparation. ²The Holy Spirit promotes healing by looking beyond it to what the children of God were before healing was needed, and will be when they have **been** healed. ³This alteration of the time sequence should be quite familiar, because it is very similar to the shift in the perception of time that the miracle introduces. ⁴The Holy Spirit is the **motivation** for miracle-mindedness; the decision [Ur: will] to **heal** the separation by letting it go. ⁵Your will is still [Ur: It {the Holy Spirit} is] **in** you because God placed it in your mind, and although you can keep it asleep you cannot obliterate it. ⁶God Himself keeps your will [Ur: It {the Holy Spirit}] alive by transmitting it from His Mind to yours as long as there is time. [Ur: It is partly His will and partly yours.] ⁷The miracle itself is ~~a reflection of this~~ [Ur: is just this fusion or] union of will between Father and Son.

• Study Question •

1. *In sentences 1 and 2, what is the significance of our healing being “reparation” rather than “creation”? Reflect on the difference between creating something and repairing it; what are the significant differences?*

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The section opens with some thoughts about healing, and how the Holy Spirit promotes the healing of our minds.

Healing is not creating; it is reparation. The Holy Spirit promotes healing by looking beyond it to what the children of God were before healing was needed, and will be when they have been healed. (1:1–2)

The aspect of healing being focused on here is *healing as repair*. Healing is not making something new; it is repairing something which is, or which seems to be, broken. There is a big difference between an automobile assembly line and a service station. That is the difference being looked at here. Healing is restoring something to its original state, not making it into something it never was.

The healing methodology of the Holy Spirit involves looking at *what we really are*, looking past the apparent condition we are in now to see what we were before and will be again. He is looking at our eternal aspect, that which is always true of us. The miracle introduces a similar shift in our perception of time (1:3), focusing on what is eternally true rather than what seems to be true now, or in the past. By focusing on that picture of wholeness, He *draws* us towards wholeness.

The Holy Spirit is a gift of God placed into our minds. He is “the motivation for miracle-mindedness” (1:4); that is, He encourages us and reminds us to expect miracles, or to expect things outside the bounds of time and space. Make a note of this idea, that the Holy Spirit is our *motivation*, because it comes up again at the end of this section (12:4).

God Himself keeps your will alive by transmitting it from His Mind to yours as long as there is time. (1:6)

The Holy Spirit is the means by which God does that. It is as if our *real* will, which we have covered over with the ego's empty wishes, still lives in God's Mind, and He transmits it to us by the Holy Spirit, keeping it alive within us. We can mask it but we can't "obliterate" or get rid of it entirely. There is in each of us an undying will to end the separation "by letting it go" (1:4). In this way, we continue to be drawn to God, to unity, and to love. Without this, our conscious minds would remain lost in the ego's darkness.

Notice how (in the Urtext) it says that this will is partly God's will and partly ours; it is the image and likeness of God in each of us that cannot be erased; it is God's Will at the point of me, God's Will individualized as me. Every miracle is an instance of awareness of this union with the Divine (1:7).

Paragraph 2

2. ¹The Holy Spirit is the spirit of joy. ²He is the Call to return with which God blessed the minds of His separated Sons. ³This is the vocation of the mind. ⁴The mind had no calling until the separation, because before that it had only being, and would not have understood the call to right thinking. ⁵The Holy Spirit is [was] God's Answer to the separation; the means by which the Atonement heals [Ur: could repair] until the whole mind returns [Ur: returned] to creating.

• Study Question •

2. *The paragraph emphasizes the aspect of the Holy Spirit as a "Call" in our minds. The Call, placed within our minds, is God's Answer to the separation. Refer to I.5:4, II.2:1, II.2:4 (last phrase), II.3:2, II.3:8, II.6:1, and II.10:5, which all speak of the Holy Spirit as a "Call." Describe what you think this means, and if you can, relate it to something you have felt within yourself.*



This paragraph begins a whole series of statements about what the Holy Spirit is, and the part He can play in our return to God. He is the "spirit of joy" (2:1). One thing which characterizes a moment when the Spirit is speaking in our lives is that there is always *joy* in that moment. In the Manual, in the section on "How should the teacher of God spend his day?", Jesus says:

There is one thought in particular that should be remembered throughout the day. It is a thought of pure joy; a thought of peace, a thought of limitless release, limitless because all things are freed within it. (M-16.6:1-2)

That is the Holy Spirit at work—pure joy.

