

Study Guide and Commentary ACIM® Text, Chapter 6, Section II

The Alternative to Projection

Overview of the Section

My suggested outline for Chapter 6 views this section, titled “The Alternative to Projection,” as a correction to the second of the ego’s premises, which was given in the Introduction: “Your attack is justified in return” (T-6.In.1:3). It corrects this premise with its opposite: “Attack has no justification” (T-6.In.1:7), showing that only projection gives us an apparent justification for attack.

Paragraph 1

1. ¹Any split in mind **must** involve a rejection of part of it, and this *is* the belief in separation. ²The wholeness of God, which **is** His peace, cannot be appreciated **except** by a whole mind that recognizes the wholeness of God’s creation. ³By this recognition it knows its Creator. ⁴Exclusion and separation are synonymous, as are separation and dissociation. ⁵We have said before that the separation was and **is** dissociation, and that once it occurs projection becomes its main defense, or the device that **keeps it going**. ⁶The reason, however, may not be so obvious [Ur: as clear] as you think.

• Study Question •

1. *Paragraph 1 speaks about the nature of separation. What do the following concepts have in common: split mind, exclusion, separation and dissociation?*

When the mind rejects part of itself, the belief in separation is born (1:1). The apparent physical reality of separate things and separate living beings is no more than a reflection or projection of the one mind’s belief in separateness, and its desire to reject or deny parts of itself. In our present state, with a mind not whole, we cannot appreciate the Wholeness of God (1:2). When our mind is whole, it will instantly recognize that *all of creation* is whole or one (1:2). The Course is saying quite clearly that until we acknowledge the Wholeness of every part of God’s creation we cannot recognize God (1:3). If we exclude anyone or anything from salvation, we are upholding separation, and we are also dissociating a part of ourselves. The “other” we are excluding is in reality a rejected part of ourselves (1:4). Jesus has made the connection between separation and dissociation before, and reminds us of what he said: “The separated mind cannot maintain

the separation except by dissociating” (T-4.VI.4:2). We *think* we are judging another, but in fact, we are dissociating a part of our own minds. What keeps the separation going and protects it is primarily *projection* (1:5).

“The reason, however, may not be so obvious as you think” (1:6). What do you suppose Jesus thinks *we* are thinking? He is speaking of what we think is the “obvious” reason that projection protects and perpetuates separation. I suspect he is referring to the idea that, by projecting anger or ill will onto another, we are distancing ourselves *from them*. That is, or should be, obvious. What isn’t obvious is that such projection is also an attack *on ourselves*, and is perpetuating the *separation within our own minds*. This subtle effect of projection is explained in the following two paragraphs.

Paragraph 2 & 3

2. ¹What you project you disown, and therefore **do not believe is yours**. [You believe it is someone else’s.] ²You are [Ur: therefore] **excluding yourself** [Ur: from it] by the very judgment [Ur: by the very statement you are making] that you are **different** [Ur: from someone else.] from the one on whom you project. ³Since you have also judged **against** what you project, you continue to attack it because you continue to keep it separated [Ur: you attack it because you have already attacked it *by rejecting it*]. ⁴By doing this **unconsciously**, you try to keep the fact that you attacked yourself [you must have attacked yourself *first*] out of awareness, and thus imagine that you have made yourself safe.

3. ¹Yet projection will **always** hurt you. ²It reinforces your belief in your own split mind, and its **only** purpose is to **keep the separation going**. ³It is solely a device of the ego to make you feel **different** from your brothers and separated **from** them. ⁴The ego justifies this on the [Ur: **wholly spurious**] grounds that it makes you seem “better” than they are, thus obscuring your **equality** with them still further. ⁵Projection and attack are inevitably related, because projection is **always** a means of **justifying** attack. ⁶Anger without projection is impossible. ⁷The ego uses projection **only** to destroy [Ur: **distort**] your perception of both yourself **and** your brothers. ⁸The process begins by excluding something that [Ur: **you think**] exists in you but which you do not want, and leads directly to excluding you [Ur: **yourself**] from your brothers.

