

Study Guide and Commentary ACIM[®] Text, Chapter 14, Section VII

Sharing Perception with the Holy Spirit

Legend:

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

This is one of the great sections about our need to *look at* our ego in complete honesty and without fear. By bringing all our dark thoughts into the light and looking at them with the Holy Spirit, *sharing perception* with Him, we translate our denials into truth. The section very clearly presents a technique that we can use for our healing, a technique that some consider to be the key one in the Course's repertoire.

Paragraph 1

1. ¹**What do you want?** ²Light or darkness, knowledge or ignorance are yours, but not both. ³Opposites must be brought together, not kept apart. ⁴For their separation is only in your mind, and they are reconciled by union, as **you** are. ⁵In union, everything that is not real **must** disappear, for truth *is* union. ⁶As darkness disappears in light, so ignorance fades away when knowledge dawns. ⁷Perception is the medium by which ignorance is **brought** to knowledge. ⁸Yet the perception must be without deceit, for otherwise it becomes the messenger of ignorance rather than a helper in the search for truth.

• Study Question •

1. *This section discusses the principle of bringing our darkness to the light for healing. In this paragraph, which of the following are ways in which opposites such as light and darkness can be reconciled? (There may be more than one.)*
- A. *By bringing them together*
 - B. *By union*
 - C. *By conflicting and competing with each other*
 - D. *By one fading away in the presence of the other*
 - E. *All of the above*

The section begins with a simple question: "What do you want?" (1:1) Over and over again, the Course makes it clear that what we have, or what we experience, is *always*

what we want, whether we think it is or not. Our mind chooses what we experience; therefore, realizing what we have been choosing, and choosing again if we don't like the results of our choice, is a major theme in the Course.

We are choosing constantly, with basically only two alternatives to choose between. We can have one or the other, but not both: "Light or darkness, knowledge or ignorance are yours, but not both" (1:2). Do we want light (knowledge), or do we want darkness (ignorance)? That is our choice. We will have knowledge if we choose to have it; if we choose ignorance, we will have ignorance.

Most of us would not feel that ignorance could actually be our choice. We would say that most ignorance is not our fault, and not our choice; we would *like* to know something but we don't know it. That is actually a very naïve and self-deceived picture of the situation. The Course will be telling us shortly (in paragraph 3) that we already know everything, but have deliberately chosen to forget it. In particular, we already know the way to God, we already know God, and we already know the ultimate reality of all that is. It says, basically, that we had knowledge and deliberately hid it from ourselves. Now we're convinced we don't know, but in fact we do know; we are just denying that we know. We are choosing not to know.

The way to discover what you already know but have chosen to forget is to become aware of your choice to forget it! In other words, watch your thoughts and let the Holy Spirit translate your denial of truth into a positive affirmation of the truth that you have denied (see T-12.I.9:7 and 10:1).

This is what the section begins to talk about in the next several sentences (1:3–6). How can you reconcile light with darkness? Or knowledge with ignorance? The answer given here is that they can be reconciled by bringing them together (1:4). Let's consider this in two ways: first, the relatively easy-to-understand analogy of darkness and light; and second, the more abstract principle of ignorance and knowledge which the analogy illustrates.

Darkness is merely the absence of light; darkness has no real existence. It is not a thing, but the absence of a thing. If you are trying to read a book in a dark corner of a room you can't read it because of the darkness. The way to end the darkness is not by fighting it, not by struggling harder to see, and certainly not by covering it up, which just makes the darkness darker. You get rid of the darkness by bringing it to the light. When you bring something dark into the light, the darkness disappears. That's pretty easy to understand. That's the analogy.

Knowledge is light, and ignorance is darkness. The same principle applies to both pairs of opposites. When you bring your ignorance to knowledge, it disappears, just as when you bring darkness into light (1:6). (How we bring ignorance to knowledge is the subject of the rest of the section; for now, we are just establishing the principle.) There seems to be a separation between ignorance and knowledge. That separation is not real; it exists only in our minds. If we experience ignorance in our minds, if we feel that we don't know the truth of the universe, then knowledge appears to be something that is separate from us. In fact it is not; knowledge is already in us. By exposing our ignorance, rather than hiding it, and bringing it to the knowledge within ourselves, the ignorance will simply vanish because it is not real. The words "truth is union" (1:5) are telling us that there really is only one thing: union, or oneness. Knowledge is part of that union, and that oneness is the content of knowledge.