The Holy Spirit is "the Call to return" (2:2). Many times in these paragraphs He is called "the Call to" something. He is "the Call to Atonement" (I.5:4). The "call to joy" (II.3:2). He "calls you both to remember and forget" (II.6:1). He is the "call for

God” (II.10:7). The idea of the Holy Spirit as a *call* in our minds is one of the central ways of describing what the Holy Spirit is. There is something in us that calls us home, that calls us to return, that calls us to be joyful, and that “something” is the Holy Spirit. We are like children lost in the woods, wandering, and then we hear a Voice calling us. That Voice is the Holy Spirit.

His presence in us is the way “God blessed the minds of His separated Sons” (2:2). Another fact we will see over and over in this section is that the Holy Spirit is God’s response to the separation (2:5); He is a gift to us, the way given to us by God to help us find our way home. When we believed in the separation we were hopelessly lost, but God placed this “calling” in our minds as a beacon to us, like a lighthouse showing the way back into safe harbor. We didn’t need a “calling” in our minds before the separation. We didn’t need something calling us back to right thinking because our minds were pure. Now, however, we do need it. “The Holy Spirit is God’s Answer to the separation; the means by which the Atonement heals until the whole mind returns to creating” (2:5).

Paragraph 3

3. ¹The principle of Atonement [Ur: The Atonement] and the separation began at the same time. ²When the ego was made [When man made the ego], God placed in the mind [in him] the call to joy. ³This call is so strong that the ego always dissolves at its sound. ⁴That is why you must [Ur: can] choose to hear [Ur: listen to] one of two voices within you. ⁵One you made yourself, and that one is not of God. ⁶But the other is given you by God, Who asks you only to listen to it. ⁷The Holy Spirit is in you in a very literal sense. ⁸His [It] is the Voice That calls you back to where you were before and will be again. ⁹It is possible even in this world to hear only that Voice and no other. ¹⁰It takes effort and great willingness to learn. ¹¹It is the final lesson that I learned, and God’s Sons are as equal as learners as they are as Sons [Souls].

• Study Question •

3. *What was the “final lesson” that Jesus learned (9–11), and why should his learning it encourage us?*

The principle of Atonement and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our minds began at the same time as the separation (3:1), because they were God’s response to the ego (3:2). The “call to joy” is so strong within us that the ego *cannot withstand it*: “The ego always dissolves at its sound” (3:3). If we will *choose* to listen to the Voice for God within us, the ego will just dissolve! “*That is why you must choose to hear one of two voices within you*” (3:4, my italics). As always, the Course emphasizes the necessity of our choice. *We must choose to listen*. God gave this Voice to us, and “God...asks you only to listen to it” (3:6). We made the voice of the ego; God gave us His Voice.

The Holy Spirit is “in you in a very literal sense” (3:7). Compare this with 5:5: “God is *not* in you in a literal sense” (my emphasis). So the Holy Spirit is part of God and yet different from God; *He* is in us, but *God* is not. As I understand it, the Holy Spirit is a special part of God, created by God in response to the world of illusions we have made, a part that is capable of seeing the illusion we see without believing in it, providing a way in which God can navigate and operate within the illusion without making it real.

The Course highlights this distinction between the Creator God and the Holy Spirit. Later in this section it tells us that “God does not guide” (5:1) and yet the Holy Spirit *does* guide us. He is called “the Guide” (T-5.I.4:2), and learning to allow our lives to be guided by Him is one of the major emphases of the Course (for instance, see M-29.3:10–11). The Holy Spirit bridges between the purity and perfect knowledge of God and the illusion of sin and separation in which we find ourselves. God, according to the Course, does not know the dream and *cannot* know it. As Ken Wapnick points out, whatever God *knows* is *real*, and since the illusion is not real, He cannot know it. If He knew it, it would be real, and the whole message we are learning is that the dream *is not real*. The Holy Spirit, however, shares both the knowledge of God *and* the awareness of our illusions. He is the communication link between God and us. He works within the world of form and illusion, but He does not believe in it (see T6.II.10:1–2). He works within it because *we* believe in it, but His use of it is to teach us it is not real (W-pI.110.2:4).

He calls us back to where we “were before and will be again” (3:8, compare with 1:2). He stands with one foot in eternity and the other in time, and calls us out of time, back to eternity.

Listening to His Voice is what we need. This section calls us to listen to Him, listen to that inner call, always calling us away from our illusions. “It is possible *even in this world* to hear only that Voice and no other. It takes effort and great willingness to learn” (3:9–10). Jesus is the example of that; in paragraph 9 he tells us:

I am your model for decision. By deciding for God I showed you that this decision can be made, and that you can make it (9:6–7).