• Study Question •

2. *List some of the ways in which projection keeps your mind split.*

In the discussion of projection that follows, Jesus is referring primarily to the ego’s use of projection, and not the way the Holy Spirit uses the same dynamic capacity, which the Course calls *extension*. (Early drafts of the Course actually said that both the ego and the Holy Spirit use projection, but with opposite goals; later, the term *projection* was

restricted to the ego, and *extension* was substituted to denote the Holy Spirit's parallel activity.)

When you project something, you are taking something that is *in* your mind and locating it *outside* your mind; you are disowning it, and trying to convince yourself that it is not yours, but someone else's (2:1). An example often mentioned in the Course is our belief that we have sinned and deserve to be punished. Rather than accepting this as our own belief, we attribute the "punishing intent" to someone else. Sometimes we attribute it to God ("[The ego] attributes to God a punishing intent, and then takes this intent as its own prerogative" T-5.V.5:8). We do not realize that *we* are punishing ourselves (2:4), and we believe God is. Other times we attribute it to a brother ("[The ego] projects conflict from your mind to other minds, in an attempt to persuade you that you have gotten rid of the problem" T-7.VIII.2:6). We project our self-attack onto someone else, and see them as attacking us. We "disown" the attack and therefore don't believe it is *our* attack (2:1).

Yet, by the very judgment that we are different from another, we have excluded or separated ourselves (2:2). We judge against the thought we have projected, and we attack it, and in doing so we are actually attacking the part of our mind in which the thought originated (2:3). We do this unconsciously, and therefore we are unaware of our self-attack (2:4). When we project, we think we are rid of the guilt we projected. Our very judgment of it, however, is an attack upon ourselves. We think we are judging and attacking the other; in reality, we are judging and attacking ourselves.

I think projection has made me safe; in reality, it always hurts me (3:1). The ego's purpose in projection is to keep the separation going by reinforcing my belief in my split mind (3:2), and that is what it does. I judge something that is in my mind, but conceal that judgment from myself by projection; this "protects" the split in my mind. Furthermore, I see that something in someone else, thus making us "different" and therefore separate (3:3). The separation seems merited because, as they are condemned, I seem "better" by comparison (3:4). I *seem* to be gaining by the other person's loss, as the ego sees things. "You gave him not his holiness, but tried to see your sins in him to save yourself" (T-22.III.8:6). As the *Song of Prayer* says, "...you have called him guilty of your sins, and in him must your innocence now be found" (S-2.I.4:6).

"Projection and attack are inevitably related" (3:5) for several reasons. As we have just seen, projection *is* an attack on another, smearing your guilt on him to save yourself. Having projected your guilt onto him, you then use the guilt that you have "discovered" in him to justify your more overt attack (3:5). He has "caused" you distress and deserves your attack in return. You are "righteously angry" with him. We need to realize that there is no such thing as righteous anger: "There can be no justification for the unjustifiable" (T-6.I.6:8). The only way to *think* that anger is justified is to project (3:6). That means that every time you get angry, you are perceiving something that isn't really where you think it is. What you *think* is something outside yourself, deserving of anger, is really something *inside* yourself that you have rejected and projected. Your perception of yourself is warped and partial because of your denial; your perception of your brother is

distorted by what you project onto him (3:7). You *reject* what is in you; you *project* it outward; then you *detect* it in another, and *deflect* your brothers away from you (3:8).

Paragraph 4 & 5

4. 1We have learned, however, that there is an alternative to projection [Ur: there is another use of projection]. 2Every ability of the ego has a better use [Ur: counterpart], because its abilities are directed by the mind, which has a better Voice. 3The Holy Spirit extends and the ego projects. 4As their goals are opposed, so is the result.

5. 1The Holy Spirit begins by perceiving you as perfect. 2Knowing this perfection is shared He recognizes it in others, thus strengthening it in both. 3Instead of anger this arouses love for both, because it establishes inclusion. 4Perceiving equality, the Holy Spirit perceives equal needs. 5This invites Atonement automatically, because Atonement is the one need in this world that is universal. 6To perceive yourself this way is the only way in which you can find happiness in the world. 7That is because it is the acknowledgment that you are not in this world, for the world is unhappy.