To get the full impact of this idea, we have to realize that we do not typically handle our ignorance in the way that is being recommended here. We don't expose our ignorance; we hide it. We cover it up. We pretend to know. We often even convince ourselves that we really know things—that we understand what life is about. Thinking that we already know is what blocks us from really knowing! If we think we know, we are not willing to listen to the inner Teacher, the Holy Spirit, Who actually does know all things.

“Perception is the medium by which ignorance is brought to knowledge” (1:7). Now, Jesus is starting to explain how this works. How do we bring ignorance to knowledge? By means of perception. This still may seem as clear as mud, but it gets clearer; bear with it. All he is saying here is that this process being recommended is worked out in the realm of perception; that is, in how we see things. Perception is the way to knowledge. Specifically, we shall see, *transformed* perception is the way to knowledge. We have used perception as a way of hiding the truth from ourselves, but it can become the means to lead us back to knowledge of the truth, as he says in the next sentence (1:8).

Perception can either validate our ignorance or assist our finding truth. The key to the difference is that true “perception must be without deceit” (1:8). That is, it must be perfectly honest; nothing must be hidden or covered up.

There is a lot yet to be explained here, and it will be. But consider what have we seen so far:

We can have light or darkness, knowledge or ignorance. We can only have one; not both.

Which we have depends only on which we want.

We can find knowledge by bringing our ignorance into the presence of knowledge.

We do this through the medium of perfectly honest perception.

Paragraph 2

2. ¹The search for truth is but the honest searching out of everything that **interferes** with truth. ²**Truth is.** ³It can neither be lost nor sought nor found. ⁴It is there, wherever **you** are, being **within** you. ⁵Yet it **can** be recognized or unrecognized, real or false to **you**. ⁶If you hide it, it becomes unreal to you *because* you hid it and **surrounded it with fear**. ⁷Under each cornerstone of fear on which you have erected your insane system of belief, **the truth lies hidden**. ⁸Yet you cannot know this, for by **hiding** truth in fear, you see no reason to believe that the more you **look** at fear the **less** you see it, and the clearer **what it conceals** becomes.

• Study Question •

2. *Bringing the darkness to the light is another way of talking about removing the obstacles to our awareness of love. The Course has a strong emphasis on “searching out everything that interferes with truth” (2:1). The picture given here is that truth is always with us and within us, but it can be hidden by our fears. Which of the following are reasons that are given in this paragraph telling why we should look at our fear, or how we benefit from looking at our fear? (There can be one or more answers.)*

- A. *Looking at our fear makes it less real and visible to us.*
- B. *Looking at our fear helps us see what the fear is hiding.*
- C. *If we do not look we will not know the truth is in us, hiding beneath the fear.*
- D. *Truth is; what is necessary is uncovering what is blocking our awareness of it.*
- E. *All of the above.*

Paragraphs 2 through 4 deal with the idea of *bringing our darkness to the light*, and explain in more detail what that means.

Searching for truth is another way of talking about trying to obtain knowledge. From the perspective of the Course, you do not search for the truth by searching for the truth! You search for the truth by searching for everything that is false—“everything that interferes with truth”—and removing it. The idea is that we have disguised the truth; we have hidden it under layers of deception and deceit. The truth is simply *what is*. It cannot be lost, but it can be hidden. We have to identify the layers of disguise and peel them away. Once all the disguises are gone, the truth will be obvious to us.

The reasoning here follows the same general line of thought that occurs often in the Course. The idea is that since God creates only perfectly, He can create only that which is perfect, whole, and complete at the moment of its creation. Therefore, whatever we are, if we are God's creation we already are perfect and complete. Our knowledge is perfect. The truth is already in us, having been placed there at the instant of creation. Nothing we have done or can do can change that. This is the reason that “unknowing is impossible” (3:5).

While we cannot change the fact that we know, we can deny it. We can cover up the truth with falsehoods so that we can no longer recognize it.

