

Study Guide and Commentary

ACIM[®] Text, Chapter 7, Section IV

Healing as the Recognition of Truth

Legend for Text paragraphs:

blue text = Material from ACIM 3rd edition (FIP)
bold blue text = words emphasized in all caps in Urtext
red text = alternate or omitted material from the Urtext
light blue text = editorial comments
~~striketrough blue text~~ = Not in Urtext, in FIP edition

Overview of the Section

While the preceding section focused on what we are and have in *reality*, and the *certainty of knowledge*, this section, “Healing as the Recognition of Truth,” turns to *healing*. It tells us that healing is “...a way of approaching knowledge by thinking in accordance with the laws of God, and recognizing their universality” (6:9). In other words, Section III spoke mainly of the goal, while this section speaks of the *means* of approaching that goal. It continues with and applies some other earlier themes, particularly the way the Holy Spirit translates the law of the Kingdom into an intermediate form that bridges the gap between our muddled perception and perfect knowledge.

Specifically, what is *creation* in Heaven becomes *healing* here on earth. You heal your mind simply by recognizing the truth about your mind. Your mind is already whole because God created it whole, but you have taught yourself that it is sick, conflicted, unloving, and all the other negative adjectives you could think of. Healing is just undoing that mistaken teaching; it is just recognizing the lies we have told ourselves, and letting them go.

The laws of God represent *reality* or Heaven, the realm of absolute truth. Those laws bring certainty. Healing is a concept that applies only in the *unreal* situation of this world. In Heaven nothing needs to be healed. Healing comes through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; it does not come directly from God. It comes indirectly, from God *through* the Holy Spirit, Who translates God’s laws into a form we can understand in this world.

Urtext Material

There are two paragraphs that occur here, that, for some reason, were omitted from the published version. I include them here with some comments.

Healing is both an art and a science, as has so often been said. It is an art

because it depends on inspiration in the sense that we have already used the term. Inspiration is the opposite of dis-spiriting, and therefore means to make joyful. The dis-spirited are depressed because they believe that they are literally “without the Spirit,” which is an illusion. You do not put the Spirit in them by inspiring them, because that would be “magic,” and therefore would not be real healing. But you do recognize the Spirit that is already there, and thereby reawaken it. This is why the healer is part of the Resurrection and the Life. The Spirit is not asleep in the minds of the sick, but the part of the mind that can perceive it and be glad is.

This paragraph begins the discussion of healing that, as the chapter title implies, is the topic of this section. First, healing *as an art*. It depends on *inspiration*, which consists of recognizing the Spirit that is already in the “patient,” and reawakening that Spirit—or more properly, reawakening the part of the patient’s mind that can perceive the Spirit—by recognizing Spirit in them. Thus, the healer heals by “inspiring,” the patient, that is, by or awakening the patient’s recognition of Spirit. The healer does not put Spirit into the patient. Spirit is already, always there. The healer simply recognizes It and affirms Its Presence. This evokes joy in the patient. Healing is a joyful process.

Healing is also a science because it obeys the laws of God, whose laws are true. Because they are true, they are perfectly dependable, and therefore universal in application. The real aim of science is neither prediction nor control, but only understanding. This is because it does not establish the laws it seeks; cannot discover them through prediction, and has no control over them at all. Science is nothing more than an approach to what already is. Like inspiration, it can be misunderstood as magic, and will be whenever it is undertaken as separate from what already is, and perceived as a means for establishing it. To believe this is possible is to believe you can do it. This can only be the voice of the ego.

But healing is also *a science* “because it obeys the laws of God.” The aim of science is simply to understand the laws. Natural science deals with understanding natural law; divine science deals with understanding divine laws. We do not define the laws, we simply discover them and use them. “Science is nothing more than an approach to what already is.” A healer does not *establish* health and wholeness through use of the laws of mind action; that is a mistake our egos often make. Healing is affirming and engaging a wholeness that always, already exists.

Paragraph 1

1. 1 Truth can only *be recognized* and *need* only be recognized. 2 Inspiration is of the Holy Spirit [Ur: *Inspiration is of the Spirit*], and certainty is of God according to His laws. 3 Both, therefore, come from the same Source, since inspiration comes from the Voice **for** God and certainty comes from the laws of God. 4 Healing does not come **directly** from God, Who knows His creations as perfectly whole. 5 Yet healing is still [Ur: *nevertheless*] **of** God, because it proceeds from His Voice and from His laws. 6 It is their **result** [the result of His

Voice and His laws], in a state of mind that does not know Him. 7The **state** [of mind that does not know Him] is unknown to Him and therefore does not exist, but those who sleep are [stupefied, or better,] **unaware**. 8**Because** they are unaware, **they do not know**.