• Study Question •

3. *In one column, list the steps given for the alternative to projection (extension), and then, in a second column alongside, list the corresponding steps in the process of projection.*

Projection and extension are just different uses of the same ability, with differing goals. “The Holy Spirit extends and the ego projects” (4:3). We can either allow the ego to use our minds to project, or we can allow the Holy Spirit to use our minds to extend. There are no other alternatives; our minds *will* be used by one or the other. Like the goals, which are opposite, the results of projection and extension are also opposite (4:4).

We’ve seen that projection starts you believe you have found a flaw within yourself. You then reject that flaw, project it onto someone else, and see it as outside of you. The result of this mental process is that you become angry at the other person, see yourself as “better,” and separate yourself from them (see paragraph 3).

By contrast, extension begins with the Holy Spirit’s perception of your perfection (5:1). Through you, He perceives that same perfection in others (5:2), which strengthens it in you as well (instead of appearing to make it vanish, as projection does; although projection does not truly make anything vanish, and actually strengthens what you project). Perceiving the perfection of your brother, you love him instead of becoming angry (5:3). Rather than excluding and separating, you include him and join with him (5:3). Instead of seeing yourself as better than him, you see “equal needs” (5:4).

The need you share with your brother is the need for Atonement (5:5). This kind of perception, recognizing the equal need in yourself and your brother, is the only way to find happiness in this world *for the very reason that it recognizes that you are not in this world* (5:6–7). The world is, by definition, an unhappy place (5:7); therefore, the way to find happiness is to recognize that your true existence is not in this world, but elsewhere, as Jesus will emphasize in the next paragraph. To perceive your *only need* as the Atonement means that you must realize you do not need anything offered by the world:

Each thing you value here is but a chain that binds you to the world, and it will serve no other end but this. For everything must serve the purpose you have given it, until you see a different purpose there. The only purpose worthy of your mind this world contains is that you pass it by, without delaying to perceive some hope where there is none. Be you deceived no more. The world you see holds nothing that you want (W-pI.128.2:1-5).

(For an in-depth presentation of this idea, see the first four paragraphs of Lesson 128).

Paragraph 6

6. ¹How else can you find joy in a joyless place **except** by realizing that **you are not there**? ²You cannot be **anywhere** God did not put you, and God created you as part of Him. ³That is both **where** you are and **what** you are. ⁴It [Ur: This] is **completely** unalterable. ⁵It is total inclusion. ⁶You cannot change it now or ever. ⁷It is forever true. ⁸It is **not** a belief, but a Fact. ⁹Anything that God created is as true as He is. ¹⁰Its truth lies only in its perfect inclusion in Him Who alone **is** perfect. ¹¹To deny this [Ur: in any way] is to deny yourself **and** Him, since it is impossible to accept one without the other.

• Study Question •

4. (a) *Explain sentence 3 in your own words: What is “that”? How is “that” “both where you are and what you are”?*
- (b) *Express the truth of this paragraph as an affirmation in the first person: “I cannot be anywhere God did not put me.” And so on.*

We are all looking for happiness in this world. The Course makes it quite plain here that our search is in vain. We must come to the point of seeing no value in this world: “Let me accept the strength God offers me and see no value in this world, that I may find my freedom and deliverance” (W-pI.130.8:6). You cannot find happiness *in this world* because the world is not a happy place, but a *joyless* one! (6:1). The only way to find happiness is to realize that *you are not really in this world at all* (6:1). You can’t possibly be here unless God put you here, and He did not; He created you “as part of Him” (6:2). You are not in the world, you are in *God* (3:3). That is what you must perceive about yourself and about your brother. The Holy Spirit begins by perceiving you as perfect because he perceives this eternal aspect about you, which is “forever true,” “unalterable,”

“total inclusion,” “not a belief, but a Fact,” which cannot be changed now or ever (6:4–8). The “you” that appears to be in this world probably isn’t perfect! But your reality *is* perfect, unchangeably so. As God’s creation you are as true as He is (6:9). You are part of His perfection (6:10). If you deny that perfection, you are denying not only the reality of yourself, but of God as well (6:11), because your perfection is *part* of His.

I don’t think we realize how much our identity—our sense of who we are—is tied to things of this world. Our identity seems to include our job, our spouse, our car, our occupation, our hobbies, and our possessions. To rediscover the truth of What we are, as God’s perfect creation, we *must* be willing to sever our imaginary connection to *things*. Perhaps the reason we find it difficult to comprehend our own perfection is that we have confused ourselves with our bodies, personalities, and earthly roles. Our bodies are not perfect; neither are our personalities or worldly roles. Only by disengaging ourselves from these ego substitutes can we begin to identify with the Fact of our unalterable, eternal Being.