The truth is in us; we already know. But it is unrecognized truth; therefore, the concept that we already know seems unreal to us. And the reason our knowledge seems unreal to us is that we hid the truth and then put up all kinds of warning signs around the hiding place: “Keep out! Extreme danger! Do not approach under penalty of death!” (2:6).

The ego, like darkness, vanishes in the light of truth. Therefore, to preserve its existence it must remain separate from the light; it cannot allow us to approach the light. We chose to identify with this ego and so we cooperated in the deception. We have darkness and ignorance—or so it seems—because we want darkness and ignorance.

Every belief in separation, and every fear that supports that belief, hides the truth (2:7). The truth is there, everywhere, but obscured and disguised by our false beliefs. That is why sentence 1 of the paragraph is true. Uncover the false beliefs and remove them, face the fears and dispel them, and the truth buried beneath them is instantly revealed.

But we have no reason to believe this. We have hidden the truth, and we don't think it is there. All we see are the terrible guilt and fear of punishment in our minds. We don't want to look at it. We can't believe that looking at fear is the way to get rid of it, and that “the more you look at fear the less you see it”! (2:8). That is why we need the Holy Spirit; He reminds us of the hidden truth that lies below the fear in our minds. He encourages us to look at our fears, and when we look with Him, he dispels the fear.

We must be willing to look at the ugly thoughts we have, at the ways we try to manipulate people, at the constant thoughts of competition and vengeance that cross our minds, at the myriad ways we believe that guilt is useful and attack is beneficial, at the way we believe that it really is possible to gain at the expense of another person. We need to uncover all the ego's defense mechanisms and to look at them with the Holy Spirit, so that we can see with His eyes that our "terrible" ego thoughts are meaningless and are not a cause for guilt; in fact, as defense mechanisms they reveal what they are trying to hide (T-12.I.10:1), the fact of our eternal innocence. The more we look, the less we see the fear, and the clearer becomes that which the fear is trying to cover up: the Christ within.

Paragraph 3

3. ¹It is not possible to convince the unknowing that they know. ²From their point of view **it is not true**. ³Yet it **is true** because **God** knows it. ⁴These are clearly opposite viewpoints on what the "unknowing" **are**. ⁵To God, unknowing is impossible. ⁶It is therefore not a point of view at all, but merely a belief in something that does not exist. ⁷It is only this **belief** that the unknowing have, and **by** it they are wrong about themselves. ⁸They have **defined** themselves as they were **not** created. ⁹Their creation was **not** a point of view, but rather a **certainty**. ¹⁰Uncertainty **brought** to certainty does not retain **any** conviction of reality.

• Study Question •

3. *This paragraph discusses "the unknowing" (those who are convinced they do not know), which refers to us, who think we have lost the truth and knowledge of God and our true Self (if we ever had it at all). We are convinced we do not know; God is certain that we do, a very opposite viewpoint. If unknowing is not a valid point of view (3:6), what is it, according to this paragraph? (Choose more than one answer)*
- A. *A certainty*
 - B. *A mistake about ourselves*
 - C. *A belief in something that does not exist*
 - D. *A conviction of reality*

It is so very hard for us to believe that we know. We are convinced that we do not know (3:1). The whole "spiritual search" is based on a search for the truth we do not have, for the wisdom we have not yet learned, and for a perfection we have not yet attained. From our viewpoint "it is not true" that we know (3:2). From God's viewpoint it is our ignorance that "is impossible" (3:5).

When the Course tells us, "You need do nothing," it seems insane to us. We believe we are in desperate need of doing something. We not only need to do something, we need to do something *drastic* and we need to do it *yesterday*. The idea of giving up the spiritual search seems like the exact opposite of what we need! When you are convinced you do not know, being told you do know has no effect. So another approach has to be taken.

Yet, it goes on to say, "it is true" (3:3). You do know. God knows it to be true and therefore it must be so, because what God knows defines reality. God gave you knowledge in creating you; therefore you must have knowledge!

So here are two very clearly opposite viewpoints. It is impossible to convince you that you know; and it is impossible to convince God otherwise because He knows it to be true. To you, knowing is impossible; to God, unknowing is impossible. How can these two viewpoints be reconciled?