• **Study Question** •

1. *Try to explain the meaning of 1:6 in your own words. You may want to compare this sentence with 5:5–6 and T-20.IV.2:10.*

This discussion clearly follows on and builds on the two omitted paragraphs. Why they were left out is a mystery. The opening line (1:1) summarizes the main point of the preceding two paragraphs: We are not establishing truth, we are simply *recognizing* it. Sentence 2 then refers both to the artistic aspect of healing, inspiration, and the scientific aspect, God's laws.

Truth needs nothing besides recognition (1:1). It does not need to be learned. It does not need to be created. It is simply the way things are, the nature of things, similar to what Buddhists call *dharma* or Taoists call the *tao*. In line with that thought, our minds are *already whole*. That is their nature, their truth. They are not in need of any *change*; their only need is to *recognize* their essential nature, their truth. "Enlightenment is but a recognition, not a change at all" (W-pI.188.1:4).

Certainty, as we saw in Sections II and III, is connected with Heaven, with knowledge, and with God (T-7.II.3:4–5; T-7.III.5): "To know is to be certain" (T-3.III.1:3). We, however, have obscured and lost our certainty, so that what we are has become something we have to remember (T-6.III.2:3 and T-6.IV.7:6). Certainty arises from God, according to God's laws (1:2–3).

Inspiration, on the other hand, "is of the Holy Spirit" (1:2–3). He is called the "Universal Inspiration" (T-5.I.4:6) and "the shared Inspiration of all the Sonship" (T-5.I.7:1). He inspired the Atonement principle (T-5.I.5:2). He inspires miracles (2:3) and healing (T-7.V.6:9). The Course seems to connect inspiration to healing; inspiration has a restorative function, infusing spirit into those who have been dis-spirited (T-4.In.1:6). It does not put spirit *into* us, but it recognizes or reawakens the spirit that is already there. Someone in need of inspiration lacks certainty. He or she needs to be encouraged toward a goal. God gives certainty; the Holy Spirit grants inspiration to those who have lost touch with their certainty, in order to restore that certainty.

"Healing," then, "does not come directly from God" (1:4). God *knows* we are "perfectly whole" (1:4), so why, or how, would He heal us? There is no need of it—in *reality*. However, in our illusion, we *are* sick, we *do* lack, we *have* lost our knowledge. All of that is illusion, of course; we are not really sick, we have everything, and our knowledge is perfectly intact and "perfectly clear" in our right mind (T-7.III.4:9). The Holy Spirit, however, works with us where we think we are. He brings us healing because we think we need it.

The healing He brings still comes from God, but *indirectly* rather than *directly*. Healing "proceeds from" God's Voice and God's laws (1:5), but it comes by means of the Holy Spirit, who takes God's laws and interprets them, or translates them, into a form that meets the needs we think we have.

At this point please turn in the Course to the Clarification of Terms section at the back of the Manual for Teachers, and read Section 6, paragraph 4, which begins with the words: "The Holy Spirit abides...." It gives a very clear statement of the way the Holy Spirit bridges the gap and takes whatever form seems necessary to meet our imagined needs.

You may wonder why the Course makes such a point of distinguishing the function of the Holy Spirit from that of God. We've seen this before, in Chapter 5 for instance, where we were told pointedly, "God is not in you in a literal sense" (T-5.II.5:5), and yet, "The Holy Spirit is in you in a very literal sense" (T-5.II.3:7). I interpret this as a kind of philosophical ploy to "protect" the purity of God, that is, to avoid anthropomorphizing Him. The Course does not want to attribute *to God* any qualities or attributes that would make God part of our dualistic nightmare, so it lets the Holy Spirit deal with that side of things.

God, in the Course, *does not know* about a state of mind that does not know Him; therefore, *because He does not know it*, it "does not exist" (1:7). If God *did* know about such a state of mind, that would mean that it *does* exist. If the Course were to teach that healing comes directly from God, it would mean that God *recognizes our sickness and treats it as real*. It would mean, in effect, that the separation *has* occurred! Why would God give us healing unless we were really sick? The fact that no mind exists that does not know God is the whole basis for our salvation!

The Course, therefore, presents us with a Mediator, the Holy Spirit. He straddles the gap between reality and illusion. He knows the truth, but He also recognizes the delusion from which we suffer ("Because they are unaware, they do not know" (1:8)), and He responds to that delusion with healing. He "meets the needs you think you have" (C-6.4:7). We think we do not know God, so the Holy Spirit responds with inspiration and healing, restoring our minds to the awareness of that knowledge, which in truth we have never lost.

Healing, then, is the result of God's Voice and God's laws, in the state of mind that does not know Him (even though such a state of mind really does not exist!) (1:6-7). Healing is, in effect, the law of creation translated to our relative level of existence in this world. Chapter 20 says almost the same thing: "It is the reawakening of the laws of God in minds that have established other laws, and given them power to enforce what God created not" (T-20.IV.2:10).