Paragraph 7

7. ¹The perfect equality of the Holy Spirit’s perception is the reflection [Ur: counterpart] of the perfect equality of God’s knowing. ²The ego’s perception has no counterpart in God, but the Holy Spirit remains the bridge between perception and knowledge. ³By enabling you to use perception in a way that reflects [Ur: parallels] knowledge, you will ultimately remember it [Ur: ultimately meet it and know it]. ⁴The ego would prefer to believe that this memory is impossible, yet it is *your* perception the Holy Spirit guides. ⁵Your perception will end where it began. [These last two sentences were largely composed by the editors.] [Ur: The ego prefers to believe that parallel lines do not meet, and conceives of their meeting as impossible. You might remember that the human eye perceives them as if they *do* meet in the distance, which is the same as *in the future*, if time and space are one dimension. The later mathematics support the interpretation of ultimate convergence of the parallel theoretically.] ⁶Everything meets in God, because everything was created by Him and in Him.

• Study Question •

5. *This paragraph is quite abstract. See if you can make a personal application of it. Think of someone you have been judging or condemning in some way in your mind, and construct an affirmation about the way in which the Holy Spirit can guide your perception of this individual and thus bring you into knowledge.*

•

The Holy Spirit’s perception of you and me is a perception of “perfect equality” (7:1), which is perception’s counterpart (or reflection) of God’s knowledge. God *knows* we are equal; the Holy Spirit *perceives* that equality (7:1) and shares that perception with us. “The ego’s perception,” however, “has no counterpart in God” (7:2).

Once again Jesus repeats the notion that the Holy Spirit is “the Bridge between perception and knowledge” (7:2). Thrice before he has made this point (T-4.VI.2:4–5 in conjunction with T-4.VI.7:1; T-5.I.4:8–9; and T-5.III.1:2), and the idea is summarized in the Workbook’s “What is the Holy Spirit?” section:

The Holy Spirit mediates between illusions and the truth. Since He must bridge the gap between reality and dreams, perception leads to knowledge through the grace that God has given Him, to be His gift to everyone who turns to Him for truth. Across the bridge that He provides are dreams all carried to the truth, to be dispelled before the light of knowledge. There are sights and sounds forever laid aside. And where they were perceived before, forgiveness has made possible perception's tranquil end. (W-pII.7:1)

Since the Course’s program consists of retraining our minds and transforming our perception, it is important for us to realize the central role played by the Holy Spirit in this process. I repeat these ideas because the Course repeats them. Perception, being dualistic or divided between subject and object, cannot actually become knowledge, which is monistic or undivided.

The analogy of parallel lines, which is prominent in the Urtext version of this paragraph, was apparently deemed too confusing by the editors—an unfortunate choice! To me, it is quite clear. The knowledge of God and the perception of the Holy Spirit are like parallel lines. Each is a perfect counterpart of the other; they parallel one another.

In school we were taught that parallel lines never meet. Likewise, the ego would like us to believe that the parallel lines of the Holy Spirit’s perception and God’s knowledge can *never* meet (7:4). With the ego’s perception, which has no counterpart in God, that is true! But it isn’t the ego’s perception that is guided by the Holy Spirit, it is *ours* (7:4). We are able to use perception in a way that reflects or *parallels* knowledge only because the Holy Spirit is present in our minds. He brings a new perception to our minds, a perception that lets us surpass perception and return to truth (W-pII.269.1:3). Just as parallel lines seem to meet in the far distance, our perception *will* meet knowledge in God at the end of time (7:5–6). Jesus even asserts that recent mathematical theory suggests that parallel lines *can* meet! Everything meets in God because God created everything as one, and as part of Himself.

When I look at my brother and see him as my equal in God, this is what is going on. That perception of my brother reflects God’s knowing of him. It is perceiving him in this way, and being *willing* to perceive him in this way, that opens my mind to the memory of knowledge. Eventually, perception will blend into knowledge.