Remember that first paragraph? The way to reconcile these apparently opposite viewpoints is to bring them together (1:3–4). When you bring them together, the false part will disappear and only the truth will remain. So, Jesus proceeds to do just that. He reasons with us.

If unknowing is impossible to God, then it is impossible, period. There can be no such thing as unknowing; unknowing cannot exist. When I bring my viewpoint (that I don't know, and the idea that I do is inconceivable to me) into the light of this truth, I realize that my viewpoint can't be a real point of view. Unknowing is impossible. Therefore, I cannot *not* know. All I can do is hold "a belief in something that does not exist" (3:6). I can believe I don't know, but I cannot actually stop knowing.

When I bring my apparent ignorance into the light of God's knowledge, I see that my ignorance must be an illusion, simply a false belief I have about myself. But I am wrong. God's creation was a certainty. It is a fact, not merely a point of view. What He says I am, I am. What He says I have, I have. I can define myself as not having, or as not being what He says I am, but compared to God's certainty, my point of view cannot hold water; it "does not retain any conviction of reality" (3:10).

When I bring my darkness to His light, God's certainty simply cancels out my uncertainty. That is the way ignorance is brought to knowledge. I bring my point of view, my perception, to the Holy Spirit. He communicates God's certain knowledge of the situation. When my biased and unfounded perception comes up against His certainty, everything that isn't real simply disappears, and all I am left with is the truth.

For instance, suppose there is someone you see as having hurt you. You realize God is asking you to forgive this person. Yet you feel you do not know how to do so. You feel that you cannot forgive them because you don't know how. The particular area of "unknowing" in this case is your belief that you do not know how to forgive.

If you bring that thought to the presence of the Holy Spirit in your mind, you will find in His thoughts the realization that if God is asking you to forgive, you must be able to do so. You must know how. He would not be so stupid as to ask you to do something you cannot do! If you are able to do so, and yet believe you don't know how, you must be hiding that knowledge from yourself. You must be refusing to know because you do not want to forgive.

Now you have another layer of thought to bring to the Holy Spirit. So you bring to Him your refusal to know, your unwillingness to forgive. When you do, He reinterprets that as well. He shows you that your unwillingness is not really unwillingness; it is fear. You are afraid of what will happen if you forgive; you are afraid that being loving will somehow hurt you. You fear that you will lose something; that you will lose yourself. In the light of the Holy Spirit you begin to see your fear as the call for help it really is. You realize that you really do want to forgive, you really do want to be loving, but you are afraid. You realize your fears are without any basis. And suddenly, the unwillingness to forgive just melts because it is not real.

Paragraph 4

4. ¹[You must have noticed that] Our emphasis has been on bringing what is undesirable **to** the desirable; what you do **not** want to what you **do**. ²You will realize that salvation must come to you this way, if you consider what dissociation **is**. ³Dissociation is a distorted process of thinking whereby two systems of belief which **cannot** coexist are **both maintained**. ⁴[It has been recognized that,] If they are [were] **brought together**, their joint acceptance becomes [would become] impossible. ⁵But if one is kept in darkness **from the other**, their **separation** seems to keep them both alive and equal in their reality. ⁶Their **joining** thus becomes the source of fear, for if they meet, acceptance **must** be withdrawn from one of them. ⁷You **cannot** have them both, for each **denies** the other. ⁸Apart, this fact is lost from sight, for each in a **separate** place **can** be endowed with firm belief. ⁹**Bring them together**, and the fact of their complete incompatibility is instantly apparent. ¹⁰One **will** go, **because** the other is seen in the **same** place.

• Study Question •

4. *The previous paragraph ends with speaking of “uncertainty brought to certainty,” implying that we can bring our uncertainty to the Holy Spirit's certainty. This paragraph continues with the idea of bringing what is undesirable to what is desirable, or what we do not want to what we do. It says we maintain both certainty and uncertainty in our minds by the process of dissociation. (a) How is “dissociation” defined in 4:3 and 4:5? (b) Explain why bringing our uncertainty to certainty is the opposite of dissociation, and why it heals our split minds.*

This is the way the Holy Spirit transforms our perceptions. We bring the dark perceptions to Him, and He reinterprets them for us. We bring our uncertainty to His certainty, and everything that is not real simply vanishes (4:1). As Jesus says, you probably have noticed this emphasis in the Course. The Course has referred to this same process several times already.¹ It is repeated again later in this chapter.²

In simple terms, this means calling a halt to your efforts to hide and cover up your ego. You bring your ego to the Holy Spirit; you offer Him everything you do not want. Simply by opening the darkness to Him, owning it, and acknowledging it, you will find that His love, acceptance, mercy and love nullify the ego and wash it away, replacing it with the vision of Christ.