God's laws *result* in healing even when they are not directly intended to heal. One thing that helps me understand how that works is the way I tune my guitar. Maybe this illustration will help you, too.

I have a pitch pipe. When I blow through it, it sounds a pure tone, perhaps an E (there are six tones corresponding to the six strings on a guitar). One of the strings on my guitar is an E-string, and should sound the identical tone. But the guitar string can stretch, or the tuning screw can get jarred out of place, so that the string is out of tune. I retune the guitar by sounding the tone on the pitch pipe, then sounding the tone on the guitar string, and adjusting the string until its tone matches that of the pitch pipe.

The pitch pipe isn't "doing" anything. It simply is what it is. It does not sound its pure tone "because" the guitar is out of tune; it sounds the same tone regardless of what the guitar does! Yet, it serves as a correction for the guitar; it provides a standard to which I can match the guitar.

God's laws are like the pitch pipe. They do not "do" anything to bring about healing; they just are what they are. The laws are not issued "because" we have lost our awareness of God; the laws are the laws regardless of what we do or do not do. The truth is the truth. The Holy Spirit simply helps me hold my thoughts up against the standard of God's thoughts, and helps me see where my thoughts are out of accord, and need to be "retuned."

Paragraph 2

2. ¹The Holy Spirit must work *through* you to teach you He is *in* you. ²This is an intermediary step toward the knowledge that **you** are in God **because you are part of Him**. ³The miracles the Holy Spirit inspires **can** have no order of difficulty, because every part of creation **is** of one order. ⁴This is God's Will **and** yours. ⁵The laws of God **establish** this, and the Holy Spirit reminds you **of** it. ⁶When you heal, you are **remembering the laws of God** and **forgetting** the laws of the ego. ⁷I said before that forgetting is merely a way of **remembering better**. ⁸It is therefore **not** the opposite of remembering when it is properly perceived. ⁹Perceived improperly, it induces a perception of **conflict with something else**, as all incorrect perception does. ¹⁰**Properly** perceived, it can be used as a way **out** of conflict, as all proper perception can.

• Study Question •

2. On "forgetting and remembering," compare this paragraph with T-7.II.6:4 and T5.II.6:1.
- (a) What do we forget, and what do we remember (2:6)?
- (b) What brings us this experience of forgetting and remembering (2:1, 2:6)?

If you are like me, you probably tend to think of yourself when the Course talks about healing. That is, when it says that healing proceeds from God's laws and is their result in a state of mind that doesn't know Him, you think about *your own mind being healed*. Apparently, however, that is *not* the primary meaning Jesus gives it! Instead, he is speaking about the Holy Spirit working *through* you to heal *others*; that is what teaches you that He is in you (2:1). It isn't that God's laws result in the healing of your mind, it is that God's laws (of creation or extension) result in His healing power *extending itself through you*. That *does* heal you, eventually, but it heals you on the principle that what you give, you receive. Your healing is the secondary result; the *primary* result of God's laws applied to your muddled mind is that healing extends itself *through you*. "I will be healed as I let Him teach me to heal" (T-2.V(A).18:6).

We learn what is *in us* by observing its effects on the world around us. This is how the mind knows itself: "...from *what* [the mind] extends it knows itself" (T-6.III.1:2). By the healing we manifest, we learn the nature of the Holy Spirit Who is in us and part of us. In that regard, please read T-12.VII.3:1-2, 4, which is another passage showing how we can only know the Holy Spirit by what He does *through* us:

The Holy Spirit is invisible, but you can see the results of His Presence, and through them you will learn that He is there. What He enables you to do is clearly not of this world, for miracles violate every law of reality as this world judges it. ...Perceiving His

results, you will understand where He must be, and finally know what He is. (T-12.VII.3:1–2, 4)

Therefore, in order to correct our delusion about what we are, the Holy Spirit must extend miracles *through* us. The healing that heals us is not our own healing, but the healing we extend to others! Recognizing the presence of the Holy Spirit within us is “an intermediary step” on the journey back to the knowledge of our true Self. First, by extending miracles (2:3), we learn that *the Holy Spirit is in us*. That, in turn, will lead us to the awareness that *we are in God* (2:2). The miracles inspired by the Holy Spirit reflect the unity of creation in that they have no order of difficulty, because these miracles are the result in this world of God’s laws, which establish creation as being “of one order” (2:3–5). In this way, the miracles of healing performed through us will remind us of the laws of God (2:5–6).