Notice, however, that it is not something that “just happens” to us. It takes *effort*. It takes *great willingness*. This is something that has to be worked at, because we have been so thoroughly ensnared by the voice of the ego. *We can do it* because Jesus did it. But it takes work. One of the purposes of the Workbook is to train us to *listen*. We learn to listen to His thoughts by repeating them over and over and over, by practicing them hundreds of times a day.

Jesus says that hearing *only* that Voice is the final lesson he learned. I think that probably refers to a time prior to his physical appearance as Jesus, but it may refer to some period in that lifetime; I don't know. The interesting thing is that this was *the final lesson he learned*. I am very suspicious of people who think it is easy to listen to the Holy Spirit all the time, and who think that they *do* listen only to Him. I believe that people who think they are hearing only His voice are, more often than not, deceiving themselves. That degree of rapport with the Holy Spirit does not come about without “effort and great

willingness to learn.” As we were told in Chapter 4, we cannot dismiss the ego lightly, and we must realize how much of our thinking is ego-directed (4.VI.1:3–4). People who think it is easy to hear only the Holy Spirit are almost certainly taking the ego lightly and *failing* to recognize how much of their thinking is ego-directed. As a result, what they think of as the Holy Spirit is really the ego in disguise. We can often unmask our egos by applying the criteria from the final paragraph of the last section, 5.I.7: Is this thought universally applicable to everyone; is there any perception of loss? Is there any taint of attacking or being attacked? Does it promote healing not just for me but for all concerned?

Learning to hear *only* the Voice for God and no other is the highest stage of spiritual development. Until we are at that level, we should always consider that we might be mistaken, even when we think we are being guided. But the final point of the paragraph is this: *if Jesus, who is your equal and no more, learned this, then so can you.*

Paragraph 4

4. ¹You *are* the Kingdom of Heaven, but you have let the belief in darkness enter your mind and so you need a new light. ²The Holy Spirit is the radiance that you must let banish the idea of darkness. ³His is the glory before which dissociation falls away, and the Kingdom of Heaven breaks through into its own. ⁴Before the separation you did not need guidance. ⁵You **knew** as you will know again, but as you do not know now.

• Study Question •

4. *To dispel darkness, is it necessary to combat the darkness? Apply this to the way in which the Holy Spirit can dispel the ego in your mind.*

We *are* the Kingdom of Heaven! In reality we are such exalted beings, and yet, the darkness has entered our minds because we have *allowed* it to enter. We need a new light (4:1), something that still shines with the radiance our minds once knew intimately. The Holy Spirit is that light, that radiance, which will banish the idea of darkness if we let it (4:2). The word *dissociation* (4:3) may need a little further explanation here. It has a meaning similar to denial, but slightly different. As I explained in the commentary on T-4.VI.4, it refers to the splitting off of one part of the mind from another part. Dissociation is the way we manage to hold two conflicting ideas in the same mind. By keeping the ideas apart, we allow them both to exist; if the ideas met, we would be forced to choose between them or to resolve the conflict. The Course defines dissociation like this: “Dissociation is a distorted process of thinking whereby two systems of belief which cannot coexist are both maintained” (T-14.VII.4:3). In the Course’s teaching, we have two systems of thought in our minds, the “ego” system and the thought system of the Holy Spirit. Only by bringing the two systems together, thus ending our dissociation, can our minds be healed.

It is the radiance of the Holy Spirit “before which dissociation falls away, and the Kingdom of Heaven breaks through into its own” (4:3). When we bring our darkness to His light, the split in our minds is healed, and the Kingdom of Heaven breaks through. Since *we* are that Kingdom, it is we who “break through into [our] own,” recovering the fullness of our natural inheritance.

Robert Perry quotes a poem by Friedrich von Schiller (the 18th century German poet, playwright and philosopher) in this context:

*Weep for the godlike life we lost afar—
Weep!—thou and I its scattered fragments are;
And still the unconquered yearning we retain—
Sigh to restore the rapture and the reign,
And grow divine again.*

In his classic book, *Discover the Power Within You*, Eric Butterworth asserts that Jesus did not try to establish his personal divinity; “the real theme of His teaching [was] the Truth of the Divinity of Man.” He says, “This basic principle...can save the world and lead mankind to a new level of ‘peace on earth, good will toward men.’” The Course, in this paragraph, is speaking of the same thing: rediscovering our original identity, coming into our own, not *in*, but *as* the Kingdom of Heaven—our lives the realm of God’s rule.