¹ For instance, “We are therefore embarking on an organized, well-structured and

² “The Atonement does not make holy. You were created holy. It merely brings unholiness to holiness; or what you made to what you are. Bringing illusion to truth, or the ego to God, is the Holy Spirit's only function” (T-14.IX.1:1-4).

“Bringing the ego to God is but to bring error to truth, where it stands corrected because it is the opposite of what it meets. It is undone because the contradiction can no longer stand” (T-14.IX.2:1-2).

Having been urged to engage in this process, the question occurs to us quite naturally: “Why does this work?” Jesus anticipates our question and proceeds to answer it in 4:2–3.

We have already been told that our chief problem is dissociation, which is another term for separation (T-4.VI.4:2; 6.II.1:4–5). “Dissociation,” we were told, “is nothing more than a decision to forget” (T-10.II.1:2). It is the mechanism our minds use to hold on to contradictory beliefs. In one part of our mind is one belief; in another part is another belief; and we keep the two parts separate and don’t let them talk to one another. Dissociation is the way we manage, for instance, to believe in unconditional love on the one hand, and yet still get jealous when our special partner spends “too much” time with another person. When we want to focus on unconditional love we conveniently “forget” our jealousy; when we want to be jealous, we “forget” unconditional love. That is dissociation.

Dissociation is what we are doing when we tell ourselves we want the peace of God and yet spend a large percentage of our time doing things that push that peace away from us. Dissociation is compartmentalizing our mind. The cure for dissociation is bringing the dissociated parts together and letting wholeness result from the union.

What we need to do, according to this section, is to bring the opposites together instead of keeping them apart (1:3). In Chapter 12 we were told that the world of separation which we perceive “was made out of what you do not want, projected from your mind because you are afraid of it” (T-12.III.9:7). That is what happens when we keep “what [we] do not want”—the ego and its attack thoughts³—apart from the Holy Spirit. If we do not bring the darkness to the light, the darkness goes underground and gets projected out to make the world of separation. The solution is to stop hiding the darkness, to stop trying to cover up the ego, and to bring it instead to the light. To bring what we do not want to what we do.

Instead of dissociating our jealous thoughts and our loving thoughts, bring them together. Own the jealous thoughts and acknowledge them as your own; don’t try to project them outward, don’t try to justify the jealousy by blaming it on the actions of another person. Just own it. When you bring love and jealousy together, the incompatibility becomes obvious. What you really want, the love, displaces what you do not want, or the jealous attack. What’s real remains and what’s unreal is seen to be nothing. When you understand what dissociation is, the reason that “salvation must come to you this way”—by bringing the undesirable to the desirable—becomes easy to understand.

Keeping them apart keeps them both alive (4:5). Hiding the ego is what seems to keep it alive and equal in reality to the Christ in you, although the ego is nothing but an illusion of yourself. Bringing the ego to the Holy Spirit is what makes it possible to let it go, because the ego and the Holy Spirit cannot coexist.

This is why the ego is afraid to have you look within, and afraid to have you look honestly at your own ego in the presence of the Holy Spirit. It knows that such open looking spells its doom (4:6). So it fears the joining. But it tries to tell you that you are afraid of the ugliness and darkness you will see if you look, when the actual object of fear is the light you will find!

³ “If the cause of the world you see is attack thoughts, you must learn that it is these thoughts which you do not want” (W-pI.23.2:1).

Apart, this fact is lost from sight, for each in a separate place can be endowed with firm belief. Bring them together, and the fact of their complete incompatibility is instantly apparent. One will go, because the other is seen in the same place (8–10).