Paragraph 8

8. ¹God created His Sons by extending His Thought, and retaining the extensions of His Thought in His Mind. **2**All His Thoughts are thus perfectly united within themselves and with each other [Ur: because they were created neither partially nor in part]. ³The Holy Spirit enables you to perceive this

wholeness now. [Ur: You can no more pray for yourselves alone than you can fine [find] joy for yourself alone. Prayer is a re-statement of *inclusion*, directed by the Holy Spirit under the laws of God.] ⁴God created you to create. ⁵You cannot extend His Kingdom until you know of its wholeness.

• Study Question •

6. *Personalize this paragraph by substituting personal pronouns for nouns, and include your brother or sister by name, e.g., "God created Joe and me by extending His Thought...."*

If God created His Sons by extending His Thought and retaining those extensions in His Mind (8:1), that means that "All His Thoughts are...perfectly united within themselves and with each other" (8:2). Why? The idea seems to be that because God's Mind is one Mind, everything *in* that mind must also be one. God does not have conflicting thoughts! So if you and I are Thoughts in His Mind, *we* cannot be conflicting; we must be unified. This is "God's knowing" (7:1) that is reflected in the perception of the Holy Spirit; that is, when we perceive with the Holy Spirit, we perceive our oneness, our lack of conflict.

When I perceive with the Holy Spirit, I cannot see you as attacking me, nor can I see myself as attacking you. I see you as united within yourself (wholly loving) rather than internally conflicted, and I see myself that way also. I see you perfectly united with me, and me with you. If I am praying truly I cannot possibly pray selfishly (for myself alone), because true prayer is always an affirmation of oneness, or of "inclusion."

I cannot see us in this way by myself, but the Holy Spirit enables such a perception. His enabling always includes my perception of *you* as well as my perception of *myself*, because I cannot see my own wholeness until I also see yours. I cannot understand and fulfill my own function of creating until I know (and perceive) the wholeness of all God's creation, which is His Kingdom (8:4-5).

Paragraph 9

9. ¹Thoughts begin in the mind of the thinker, from which they reach outward. ²This is as true of God's Thinking as it is of yours. ³Because your mind is split, you can perceive as well as think. ⁴Yet perception cannot escape the basic laws of mind. ⁵You perceive from your mind and project your perceptions outward. ⁶Although perception of any kind is unreal [Ur: unnecessary], you made it and the Holy Spirit can therefore use it well. ⁷He can inspire perception and lead it toward God [Ur: by making it *parallel* to God's way of thinking, and thus guaranteeing their ultimate meeting]. ⁸This convergence seems to be far in the future only because your mind is not in perfect alignment with the idea, and therefore does not want it now.

• Study Question •

7. *What is the basic law of mind presented in this paragraph?*

To say, “Thoughts begin in the mind of the thinker, from which they reach outward” (9:1) seems to be a truism. It’s self-evident; why bother to mention it? Yet, it is an important idea that needs repeated emphasis because we do not often consider its implications. It is one of the “basic laws of mind” (9:4) which apply to God’s Thinking as well as our own (9:2). Unlike God, we not only think, we perceive, because our mind is split (9:3). Yet perception is still an activity of the mind, and must follow mind’s laws (9:4). Therefore, in accordance with the law of mind just stated, namely, that *thoughts* begin in the mind of the thinker and then reach outward, *perceptions* also begin in our minds and then *project* outward (9:5).

If you consider what is being said here you’ll realize it is quite revolutionary! We normally conceive of perception as something that begins *outside of our mind* and is then *received by the mind* from outside. Light shines on an object and is reflected to our eyes, which translate the light into signals to our brain. The brain then decodes the signals and makes some kind of sense out of them. We “see” an object.

The Course, however, says that perception works exactly in reverse of the way we think it does. It starts *in our mind* and is then *projected outward* (7:5). The mind, then, is the cause of perceptions. The thoughts held in our mind affect what we see and how we see it. Perceptions are thus “unreal” (9:6). The Urtext used the word “unnecessary” here. This seems to indicate that when the mind is whole, knowledge is all that is necessary.

Nevertheless, we made perception and therefore the Holy Spirit can use it by inspiring our perception and leading it toward God (9:6–7). By planting His thoughts in our minds, He can bring our perception into alignment with truth or with the knowledge of God. The Urtext here continues the analogy of parallel lines begun in paragraph 7.