We’ll discuss the last two sentences along with the next paragraph.

Paragraph 5

5. ¹God does not guide, because He can share only perfect knowledge. ²Guidance is evaluative, because it implies there is a right way and also a wrong way, one to be chosen and the other to be avoided. ³By choosing one you give up the other. [Ur: This is a conflict state. It means that knowledge has been lost, because knowledge is sure.] ⁴The choice for the Holy Spirit is the choice for God. [This sentence was inserted by the editors.] ⁵God is not in you in a literal sense; you are part of Him {He is not in you; you are in Him}. ⁶When you chose [willed] to leave Him He gave you a Voice to speak for Him because He could no longer share His knowledge with you without hindrance. ⁷Direct communication was broken because you had made another voice [Ur: through another will].

• Study Question •

5. *If you compare 5:5 with 3:7, you will see another distinction made between God and the Holy Spirit. What is it?*

We’ve already referred to the first sentence, “God does not guide” (page 4, paragraph 2 above). This paragraph talks more about the distinction between God and the Holy Spirit, or the reason why God created the Holy Spirit. Before the separation we didn’t

need guidance; we simply *knew* (4:4–5; 5:7). We had direct communication with God all the time. Guidance wasn't needed because there were no choices being made; our mind was unified. Now, our mind is not unified. There seem to be two choices in our minds, the wrong and the right way (5:2). So now, we *do* need guidance, because we have made up an alternative, “another will,” and we have to be guided to make the right choice. When we shut God out of our minds in the separation, He could not speak to us directly, so He created the Holy Spirit and placed Him in our minds as His representative, His ambassador, so to speak (5:6). It is the Holy Spirit Who guides us, and choosing for Him is identical to choosing for God (5:4).

Paragraph 6

6. ¹The Holy Spirit calls you both to remember and to forget. ²You have chosen to be in a state of opposition in which opposites are possible. ³As a result, there are choices you must make. ⁴In the holy state the will is free, so that its **creative** power is unlimited and choice is meaningless. [Ur: In the holy state, the will is free in the sense that its *creative* power is unlimited, but choice itself is meaningless.] ⁵Freedom to choose is the same **power** as freedom to create, but its *application* is different. ⁶Choosing depends on a split mind [Ur: Choosing *means* divided will]. ⁷The Holy Spirit is one way of choosing. [Ur: This way is in you *because* there is also another way.] ⁸God did not leave His children comfortless, even though they chose to leave [Ur: left] Him. ⁹The voice they put in their minds was **not** the Voice for His Will, for which the Holy Spirit speaks. [Ur: The call to return is stronger than the call to depart, but it speaks in a different way.]

• Study Question •

6. *How did God respond to our choice to leave Him ,or rather to our making a choice seem possible?*

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“The Holy Spirit calls you both to remember and to forget” (6:1). Compare that with the following:

When you heal, you are remembering the laws of God and forgetting the laws of the ego. (T-7.IV.2:6)

I said before that He teaches remembering and forgetting, but the forgetting is only to make the remembering consistent. You forget in order to remember better. (T7.II.6:4–5)

So, in these quotes, he is teaching us to forget the ego and to remember God. Forgetting the ego and its teachings is necessary in order “to remember better” or “to make the remembering consistent.”

The point is that we need teaching because we have chosen to be in a state where opposites are possible; that is, we believe that something other than God's Will is possible (6:2). While we think "something else" besides God exists we need to be taught, but what we are being taught is that nothing besides God exists. We have illusions and we are being "dis-illusioned." We are unlearning what we have taught ourselves, or forgetting the ego's teaching. That is true learning in this world (M-4.X.3:7).

The only reason we have choices to make is that our minds are split (6:6). In this world we have freedom of choice, but that is not true freedom of *will*. If our minds are divided between two alternatives, between which we constantly must choose, we are always choosing *against* what seems to be part of ourselves. That is some kind of bondage. It is free *choice* but not a truly free *will*. Free will occurs when the mind is completely unified; when there is no opposite choice. The entire being is moving without opposition in one direction. *That* is free will!

We made the voice for the ego (6:9), but God did not "leave [us] comfortless" (6:8); He gave us another "way of choosing" (6:7), which was the Holy Spirit, His Voice in our minds (6:9). That Voice is God's Answer to the ego, and Its inner call is stronger than the ego's (Urtext line following 6:9). When we have learned to listen only to that Voice and no other, there will no longer be any need for choice (6:4). Choosing to listen to Him is the choice that ends all choice:

By teaching what to choose, the Holy Spirit will ultimately teach you that you need not choose at all. This will finally liberate your mind from choice, and direct it towards creation within the Kingdom (T-6.V(C).4:9-10).