This is why the solution is bringing what you do not want to what you do, bringing the darkness to the light, bringing the ego to the Holy Spirit. When you do, “one will go” (4:10), and that one will be the ego, because it is not real. Keeping the ego hidden is what makes it seem real (4:8). “Not looking is the way they [illusions] are protected” (T-11.V.1:1). Looking without fear at our egos, then, is the way the ego is undone.

Paragraph 5

5. ¹Light cannot enter darkness when a mind **believes** in darkness, and will not let it go. ²Truth does not struggle **against** ignorance, and love does not **attack** fear. ³What needs no protection does not defend itself. ⁴Defense is [was] of **your** making. ⁵God knows it not. ⁶The Holy Spirit uses defenses **on behalf** of truth only because you made them **against** it. ⁷His perception of them, according to **His** purpose, merely changes them into a **call for** what you have **attacked with** them. ⁸Defenses, like everything you made, must be gently turned to your own good, translated by the Holy Spirit from means of self-destruction to means of preservation and release. ⁹His task is mighty, but the power of God is with Him. ¹⁰Therefore, to Him it is so easy that it was accomplished the instant it was given Him for you. ¹¹Do not delay [yourselves] in your return to peace by wondering how He can fulfill what God has given Him to do. ¹²Leave that to Him Who knows [Who knows!]. ¹³You are not asked to do mighty tasks yourself. ¹⁴You are merely asked to do the little He **suggests** you do, trusting Him only to the small extent of believing that, if He asks it, you can do it. ¹⁵You will **see** how easily **all** that He asks can be accomplished.

• Study Question •

5. **5:1-8.** *A split mind means conflict, which involves defenses such as our belief in uncertainty, as well as all other ego thoughts. Truth does not need to struggle against ignorance; it simply shines it away. How does the Holy Spirit perceive our defenses? (Only one answer is correct)*
- A. *As a call for what the defenses are attacking (that is, love)*
 - B. *As a dark barrier making the truth unknown to us*
 - C. *As the means of our self-destruction*
6. **5:9-15.** *Translating our defenses into the means of our release is a mighty task, but the Holy Spirit accomplished it the instant it was given to Him because He has the power of God. We delay our return by wondering how He can do this, something we do not really need to know. Instead we are asked to do only “the little He suggests to you” (5:14). Based on the preceding paragraphs, what is “the little” we are to do? (One answer)*
- A. *Believing that He can do it*
 - B. *To bring our dark thoughts to Him instead of hiding them*

C. Resisting our dark thoughts

D. Affirming our certainty instead of our uncertainty

The truth cannot enter your mind if you are actively keeping it out. When you are holding on to the ego, hiding it, protecting it from exposure, you are blocking the entry of real light. “Light cannot enter darkness when a mind believes in darkness, and will not let it go” (1).

Truth does not struggle against ignorance, and love does not attack fear. What needs no protection does not defend itself (2,3).

The truth in you, the love that is really you, does not struggle against the ignorance and fear in your mind. It merely waits for you to recognize the insanity and unreality of the ignorance and fear. It does not defend itself because it does not need to be defended. It needs no defense because it cannot be attacked. You are love, and nothing you think or do can change that.

Defense is of your making. God knows it not. The Holy Spirit uses defenses on behalf of truth only because you made them against it. His perception of them, according to His purpose, merely changes them into a call for what you have attacked with them (4–7).

The first paragraph told us that “Perception is the medium by which ignorance is brought to knowledge” (1:7). So the Holy Spirit, Who leads us from our ignorance to knowledge, is going to use perception to do so. We have used perception as a defense against the truth. Jesus is explaining in this paragraph why it is that, although truth needs no defense, the Holy Spirit nevertheless *uses our defenses* on behalf of truth. He uses our defenses to lead us to truth only because we made the defenses to be used against the truth.

The way the Holy Spirit uses our defenses is to translate them from a *defense against* truth (or an attack on the truth, which is the same thing) into a *call for* the truth itself. The principle here is one that was presented in some detail earlier, in Chapter 12, Section I, “The Judgment of the Holy Spirit.” The idea there, in paragraphs 8 and 9, was that an attack on the truth must be based on fear of the truth. Fear of the truth, in turn, implies that we must believe in the truth; if we did not believe in it, why would we fear it? Thus an attack on truth is actually “a positive affirmation of the underlying belief it masks” (T-12.I.9:7). An attack on truth, seen by the Holy Spirit, is “a call for love, in unconscious recognition of what has been denied” (T-12.I.8:13).