Sometimes, it may seem to us that our minds and especially our perceptions are very far from “convergence” with God’s knowledge. God, we read, knows that I am perfect and that my brother is perfect. My perception of my brother, and my perception of myself, probably seem wildly different than that. *Me*, perfect? *Her (or him)* perfect? What a joke!

If perception is *caused* by thoughts, however, then it becomes at least possible to understand that such perfection is real and true, existing right now, although I cannot see it. I am seeing what I *want* to see, and at the moment, my mind *does not want* to perceive perfection in either of us (9:8). It seems as if it will take a very long time to bring my mind around to that perception, but the apparent length of the time required to achieve that perception is only a measure of my mind’s resistance to it. If my mind were to change, that time could collapse to an instant.

Paragraph 10

10. ¹The Holy Spirit uses time, but does not believe in it. ²Coming from

God He uses everything for good, but He does not believe in what is not true. ³Since the Holy Spirit is in your mind, your mind can also [Ur: *must be able to*] believe only what is true. ⁴The Holy Spirit can speak only for this, because He speaks for God. ⁵He tells you to return your whole mind to God, because it has never left Him. ⁶If it has never left Him, you need only perceive it as it is to be returned. ⁷The full awareness of the Atonement, then, is the recognition that *the separation never occurred*. ⁸The ego cannot prevail against this because it is an explicit statement that the ego never occurred.

• Study Question •

8. *If you truly believed that the separation never occurred, how would you be different? What would change in your life, your perceptions, your thoughts, and your behavior?*

We've read earlier in the Text that time really has only one purpose: to be used constructively (T-1.I.15:2), or to "give you time" to achieve right-mindedness (T2.VIII.5:8). When its usefulness as a learning device is over, it will cease to exist (T1.I.15:4; T13.IV.7:3-4). We *seem* to need time to bring our perception into alignment with knowledge, or for the parallel lines of perception and knowledge to converge in the "far distant" future. The Holy Spirit will *use* time for that purpose, but He does not actually believe in time; that is, time is *not* truly necessary for this purpose (10:1). He uses it for good, but that does not make time real or true (10:2).

The Holy Spirit can speak only for what is actually true, and our minds can believe only in that truth (10:3-4). As "the Call to return" (T-5.II.2:2), he calls us to return our minds to God. He does so, however, in the understanding that our minds never truly left God! (10:5). In our perception, the mind has left God; therefore, in our perception, the mind needs to be returned to Him. In reality, a Thought of God *cannot* leave His Mind, and therefore cannot truly need to return. "If it has never left Him, you need only perceive it as it is to be returned" (10:6).

We are not changing the *location* of our mind. We are changing only our *perception* of our mind. We are recognizing that our mind, as a Thought of God, has *never left* His Mind.

Sentence 7 may be one of the most important lines in the Course. It states *the* fundamental premise of the Course: "...the separation never occurred" (10:7). Also, it informs us that *recognizing* that truth is the sum total of enlightenment, "the full awareness of the Atonement." Recognition that the separation never occurred guarantees the end of the ego, because if the separation never occurred, neither did the ego (10:8).

Paragraph 11

11. ¹The ego can accept the idea that return is necessary because it can so easily make the idea seem difficult. ²Yet the Holy Spirit tells you that even

return is unnecessary, because what never happened cannot be difficult [Ur: cannot involve any problem].³ However, you can [Ur: But it does not follow that you cannot] make the idea of return both necessary and difficult. [Ur: God made nothing either necessary OR difficult. But you have perceived both as if they were part of His perfect creations.]⁴ Yet it is surely clear that the perfect need nothing, and you cannot [Ur: and cannot] experience perfection as a difficult accomplishment, because that is what you [Ur: they] are.⁵ This is the way in which you must perceive God's creations, bringing all of your perceptions into the one [Ur: parallel] line the Holy Spirit sees.⁶ This line is the direct line of communication with God, and lets your mind converge with His.⁷ There is no conflict anywhere in this perception, because it means that all perception is guided by the Holy Spirit, Whose Mind is fixed on God.⁸ Only the Holy Spirit can resolve conflict, because only the Holy Spirit is conflict-free.⁹ He perceives only what is true in your mind, and extends outward only to [to only] what is true in other minds.