Much of our resistance to listening, by the way, comes from the fact that we don't want choice to end. That is why learning this lesson takes effort and great willingness to learn.

Paragraph 7

7. ¹The Voice of the Holy Spirit does not command, because it is incapable of arrogance. ²It does not demand, because it does not seek control. ³It does not overcome, because it does not attack. ⁴It merely reminds. ⁵It is compelling only because of what it reminds you of. ⁶It brings to your mind the other way, remaining quiet even in the midst of the turmoil you may make [Ur: have made for yourselves]. ⁷The Voice for God is always quiet, because it speaks of peace. ⁸Peace is stronger than war because it heals. ⁹War is division, not increase. ¹⁰No one gains from strife. ¹¹"What profiteth it a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" ¹²[Ur: This means that] If you listen to the wrong voice you have lost sight of your soul. ¹³You cannot lose it, but you can not know it. ¹⁴It is therefore "lost" to you until you choose right.

• Study Question •

7. *If you seem to be receiving guidance that is demanding that you do something, or that is commanding you to do it, is that the Voice of the Holy Spirit?*

Sometimes we expect the voice of the Holy Spirit to be loud and clear in our minds, and He *is* clear when we are wholly willing to listen. But the overriding characteristic of His voice is *gentleness*. He is the Voice for peace, and His voice is always peaceful, never strident or demanding. The Bible refers to Him as “the still, small voice” (I Kings 19:12). He is a *reminder*, that is all, the reminder of “the other way” (7:4–6). He is not forceful; He does not seek control (7:2). He is reminding us of what we really want in the heart of our being (7:5), if we only would let go of what we *think* we want.

Jesus quotes himself from the Gospels (Mark 8:36) again in 7:11, concerning the immense value of our soul as compared to the whole world. We can lose sight of our “soul” (7:12–13), which in this instance clearly refers to our true Self. In our true Self we want only God’s Will. We lose sight of the soul if we listen to the wrong voice (7:12), seeking the values of the world (“other devotions” in 8:8). But although we can *lose sight* of it, we cannot *lose* it (7:13). Yet as long as we have lost *sight* of it, it is *as if* it were lost to us. By choosing again, choosing rightly (7:14), choosing to listen to the Voice for God, we can find our Self once more, and recover awareness of our divinity.

Paragraph 8

¹The Holy Spirit is your Guide in choosing. ²He is in the part of your mind that **always** speaks for the right choice, because He speaks for God. ³He is your remaining communication with God, which you can interrupt but cannot destroy. ⁴The Holy Spirit is the way in which God’s Will is [Ur: can be] done on earth as it is in Heaven. ⁵Both Heaven and earth are in **you**, because the call of both is in [your wills and therefore in] your mind. ⁶The Voice for God comes from your own altars to Him. ⁷These altars are not **things**; they are **devotions**. ⁸Yet you have other devotions now. ⁹Your divided devotion has given you the two voices, and you must choose at which altar you want to serve. ¹⁰The call you answer now is [Ur: is] an evaluation because it is a decision. ¹¹The decision [Ur: itself] is very simple. ¹²It is made on the basis of which call is worth more to you.

• Study Question •

8. *“Yet you have other devotions now” (8:8), things that compete with God’s call to you. What might some of these “other devotions” be in your life?*

Part of our mind is not corrupted by the ego and always speaks for the right choice (8:2), but this is the part we have lost sight of. By letting the Holy Spirit guide our choices (8:1), we can rediscover that part of us we thought was lost. The Holy Spirit lives

in that part of our mind (8:2), which is called “the right mind” or “the higher mind” in other places in the Course.

He is not only the voice of our true Self; He is also the Voice for God. He is our communication link with God (8:3, see also T-6.I.19:1). This idea is mentioned six or seven times in the Course, so it must be important. If God had not created the Holy Spirit to link us to Himself, we would have been left bereft, trapped in our separation:

Yet He has created the Holy Spirit as the Mediator between perception and knowledge. Without this link with God, perception would have replaced knowledge forever in your mind. (W-pI.43.1:3–4)

“Both Heaven and earth are in you, because the call of both is in your mind” (8:5). By listening to the Holy Spirit, we bring earth to Heaven, and God’s Will is done in earth as it is in Heaven (8:4). Both are in *our mind*, and it is through the Holy Spirit in our minds, and our choice to hear Him, that earth is transformed to Heaven.