In the perception of the Holy Spirit, every defense against the light, every attempt to push away the peace of God, and every deceitful dissociation we make to keep the darkness active in our minds is actually a proof that the truth is in us. Our defense against the truth does not, in His perception, prove our guilt; it proves our innocence! It proves that despite our best efforts, the light in us still lives.

We hesitate to look within and see the elaborate defense mechanisms the ego has erected against God. We shy away from becoming aware of our ego thoughts. But there is no need to shy away; there is nothing to be ashamed of. If we will share the perception of the Holy Spirit, if we will simply look at our ego as He looks at it, what we see will not make us guilty. What we see will prove that the Christ in us has never died. When we

look at the ego with Him, He enables us to change our very attack thoughts into a call for the very thing being attacked. He translates our attack thoughts into prayers.

Defenses, like everything you made, must be gently turned to your own good, translated by the Holy Spirit from means of self-destruction to means of preservation and release. His task is mighty, but the power of God is with Him. Therefore, to Him it is so easy that it was accomplished the instant it was given Him for you (8–10).

He takes the very weapons we used against God and translates them into healing instruments. He does not fight our ego. He does not belittle it, or attack it, or try to crush it. He translates it. He teaches us to perceive it differently. He uses the very mechanisms of the ego as “means of preservation and release.” The beauty of this is that it totally eliminates guilt. It leaves nothing left of the ego to be condemned. The very ego we are so ashamed of becomes, when translated by the Holy Spirit, the means of our salvation. Think about how miraculous that is! The ego becomes the means of our salvation!

Truly this is a mighty task. But the power of God is with the Holy Spirit, and because of that power, the translation process is so easy it was over and done with in an instant. The instant God gave the job to the Holy Spirit the job was done. He already sees you that way. He has already reinterpreted your ego. That is why He sees you as wholly innocent, without guilt of any kind. He sees no evil in what you have done; He sees only the call for help.

Do not delay [yourselves] in your return to peace by wondering how He can fulfill what God has given Him to do. Leave that to Him Who knows! (11,12).

Don't waste time wondering, for instance, “How can the Holy Spirit possibly interpret that horrible thought in a positive light? How could I possibly bring that awful desire of mine into His presence? How could He ever forgive me?” That's His job, not yours, and He has already done it. So don't hold on to your guilt, figuring you have to understand how the guilt has been dispersed before you can be at peace. The guilt is gone, that's all you need to know. Take the peace now. Leave the how of it to the Holy Spirit.

You are not asked to do mighty tasks yourself. You are merely asked to do the little He suggests you do, trusting Him only to the small extent of believing that, if He asks it, you can do it. You will see how easily all that He asks can be accomplished (13–15).

You don't have to figure out forgiveness. You don't have to translate denial of the truth into a positive affirmation of the truth. He does the hard part. All you have to do is the little he suggests; that little bit is, as the next paragraph will tell us, simply to bring all your secret thoughts to Him for healing.

Paragraph 6

6. ¹The Holy Spirit asks of you but this; bring to Him every secret you have locked away from Him. ²Open every door to Him, and bid Him enter the darkness and lighten it away. ³At **your** request He enters gladly. ⁴He brings the light to darkness if you make the darkness **open** to Him. ⁵But what you hide He cannot look upon. ⁶[For] He sees **for you**, and unless you look **with** Him He

cannot see. ⁷The vision of Christ is not for Him alone, but for Him **with you**.
⁸Bring, therefore, all your dark and secret thoughts to Him, and look upon them **with Him**. ⁹He holds the light, and you the darkness. ¹⁰They **cannot** coexist when Both of you **together** look on them. ¹¹His judgment **must** prevail, and He will **give** it to you as you join your perception to His.