The Course’s teaching about remembering and forgetting is interesting. There are two main earlier references to it: T-5.II.6:1 and T-7.II.6:1–8. In this section, forgetting is discussed not only in this paragraph (2:6–10), but also in paragraphs 4 and 7. The earlier references emphasized that we are called both to remember (God) and to forget (the ego). Forgetting the ego’s teaching is necessary in order to remember the laws of God, as the earlier references pointed out, and as is repeated here (2:6). In other words, “Forgetting is merely a way of remembering better” (2:7).

What we are remembering is that everyone (every part of God’s creation) is equally worthy of being healed. Simultaneously, we are forgetting the laws of the ego that teach some are worthy and some are not. This kind of forgetting is the flip side of remembering, not its opposite (2:8). To remember that everyone is worthy, you *must* forget the whole concept of orders or levels in the Kingdom. Forgetting, then, perceived properly, is a positive thing (2:9–10). We’ll have more to say about it a bit later.

Paragraph 3

3. [You will notice that we have used the term abilities as a plural, which is correct. This is because abilities began with the ego, which perceived them as a POTENTIAL FOR EXCELLING. This is how the ego STILL perceives them and uses them.] ¹The ego does **not** want to teach everyone all it has learned, because that would **defeat** its purpose [Ur: in learning]. ²Therefore it does not **really** learn at all. ³The Holy Spirit teaches **you** to use what the ego has made, to **teach** the opposite of what the ego has “**learned**.” ⁴The **kind** of learning is as irrelevant as is the particular ability that was applied to the learning. [You could not have a better example of the Holy Spirits (this) unified purpose than this course. The Holy Spirit has taken very diversified areas of YOUR past learning, and has applied them to a UNIFIED curriculum. The fact that this was NOT the egos reason for learning is totally irrelevant. YOU made the effort to learn, and the Holy Spirit has a unified goal for ALL effort. He ADAPTS the egos potentials for excelling to potentials for EQUALIZING. This makes them USELESS for the egos purpose, but VERY useful for His.] ⁵All **you** need do is make the effort to learn, for the Holy Spirit has a unified goal for the effort. ⁶If different abilities are applied long enough to one **goal**, the abilities **themselves** become unified. ⁷This is because they are channelized in one direction, or in one

way. ⁸Ultimately, then, they all contribute to **one result**, and by so doing, their **similarity** rather than their differences is emphasized. [Ur: You can *excel* in many *different ways*, but you can *equalize* in *one way only*. Equality is *not* a variable state, by definition.]

• **Study Question** •

3. *Give some concrete examples of some things that the ego made which the Holy Spirit can use to teach us.*

If most of this paragraph seems familiar, you are right: It was originally located between Sections II and III, and was part of a longer discussion about abilities, and how the ego developed them as “potentials for excelling,” or being better than others, while the Holy Spirit wishes to use them as “potentials for equalizing,” affirming our divine equality. I discussed it with commentary appropriate to that context as an appendix to the commentary on T-7.III. Here, I will address my comments to it in *this* context, which is where the editors felt it was more appropriate.

Think how Helen Schucman, who, in her human frailty, was rather proud of her personal achievements, must have received this message. Jesus was telling her that all her efforts at personal academic excellence—which her ego intended to set her apart and above others—could now be used by the Holy Spirit to bring people to perfect equality through healing. The ego does not want to share what it learns because it learns to make itself *superior to others* (3:1). But Jesus took all of Helen’s abilities, things “the ego has made” (3:3), and used them to build his Course, thus teaching “the opposite of what the ego has ‘learned’” (3:3). Instead of making Helen alone superior, her abilities now contributed to helping everyone realize their equality. Helen’s psychic abilities, her knowledge of psychology, her love of logic, and her liking for Shakespearean iambic pentameter, were all used to contribute to *A Course in Miracles*.

Applying this to ourselves, we can realize that we do not need to “throw out” anything our egos have done; all of it can become fuel for the fire of God. The Holy Spirit can use anything the ego has made, and use it to undo the ego (3:3). It does not matter what kind of learning was involved, or what ability was needed to learn it; all of it, given to the Holy Spirit, can be used towards His “unified goal” (3:4–5). The abilities we bring to the Kingdom, “applied long enough to one goal,” all get blended together. We see their similarities rather than their differences (3:6–8).

I think this is true for each of us and the various abilities and talents we may have acquired in our lifetimes. It does not matter that our original motivation for developing these abilities was completely ego-driven, and totally intended to make us King of the Mountain. The Holy Spirit can use all of them, and by applying them to the single goal of healing He brings them into harmony with one another. It is true as well for us as a group. Different individuals may have widely varying abilities. We may approach the goal from very different directions. But if we all have the same goal, we will grow more and more aware, not of our differences, but of our similarities. The longer I study different world religions, for instance, the more I see their similarities.