• Study Question •

9. *Why does your ego like the idea that "return" is necessary?*

My ego likes the idea of "return to God" because it can make returning seem so damned hard! (11:1). It can tie me up in knots, struggling and striving and straining to "get back" to God. All of the struggle and stress to get back serves as a wonderful way to keep me from recognizing that *I never left in the first place*. How can it be difficult to "get back" if I never left? (11:2). Getting back to a place you never left is a no-brainer. It's like the times you are looking for something like your keys or your glasses and suddenly realize that you have the object in your hand or on your nose or whatever. The search suddenly becomes meaningless because you already have what you were looking for. "I was created as the thing I seek. I am the goal the world is searching for" (W-pII. 318.1:5-6).

We can make returning seem necessary and difficult (11:3), but if God created us perfect, how can it be? The perfect do not need anything, and can't experience being perfect as a difficult thing to accomplish because *perfect is what they are* (11:4). There is nowhere to go and nothing to do. There is nothing to accomplish. You started at the Finish Line. You were already Home when you came into existence.

If this is true of you, however, it *must* be true of everyone. To bring your mind into alignment with God's Mind, "you must perceive God's creations" in this same way (11:5), which means perceiving *that* brother and *that* sister as sharing perfection with you. Yes, *that* one, the one you cannot *imagine* as having anything at all to do with God.

Seeing perfection in every created being is what it means to bring your perceptions into line with what the Holy Spirit sees (11:5). This is how your mind converges with God's, and the parallel lines meet at last (11:6).

When we perceive in this way there is “no conflict anywhere” (11:7). How is it possible to perceive perfect union with people who *appear* to be in conflict with us, at times even *violent* conflict? For you and me by ourselves it isn't possible. “*Only* the Holy Spirit is conflict-free” (11:8), and therefore only He can resolve conflict. He is able to overlook all illusions in your mind and in the minds of others. He sees past the illusions and “perceives only what is true in your mind, and extends outward only to what is true in other minds” (11:9). He is able to sort out the false from the true, and He guides our perception along the same lines as His own.

Paragraph 12

12. ¹The difference between the ego's projection and the Holy Spirit's extension is very simple. ²The ego projects to **exclude**, and therefore to deceive. ³The Holy Spirit extends by **recognizing Himself in every** mind, and thus perceives them as **one**. ⁴Nothing conflicts in this perception, because what the Holy Spirit perceives **is** all the same. ⁵Wherever He looks He sees Himself, and because He is **united** He offers the whole Kingdom always. ⁶This is the one message God gave **to** Him and for which He must speak, because that is what He **is**. ⁷The peace of God lies in that message, and so the peace of God lies in **you**. ⁸The great peace of the Kingdom shines in your mind forever, but it must shine **outward** to make **you** aware of it.

• Study Question •

10. *What is the “very simple” difference between the respective purposes of the ego's projection and the Holy Spirit's extension?*

Recall that projection of the ego and extension of the Holy Spirit are different expressions of the same ability of mind. What distinguishes them is quite simple: their differing *purposes* (12:1–2). The purpose of the ego in projection is to exclude, separate, divide, and segment (12:2). The purpose of the Holy Spirit is to perceive unity by recognizing Himself in every mind (12:3).

When one perceives as the Holy Spirit perceives, there cannot be any conflict between parts of what is being perceived because the parts are all the same (12:4). The “parts” are, of course, us. *We* are all the same. We all bear the divine stamp; the Holy Spirit sees the family likeness in everyone (12:5) and sees every one of us as sharing the divine inheritance (the Kingdom). This message of our oneness is “the one message God gave to Him” (12:6), and which He speaks to us all. This is the message that brings with it the peace of God (12:7). We have that peace in us because we have that message in us, shining in our minds forever, and yet, to become *aware* of its presence within us, we must allow it to shine *out* from us to others (12:7–8).

The message keeps coming back to us repeatedly: We must give peace in order to have it. We must *not* perceive our brothers as attacking us, but we must, instead, extend

to them our perception of them as whole, complete, and perfect in God. Only in this way can we come to recognize that same perfection in ourselves.