The latter part of this paragraph is a restatement of ideas that have already been presented. The divided state of our mind has given us two voices (8:9), and we must now choose which voice to listen to, or at which “altar” to serve (note that 8:7 defines the symbol of *altar* as “devotions,” or things to which we are dedicated). The choice will be made “on the basis of which call,” the call of earth or the call of Heaven (8:5), “is worth more to you” (8:11–12). One of the things we learn as we progress is to value earth less and less, and to value Heaven more and more. Workbook Lesson 133, “I will not value what is valueless,” is all about learning to let go of our investment in the world. That is the lesson only hinted at here.

Paragraph 9

9. ¹My mind will always be like yours*, because we were created as equals. ²It was only my decision [Ur: *decision**] that gave me all power in Heaven and earth. ³My only gift to you* is to help you make the same decision [Ur: *for yourself*]. ⁴This decision is the choice to share it [Ur: *The will for this decision is the will to share it*], because the decision itself *is* the decision to share. ⁵It is made by giving [Ur: *made by giving*], and is therefore the one choice [Ur: *act of mind*] that resembles true creation. [Ur: *You understand* the role of models in the learning process, and the importance of the models you value and choose to follow in determining what you will to learn.*] ⁶I am your model for decision*. ⁷By deciding for God I showed you that this decision can [Ur: *can*] be made, and that you [Ur: *you**] can make it.

• Study Question •

9. *What was “my decision” that Jesus refers to in 9:2, a decision he wishes to help us make also (9:3)? Compare with the latter part of paragraph 3.*



In this paragraph, Jesus speaks to us personally: “My mind will always be like yours, because we were created as equals” (9:1). You are the equal of Jesus! Everyone is; we are all equal to one another and equal to him. Because that is so, we can choose as he did.

He decided to listen to the One Voice and to serve at only God’s altar, and that is what gave him his power (9:2). Now, he gives us a gift, not because he is superior to us but just because he is the same as us. He helps us make the same decision he made (9:3).

His helping us, or sharing his gains with us, is a foregone conclusion because “this decision is the choice to share it, because the decision itself is the decision to share” (9:4). The Voice for God, or the Holy Spirit, is “the shared Inspiration of all the Sonship” (T5.I. 7:1). When we listen to Him we are listening to a voice that is in everyone; *it therefore has to be shared*. His Voice speaks of our Oneness; how could it possibly be received in some private way? The message it speaks is that we are not separate, but one. It tells us our function is to extend God’s creation. To hear the Voice, therefore, is to share It.

Hearing Him and sharing what He gives us are the same decision. You cannot avoid it. The decision to hear His Voice “is made by giving” (9:5). When you open your heart to others, you have learned to open your heart to Him. You learn to hear Him by sharing Him with others. I said earlier that the chapter has two themes: listening to the Holy Spirit, and the interpersonal nature of salvation or the need to share what we have. Those are not really *two* themes; they are the same theme seen in different ways. The way to listen to the Voice is to share Him with others.

* As an exercise, try reading the paragraph again, aloud if you can, inserting your name wherever you see an asterisk. Imagine Jesus speaking this personally to you. (You can also try the same exercise in the next paragraph.)

Paragraph 10

10. ¹I have assured [Ur: promised] you* that the Mind that decided for me is also in you, and that you can let it change you just as it changed me. ²This Mind is unequivocal, because it hears only one Voice and answers in only one way. ³*You are the light of the world with me. ⁴Rest does not come from sleeping but from waking. ⁵The Holy Spirit is the call to awaken and be glad. ⁶The world is very tired, because it is the idea of weariness. ⁷Our task* is the joyous one of waking it to the Call for God. ⁸Everyone will answer the Call of the Holy Spirit, or the Sonship cannot be as one. ⁹What better vocation could there be for any part of the Kingdom than to restore it [the Kingdom] to the perfect integration that can make it whole? ¹⁰Hear only this through the Holy Spirit within you*, and teach your brothers to listen as I am teaching you.

• Study Question •

10. *According to this paragraph, what is your vocation or calling in this world?*

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“I have assured you that the Mind that decided for me [the Holy Spirit, see 12:2] is also in you, and that you can let it change you just as it changed me” (10:1). That is the value of Jesus to us. He’s a man just like us who was changed by the Holy Spirit. By looking at him, we can realize it can happen for us just as it did for him. The same Holy Spirit that was in him is in us.