Paragraph 4

4. ¹All abilities should therefore be given over to the Holy Spirit, **Who understands how to use them properly.** ²He uses them **only** for healing, because He knows you **only** as whole. **3**By healing you learn of wholeness, and by learning of wholeness you learn to remember God. ⁴You **have** forgotten Him, but the Holy Spirit understands [Ur: still knows] that **your forgetting must be translated into a way of remembering** [Ur: and *not* perceived as a *separate* ability which *opposes an opposite*. This is the way in which the ego tries to use *all* abilities, because its goal is *always* to make you believe that you are in opposition].

• Study Question •

4. *Make a list of some of your abilities, and consciously give them over to the Holy Spirit in prayer, asking that they be used to bring healing to others, so you may awaken to your own wholeness.*

Although the insertion of the preceding paragraph makes sense and seems to fit well, remember for a moment that, originally, it was not in this place. Sentence 4:1 was immediately preceded by sentence 2:10. We should ask ourselves regarding 4:1, “What is the ‘therefore’ there for? What does it refer to?” And obviously it cannot be referring to what is now Paragraph 3 because it wasn’t there; it must be referring to the end of Paragraph 2. The topic of discussion there was remembering and forgetting, as two apparently opposite abilities. Jesus makes the point that “Forgetting is merely a way of remembering better” because, *if perceived properly*, it can be used to eradicate errors from our minds, clearing the way for remembering the laws of God. Thus, forgetting can be used as a way out of conflict. “*Therefore*,” Jesus says, “*all* abilities should be given over to the Holy Spirit, who understands how to use them properly.”

Do you see the connection? Forgetting is an ability that, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, can become a tool for positive mental healing. If that is true of forgetting, it is equally true for *all* abilities: Any ability in His hands can become a vehicle for healing.

Are we willing to give our abilities over to the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to direct the ways in which we use them? (4:1). Perhaps we have spent years developing our skills in some area, or building our bodies, or filling our minds with specialized knowledge of some kind. Most likely we have done so to benefit ourselves. We wanted to qualify for a better job, earn more money, attract a better quality mate, or simply to stand out head and shoulders above the crowd. If we give these abilities to the Holy Spirit, that isn’t how He will use them! He will use them for healing—period (4:2). Are we willing to do that?

If we are, He will use those abilities to extend healing through us, which will teach us of the wholeness of our brothers, and thus of our own wholeness. In learning of our wholeness, we will learn, eventually, to remember God (4:3). In a broader sense, then, He will still use our abilities for our benefit, but only in a way that includes everyone else at the same time, and reminds us of a much larger vision of all that our Self includes. They will become potentials for equalizing rather than potentials for excelling.

Even the ability to *forget*, which the ego made in order to forget God, can be “translated into a way of remembering,” as we learn to forget the lessons taught by the

ego (4:4). The Urtext goes on to emphasize that it is essential to realize that forgetting is not the *opposite* of remembering, but a *way* of remembering. The ego is always trying to keep us in conflict, to believe that different parts of our minds are at war with one another. Workbook lessons 74 and 307 teach us that, in reality, in our true Self, conflicting wishes or desires are impossible.

Paragraph 5

5. ¹The ego's goal is as unified as the Holy Spirit's, and it is **because** of this that their goals can **never** be reconciled in **any** way or to **any** extent. ²The ego **always** seeks to divide and separate. ³The Holy Spirit always seeks to unify and **heal**. ⁴As you heal [others] you **are** healed, because the Holy Spirit sees **no order of difficulty in healing**. ⁵Healing is the way to undo the belief in differences, being the **only** way of perceiving the Sonship as one [Ur: undo the belief in differences, because it is the *only way of perceiving the Sonship without this belief*]. ⁶This perception is therefore **in** accord with the laws of God, even in a state of mind that is **out** of accord with His. ⁷[Ur: But] The strength of right perception is so great that it brings the mind **into** accord with His, because it serves His Voice, Which **is** in all of you.

• Study Question •

5. *Some teach that the ego will ultimately be harmonized with God, like a misguided child that finally grows up. What does the Course say about this viewpoint?*

“The ego always seeks to separate and divide” (5:2), while the Holy Spirit’s aim is “to unify and heal” (5:3). Their goals could not be more diametrically opposed. If you consider any relationship in which you have allowed the ego to operate without restraint, you have seen this in action. You find yourself separated from the other person in your relationship, barriers between you, your time together marred by strained silences. That is always the way when you listen to your ego.

Our abilities are also used by the ego to separate and divide. Instead of using my computer skills, for instance, to assist you, I might emphasize how much more skilled I am than you, and thus “elevate” myself above you, creating more separation. The Holy Spirit would use that ability to unify and to heal; that is how He uses *everything*. The goals of the ego are so different from the goals of the Holy Spirit, and so unified in their direction, that the two sets of goals “can never be reconciled in any way or to any extent” (5:1).