Paragraph 13

13. ¹The Holy Spirit was given you with perfect impartiality, and only by recognizing [Ur: perceiving] Him impartially can you recognize [Ur: perceive] Him at all. ²The ego is legion, but the Holy Spirit is one. ³No darkness abides anywhere in the Kingdom, but [Ur: so] your part is only to allow no darkness to abide in your own mind. ⁴This alignment with light is unlimited, because it is in alignment with the light of the world. ⁵Each of us is the light of the world, and by joining our minds in this light we proclaim the Kingdom of God together and as one.

• Study Question •

11. *What do you suppose it means to recognize the Holy Spirit “impartially”?*

We need to see the Holy Spirit in everyone equally, because He *is* in everyone equally. Seeing Him in that way is the only way to recognize Him at all because that is what is true about Him (13:1). There is only one Holy Spirit, although “the ego is legion” (13:2). He is the same everywhere.

It’s important to realize that you are not responsible for banishing darkness anywhere but within “your own mind” (13:3). Although everyone is equally devoid of darkness, your only part is to take care of recognizing that fact *in your own mind* and making sure that no darkness gets to live there. It isn’t your job to tell anyone else what to do or how to do it; just take care of yourself.

As we align our own minds with the light, sharing the unified perception of the Holy Spirit, we are lining up with the light of the world (13:4). Although we may seem to be taking care of just one individual mind, the effect is unlimited. In aligning with the light of the world we *become* the light of the world, and “by joining our minds in this light we proclaim the Kingdom of God together and as one” (13:5).

As I take responsibility for my own mind, allowing no darkness (i.e., judgment or thoughts of blame and attack) to remain in it, it’s like tuning in to the most powerful force in the universe—the light of the world, the Love of God. As I recognize the Holy Spirit in my brothers and sisters, I *am* proclaiming the Kingdom of God, I *am* bringing peace on earth.

Answer Key

1. All are forms of separation, of splitting our awareness off from something.
2. Projection involves a rejection of part of myself, which is one kind of split. It results in my rejection of my brother, who is really a part of me, which is another kind of split.
3. The corresponding steps in extension and projection:

Extension	Projection
The Holy Spirit sees us as perfect.	We deny or reject something in our mind.
He recognizes the perfection in others.	We project the thing onto someone else.
Perfection is strengthened in ourselves.	The thing now seems split off from us.
This arouses in us love for the other person.	We recoil from the person onto whom we have projected (anger).
Extension establishes inclusion, so that the other is seen as part of us. We see others as our equals.	The other person appears to be split off or separate from us. We see ourselves as "better."

4. (a) "That" refers to "part of God" in sentence 2. You *are* a part of God; that is "what you are." Since that is true, it also defines "*where* you are": within God. Wherever God is, you are. You are not "in the world," you are "in God."
 (b) I cannot be anywhere God did not put me. He created me as part of Him. That is both what I am and where I am. It is completely unalterable. It is total inclusion. I cannot change it now or ever. It is not a belief but a Fact. Being part of God is what I am and where I am.
5. An example: When the Holy Spirit guides my perception of Joe, I perceive his perfect equality with me in God. This perception reflects God's knowing of Joe as His perfect creation and my brother. Holy Spirit, guide my perception of Joe in a way that reflects knowledge, for only in this way can I remember God.
6. God created Joe and me by extending His Thought, and retaining us in His Mind as extensions of His Thought. Joe and I are thus perfectly united within ourselves and united with each other. The Holy Spirit enables me to perceive this wholeness now. God created me to create. I cannot extend God's Kingdom (i.e., create) until I know of the Kingdom's wholeness—which means perceiving Joe and myself as equal creations of God, united in God.
7. The basic law of mind is that thoughts begin in the mind of the thinker, from which they reach outward (but without leaving that mind).
8. No written answer is expected.

Allen Watson's Commentary on the Text of *A Course in Miracles*

9. The ego likes the idea that “return” to God is necessary because it can make the idea of return seem very *difficult*.
10. The purpose of the ego’s projection is *exclusion*. The purpose of the Holy Spirit’s extension is *the perception of oneness*.
11. The word *impartial* means not biased, not favoring one more than another, or treating all alike. Thus to recognize the Holy Spirit impartially means to recognize Him equally in everyone, without distinction.