He is “unequivocal” (10:2). He hears only God, and speaks only for Him. He reminds us of the light of love within us, and together we realize, as Jesus says to us here, “You are the light of the world with me” (10:3). Sometimes it just seems so clear to me why accepting that fact—that I am the light of the world, along with Jesus—is the same thing as forgiving myself, and the same thing as being an enlightened being. All of them are simply the acceptance of the fact that *I am love*, because that’s what God created me to be, and nothing I have imagined has changed that in any way. The light of love is in me, and in you, undimmed by any spot of our imagined sin. Accepting our function as the light of the world, accepting our responsibility to share the light of forgiveness with the world, is identical to listening to the Holy Spirit for ourselves. If we listen, we will hear Him saying, “Feed my sheep. Lift the burden of guilt from those around you. *Be* the love that you are, and you will come to *know* that love is what you are.”

“The Holy Spirit is the call to awaken and be glad” (10:5). He calls *to* us, and He calls the world *through* us. Read sentences 6 through 10 again, now.

This is our calling, our *vocation*—a word that is derived from the Latin *vocare*, to call. “Vocation” is often used as another word for “job, occupation, profession.” We speak of “vocational training.” Your vocation as a Son of God is to hear the Holy Spirit calling you, and to teach your brothers to listen to that same call within them. That is your profession. What better occupation could we have? We are here to awaken everyone in the world to the Call for God that lives within them (10:7).

Paragraph 11

11. ¹When you are tempted by the wrong voice, call on me to remind you how to heal by sharing my decision and making it stronger. ²As we share this goal, we increase its power to attract the whole Sonship, and to bring it back into the oneness in which it was created. ³Remember that “yoke” means “join together,” and “burden” means “message.” ⁴Let us restate [Ur: reconsider the biblical statement] “My yoke is easy and my burden light” in this way; “Let us join together, for my message is Light.” [Ur: I came to your minds because you had grown vaguely aware of the fact that there is another way, or another voice. Having given this invitation to the Holy Spirit, I could come to provide the model for *how to think*.]

What do we do when we are “tempted by the wrong voice”? What do we do when the ego strikes back? “Call on me to remind you how to heal by sharing my decision and

making it stronger” (11:1). There are at least four different relational interactions referred to in that one sentence! When we are tempted by the ego:

- *We call on Jesus.* Pray. Ask his help. The first interaction is our prayer to him. And what we are to ask Him for is to remind us of something.
- The second interaction is that *he reminds us of something.* He responds to our prayer.
- He reminds us how to heal. The third interaction is with someone else who needs healing; *we give healing to another.* How interesting that when we are tempted to listen to the ego, what we need to be reminded of is not how to *be* healed but *how to heal!* When our minds are fuzzed by the ego, what we need is not to turn inward in introversion; what we need is to extend ourselves to another. Extending is what reminds us of who we really are.
- *We share his decision.* How *do* we heal? “By sharing my decision and making it stronger” (11:1). What decision is that? The decision for God, the decision to hear His Voice, which is identical to the decision to share God with another.

The phrase “sharing my decision” can be understood in two ways, both of them correct, I believe. First, it can mean that we share Jesus’ decision *with him.* We join with Him in joining our minds with the Holy Spirit. We ask him to join with us, and trust him to add the power of his decision to our own. Second, the phrase may mean that we share this decision for God *with others;* we extend it. Since the decision to hear *is* the decision to share, this second meaning is actually included in the first. We remind others to listen to the voice within them, just as Jesus reminds us to listen.

Sharing it makes it stronger. We realize that what is true for us is true for everyone. As we extend our decision to others, our decision becomes stronger. As others join in the decision, our own decision becomes more solid. “As we share this goal, we increase its power to attract the whole Sonship, and to bring it back into the oneness in which it was created” (11:2). This decision is meant to multiply by being shared. Jesus is our reminder and our model, and he is asking us to demonstrate to people around us that we are not egos, in order to remind them that *they* are not egos either. We are the light of the world. The goal is to attract the whole Sonship and bring it back into oneness.

The way to deal with ego temptations is to “teach your brothers to listen as I am teaching you” (10:10). We become “vaguely aware” that there is another way to think, which opens the door for Jesus, or the Holy Spirit, to enter. Once that happens, the way to be released from the ego is to release someone else. The way to have is to give; that is the law of the Kingdom. “Let us join together, for my message is Light” (11:4).

Paragraph 12

12. [Ur: Psychology has become the study of *behavior*, but no-one denies the basic law that behavior is a response to *motivation*, and motivation is will.] ¹I have enjoined you to behave as I behaved*, but we must respond to the same Mind to do this. ²This Mind is the Holy Spirit, Whose Will is for God always.