Notice the two-fold nature of that negation. The goals cannot be reconciled *in any way*. That means they are contrary to one another in every aspect. From whatever angle you might choose to look at them, the ego’s goals are opposed to those of the Holy Spirit. There is no way they can be reconciled. The goals as well cannot be reconciled *to any extent*. In other words, *not in the slightest!* They are completely incompatible. The ego is beyond hope of redemption!

Some spiritual teachers say that the ego is like an abused child that needs to be loved, accepted, and guided back home. It is a lost part of our mind that needs to be won over

and reconciled with the rest of the mind. That is not the Course's view. As we have seen before, the Course says that the ego "never was and never will be" part of our God-like mind (T-6.III.1:7). What the Course says of our *specialness* applies equally to our ego: "It will forevermore be unforgiving, for that is what it is; a secret vow that what God wants for you will never be, and that you will oppose His Will forever" (T-24.III.4:6).

As our minds are guided to heal by the Holy Spirit, they will seek equality and unity. Because all are equal, and equally worthy, one healing is the same as another, and "as you heal you are healed" (5:4). This should be a familiar concept by now; the Course has said it often enough and in many ways.

This is why healing actually undoes our "belief in differences" (5:5). What heals you is allowing healing to flow through you to others. What follows is, I believe, actually a short explanation of why, or how, giving healing to others heals *you*.

First, to give healing to another, you have to recognize their wholeness, which means seeing the person as an equal part of the one Sonship. Your mind is recognizing the oneness of the Sonship. Even though your mind may be out of accord with God's Mind, that perception of the Sonship mirrors the laws of God (5:6). Right perception is so powerful that, as it swings into line with God's truth, it *pulls the entire mind along with it* (5:7). Your mind, which was *out of accord* with God, is drawn *into accord* with Him. It harmonizes with the Voice for God that is in all of us (5:7). Thus, your extension of healing has healed you.

My personal, less theoretical explanation is that when I let love flow through me, I discover that the feeling is very familiar and comfortable. This causes me to realize that love must be my nature because loving feels so natural! Therefore, the way to remember my true Self is to willingly choose to let the Holy Spirit work through me to heal those around me, even if my mind does not seem to me to be very godly at the time—which is pretty much what was said back in 2:1!

Paragraph 6

6. ¹To think you can oppose the Will of God is [Ur: To oppose the pull or the will of God is not an ability but] a real delusion. ²The ego believes that it can [Ur: has this ability], and that it can offer you its own "will" [Ur: offer this ability to you] as a gift. ³You do not want it. ⁴It is **not** a gift. ⁵It is **nothing at all**. ⁶God **has** given you a gift that you both *have* and *are*. ⁷When you do not **use** it, you forget [Ur: do not know] that you **have** it. ⁸By not remembering it [Ur: not knowing this], you do **not** know what you **are**. ⁹Healing, then, is a way of **approaching** knowledge by **thinking** in accordance with the laws of God, and **recognizing their universality**. ¹⁰**Without** this recognition, you have made the laws meaningless **to** you. ¹¹Yet the **laws** are not meaningless, since all meaning is contained **by** them and **in** them.

• Study Question •

6. *Explain what these sentences mean to you: "God has given you a gift that you both have and are. When you do not use it, you forget that you have it" (6:6–7).*



The ego believes we can have a will independent of God's, and offers us the delusion of an independent will (6:1–2). No such will exists and we do not want it (6:3–5). Our healing is recognizing the truth of what we are and *using* it; that truth, reflected in this world, manifests in our being healers of others (6:6, 9). When we do not use our gift, we forget it, and therefore forget who we are; we “lose” the meaning of God's laws for ourselves, although those laws continue to contain and define all meaning (6:7–8, 10–11).

Perhaps there is some way in which you believe you *have* opposed God's will and resisted the inner pull towards God. The good news here is, that's a delusion! You cannot do it; you cannot oppose God. You *can* forget what you are, however, and that is all that has happened when you think you've resisted God. You have not resisted God, you've just forgotten that you can't!

We are still discussing mental vigilance here, I think. This comparison of the ego's beliefs with those of the Holy Spirit serves as a “Heads up!” to us, alerting us to what kind of thoughts to watch for. When our minds gravitate to differences in the people we see, rather than to our sameness and equality, we are listening to our egos. We are vitiating the meaning of God's laws. We are hiding from ourselves the truth of our true nature as givers and healers.

In other words, we need to become vigilant against *anti-healing* thoughts, thoughts that inhibit or block the flow of God's healing Love through us to others. All such thoughts are characterized by a focus on differences and division, instead of equality and oneness. Watch what you are thinking about people, and *how* you are thinking about them. Do your thoughts reflect differences and division, or equality and oneness? The first kind of thinking blocks healing; the second kind encourages healing and supports your remembrance of your true Self.

Paragraph 7

7. ¹Seek ye **first** the Kingdom of Heaven, because that is where the laws of God operate truly, and they can operate **only** truly because they are the laws of truth. ²But **seek this only**, because you can **find** nothing else. ³There *is* nothing else. ⁴God is All in all in a very literal sense. ⁵All being is in Him Who is [Ur: because He *is*] all Being. **6**You are therefore in Him since [Ur: because] **your being is His**. ⁷Healing is a way of **forgetting** the sense of danger the ego has induced in **you**, by not recognizing its existence in your brother [Ur: brothers]. ⁸This strengthens the Holy Spirit in **both** of you, because it is a **refusal to acknowledge fear**. ⁹Love needs only this invitation. ¹⁰It comes freely to **all** the Sonship, being what the Sonship **is**. ¹¹By your awakening **to** it, you are merely forgetting what you are **not**. ¹²This enables you to remember what you **are**.

• Study Question •

7. *Think of a situation involving you and another person in which there is need of healing, and try to apply what this paragraph says to that situation. In that situation, what is the “sense of danger” spoken of here? How could overlooking that in your brother help you forget it in yourself (7:7–8)?*

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In the first sentence, the archaic word, “ye,” is a clue that Jesus is (almost) quoting from the King James Version of the Bible: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). The Course gives it an unusual twist—as usual! As the Course applies it, this admonition means that we should remember and express the laws of Heaven here on earth, always seeking to unify and to heal, rather than to divide and to steal. “Seek ye first the Kingdom” is another call to mental vigilance. If you recall, the third lesson of the Holy Spirit was: “Be vigilant only for God *and His Kingdom*” (T-6.V(C), my emphasis).

Jesus here advises us to *seek* only the Kingdom, which I think means *be vigilant* only for the Kingdom. Watch your mind with the intention of allowing it to contain *only* thoughts that reflect the laws of God. Why? “...because you can find nothing else. There is nothing else” (7:2–3). The Kingdom of God *is* reality; the appearance of something else is pure illusion. God is everything there is—*literally*. He is “All in all” (7:4). He *contains* “all being”; He *is* “all Being” (7:5). The Bible also speaks of God being “all in all” and filling “all in all” (I Cor. 15:18; Eph. 1:23). God is *in* all, and God *is* All.¹

Whenever we are seeking for or clinging to something that seems to be opposed to or outside of God’s Kingdom, it cannot be anything but a delusion. We are thirsting for a mirage.

We saw this same connection between vigilance (to keep only the Kingdom in our minds) and reality (nothing but the Kingdom is real) when we were discussing paragraph 9 of the discussion on the third lesson of the Holy Spirit (T-6.V(C).9). There, we said:

“Truth” is the way things are, or what is real. If something is true, it isn’t illusion; if something is illusion, it isn’t true. That’s self-evident. God’s Kingdom contains all truth, and only truth; it is the sum total of Reality (T-6.V(C).9:1). Anything that is *not* in the Kingdom is illusion (T-6.V(C).9:2).²

This is pretty profound theology (wisdom about God) or cosmology (wisdom about the cosmos, or the universe as a whole). God and the universe are coincident; they occupy the same space; they are identical. God *is* the universe. All that is God is real, and all that is real is God. Whatever has being is part of Him because He *is all Being*. He is everything in everything, “All in all.” The existentialist theologian, Paul Tillich, defined God as “the Ground of all being.” That is very much the same thing the Course is trying to tell us. God *is* being; He is *Is-ness*. “There is nothing else” (7:3). As the Introduction to the Text put it: “Nothing unreal exists” (T-In.2:3).

Jesus is telling us that we need to watch our minds so that our thoughts reflect these facts of reality. Seek *only* God and His Kingdom because nothing else exists. Listening to the ego’s thoughts of difference and division assumes that something beside God exists,

¹ Basically, the Course is teaching *panentheism*. Wikipedia defines panentheism thusly: Panentheism (from Greek πᾶν (pân) "all"; ἐν (en) "in"; and θεός (theós) "God"; "all-in-God") is a belief system which posits that God personally exists, interpenetrates every part of nature and timelessly extends beyond it. Panentheism is differentiated from pantheism, which holds that God is not a distinct being but is synonymous with the universe. Simply put, in pantheism, God is the whole; however, in panentheism, the whole is in God. This means that the universe in the first formulation is practically the whole itself. In the second formulation, the universe and God are not ontologically equivalent. In panentheism, God is viewed as the eternal animating force behind the universe.