³He teaches you how to keep me as the model for your thought*, and to behave like me as a result. ⁴The power of our joint motivation is beyond belief*, but not beyond accomplishment. ⁵*What we can accomplish together has no limits, because the Call for God is the call to the unlimited. ⁶Child of God, my message is for you, to hear and give away as you answer the Holy Spirit within you.

• Study Question •

II. How would you summarize what you feel is the main message of this section?

The way to behave like Jesus is to *think* like him, to listen to the same Voice and respond to the same Mind, which is within us (1). (“The Holy Spirit is the Christ Mind” —T-5.I.5:1.) “This Mind is the Holy Spirit, Whose Will is for God always” (12:2). The Holy Spirit is the inner power, the motivator within us; He is “the motivation for miracle-mindedness,” as it said in the first paragraph of this section. Jesus is the model of a man who heard that inner Voice and listened to it. He is our model *for our thought*, the model of *how to think with God* (12:3). The Holy Spirit teaches us to use Jesus as our model, and as our model Jesus shows us how to listen to the Holy Spirit, just as he did.

“Joint motivation” (12:4), I believe, refers to the joining of your mind with Jesus’ mind in listening to the Holy Spirit. But as in math, where “Things equal to the same thing are equal to each other,” so it is in this listening. If I join my mind with Jesus’ mind and you do the same, then *our* minds are also joined. So this joint motivation, this shared Inspiration of the Sonship, refers also to my joining with you in giving ourselves to the Will of God, in giving ourselves over to Love. The Holy Spirit is our motivation for miracles. As we recognize the presence of this motivation in others and in ourselves, we see that we have a *joint motivation*, a common purpose that joins us together. The power of this common motivation “is beyond belief” (12:4).

That is a play on words. The power is beyond belief not only in the sense of “unbelievable,” but also because it transcends mere belief; it takes us into the realm of the unlimited. There is nothing so powerful as minds joined together with God in a common purpose (12:5). The power is beyond belief “but not beyond accomplishment” (12:4). We may think this phenomenal release of miraculous power is beyond us, but it is not. We can know it is within reach because Jesus proved it in his own life.

Jesus’ message for us (12:6) is simply, “Answer the Call of the Holy Spirit within you, and as you hear it, give it away. Share it. Extend it to everyone until every person has heard and answered.” To share it *is* to hear it, and to hear it *is* to share it. Hearing is sharing, and sharing is hearing. To recognize forgiveness, forgive your brother. To receive love, give love. To know you are one with God, recognize your brother’s oneness with God and awaken him to it. That *is* the message of the Course.

The same message continues through the next two sections, incidentally. I’ve already quoted several lines from those sections. In closing, let me suggest you read another three wonderful passages from Section IV: T-5.IV.4:1–3; T-5.IV.5:4; and T-5.IV.7:2.

Answer Key

1. Creating makes something new; reparation restores to its original state something that previously existed. The Holy Spirit is working from the original blueprints. To use another analogy, He is like an art restorer, taking off the dirt and removing the later images layered on top of God's original painting.
2. The call of the Holy Spirit within us is our own call for God, our own longing for union with Him. St. Augustine described it as a "God-shaped blank in every man's heart." We all long for completion. Speaking for myself, it seems to me that there has always been something inside me, drawing me toward God. That inner "call" is a part of what the Course is referring to as the Holy Spirit.
3. The final lesson of Jesus was learning to hear only the Voice for God in this world, and no other. This should encourage us because if he learned it, so can we, because he is no different than we are.
4. To dispel darkness it is not necessary to fight it; just bring it to the light and it is gone. So, too, with the ego; bring it into the presence of the Holy Spirit and the ego dissolves.
5. God is not in us in a literal sense, but the Holy Spirit is.
6. God did not leave us comfortless; He gave us His Voice.
7. No, because the Voice of the Holy Spirit does not command, demand, seek control, overcome, or attack.
8. No written answer is expected.
9. Jesus is helping us to make the same decision he made, which was the decision to "hear only that Voice and no other" (T-5.II.3:9), or "deciding for God" (9:7). (See also 10:1 and 12:1-3.)
10. We are the light of the world; our task is to awaken the world to the Call for God. We are here to restore the Kingdom to "the perfect integration that can make it whole." We do this by hearing only the Holy Spirit within us, and teaching our brothers likewise to listen only to His Voice.
11. The main message of this section, in my opinion, is that we are called to hear the Holy Spirit within us and to give away His message to all our brothers.