² See also T-14.II.8:5–7.

that seeking to be “more than” a brother actually has some benefit. There is nothing besides God. There is nothing to seek outside of Him.

Your being is in God and nowhere else (7:6). You are therefore entirely safe and secure; there is nothing to fear, and no need to defend yourself against your brothers. Yet, within you there is a “sense of danger” that has been induced by the ego (7:7), because of its belief in separateness and its wholly imagined guilt over your “attack” on God. You are afraid, and therefore defensive toward God and toward your brothers. Healing is a way of curing that ingrained fear (7:7). By “healing,” remember, the Course means *giving* healing, not *receiving* it! *Giving healing to others* is a way to cure the fear within you.

How does that work? Remember that the ego has taught us to use sickness as a kind of punishment for sin. To give healing, you must recognize that the person you want to heal *deserves* or *merits* the healing. You therefore must recognize that they are *not* separate and *not* guilty; the “sense of danger” they may feel is false, and no danger actually exists for them. Giving healing to them, therefore, means that your mind must accept your brother or sister as a child of God, a child whose being is in God, wholly worthy of being whole. In so doing, you have accepted the principle by which *you are freed from guilt and fear yourself*. If your brother is not in danger, then you are not in danger either, for the same reason: You are *in God*. You are acknowledging the Holy Spirit in him, and thus acknowledging Him in yourself, and strengthening Him in both of you.

See him through the Holy Spirit in his mind, and you will recognize Him in yours.
What you acknowledge in your brother you are acknowledging in yourself, and
what you share you strengthen. (T-5.III.3:4–5)

Giving healing to a person means that you refuse to acknowledge fear in either of your minds; you refuse to *validate* the fear (7:8). By invalidating the fear, you are rejecting the ego’s picture that says you both are sinners who *deserve* to be afraid. When you do that, you are inviting Love to enter (7:9). You are removing “the blocks to the awareness of love's presence, which is your natural inheritance” (T-In.1:7). Love is your inheritance because love is what you are, and what everyone is (7:10). Refusing the fear is how you forget “what you are not” (sinners), and that is what “enables you to remember what you are” (love) (7:11–12). Love flows in to your awareness, and you recognize It as your Self.

• **Study Question** •

8. *As a additional exercise, look through the following references from this section, all of which speak about what healing is or does, and try to summarize what the Course means by “healing.” 1:4–6; 2:6; 4:3; 5:5; 6:9; and 7:7–8.*

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Answer Key

1. God's Voice (the Holy Spirit) and God's laws (the principles that govern Heaven or reality) do not directly act upon our minds to heal us. Their effect, however, on a mind that does not know God, is healing. This is an indirect effect, not a direct action of God. Healing is thus the *reflection* of God's laws in the world of illusion. Another way of saying it might be: In Heaven, God's laws are simply the way things are; in a mind that is out of accord with His, which has forgotten Him, God's laws result in *healing* that sick mental condition. We might say that God's laws have the primary function of creation, and their *side effect*, when they encounter a disturbed mind, is the healing of that mind.
2. (a) We forget the laws of the ego and remember the laws of God.
(b) Healing, or the Holy Spirit working through us, brings us the experience of forgetting and remembering.
3. The body; special relationships; the ability to learn; the ability to forget.
4. No written answer is expected.
5. The ego's goals cannot be reconciled in any way with the Holy Spirit's. **Ego**: goal is to separate and divide. **Holy Spirit**: goal is to unify and heal. Trying to reconcile the ego with God is a waste of time.
6. God has given me wholeness and made me a part of the Sonship. If I do not use that gift by giving it to (i.e., acknowledging it in) others, I will forget that it is true of me. I can only keep what I give away.
7. A "sense of danger," I think, simply means "fear." Due to the ego delusion, every one of us has a "sense of danger" concerning everyone else! My brother, for instance, is *afraid of me* at some level. As I refuse to acknowledge that fear (7:8) in a brother, I am recognizing its unreality *in him*. That affirms fear's unreality *in me* as well. In other words, as I affirm that he has no reason to be afraid of me, I begin to recognize that I, likewise, have no reason to be afraid of him—for the same reason, that we are both equal children of God. This strengthens the Holy Spirit in both of us.
8. Healing is recognizing the truth about the perfect wholeness of my brothers and myself, and refusing to acknowledge fear. Healing means guarding our thoughts so that they reflect only the laws of God, applying them universally. It means we see the Sonship as one; we do not see differences. Healing is the way that we remember and express the reality of the Kingdom of Heaven (a unified Whole) in this world. We forget what the ego has taught us about ourselves, which has induced fear. We learn of the Holy Spirit in us, and the reality of the Kingdom, by allowing the Holy Spirit to work through us in bringing healing to the world.