• **Study Question** •

7. *As we unlock the door and bring all our secret thoughts to Him, we are bringing our darkness to the light. He then brings the light to our darkness. It takes cooperation; He and we each play a part. The list below shows different aspects of this process; some are our responsibility, some are His; some are both. (a) Which aspects are our part? (b) Which aspects are the part of the Holy Spirit?*
- A. *Bringing darkness to the light*
 - B. *Bringing light to the darkness*
 - C. *Uncovering the secret thoughts*
 - D. *The vision of Christ*
 - E. *Looking at the dark and secret thoughts*
 - F. *Asking light to enter*
 - G. *Making a judgment about the thoughts*

“The Holy Spirit asks of you but this; bring to Him every secret you have locked away from Him” (1). All you have to do is to bring your secrets to Him. He will take care of the translation process. He will wash the guilt from them and change them into your call for help, a means for your own preservation and release. Just stop dissociating your darkness and projecting it out onto the world. “Bring the darkness to the light” (T-18.IX.1:1).

The Holy Spirit asks us to open the secret doors to Him (6:2). Hide nothing. Do not cower in shame, afraid to have your secret thoughts known; bring them all to Him. He will not condemn you. He will see only innocent calls for love, and with love He will respond to those calls. Make your darkness open to Him so He can lighten it away (6:4).

To me, the Course's way of describing this is remarkable. The power, the choice, is entirely in our hands. If we are willing to open up and honestly confront our dark secrets the Holy Spirit can and will take care of them, but He cannot and will not intrude on our privacy if we continue to hide things (6:5). Our will is sacrosanct and He will not violate it. The Holy Spirit's considerate respect for our choices shows how amazingly gentle the Course is: hard-hitting, utterly uncompromising, and yet gentle. It asks everything yet demands nothing.

Compare 6:6 with 7:2.⁴ The Holy Spirit cannot see unless you look with Him, and you cannot see without Him. Neither you nor the Holy Spirit can operate alone; true perception requires both (see also 6:10, “when both of you look together”). Even the Holy Spirit cannot have the vision of Christ without your cooperation (6:7). He is always

⁴ 6:6: He sees for you, and unless you look with Him He cannot see.

7:2: You cannot see alone.

willing. What prevents vision is your unwillingness to expose your darkness to Him. What frightens you is trying to look at the darkness without Him, because in your unassisted perception it *is* terrifying. Only when “you look with Him” (6:6) can He add the light that removes all fear from what you look at.

Remember that this section began by talking about the need to bring opposites together (1:3). It is still talking about that need. “He holds the light, and you the darkness” (6:8). Those two things must be brought together, which requires both the Holy Spirit and us. When that happens, the light of God banishes the darkness. Our misperceptions are replaced with His perceptions, and we begin to see things according to “His judgment” (6:11), which was described in detail in T-12.I. There, we learned that the Holy Spirit sees everything as either love or a call for love, and that is the judgment we will share as we look with Him upon our thoughts, our lives, our friends, our families, and the world around us.

Paragraph 7

7. ¹Joining with Him in seeing is the way in which you learn to share with Him the interpretation of perception that leads to knowledge [see 1:8]. ²You cannot see alone. ³Sharing perception with Him Whom God has given you teaches you how to **recognize** what you see. ⁴It is the recognition that **nothing** you see means **anything** alone. ⁵Seeing **with** Him will **show** you that all meaning, **including yours**, comes not from double vision, but from the gentle fusing of everything into *one* meaning, *one* emotion and *one* purpose. ⁶God has one Purpose, which He shares with you. ⁷The single vision, which the Holy Spirit offers you, will bring this oneness to your mind with clarity and brightness so intense you could not wish, for all the world, not to accept what God would have you have. ⁸Behold your will, accepting it as His, with all His Love as yours. ⁹All honor to you through Him, and through Him unto God.

• Study Question •

8. *This process of joining with the Holy Spirit in seeing is the way we come to share His perception and be led to knowledge. It is how we learn to see truly, with the vision of Christ. What characteristic of what is seen by the vision of Christ is emphasized in this paragraph? (One answer)*
- A. *Innocence*
 - B. *Sinlessness*
 - C. *Oneness*
 - D. *Love*

The key to this whole process, clearly, is “joining with Him in seeing” (7:1). I believe that many students of psychology, and even students of the Course, have grasped the idea that what is required is a new perception of things, a perception from which guilt is absent. The problem so many of them encounter is that interpreting everything without any shadow of guilt seems utterly impossible. It really does take a miracle! It can only happen when we open to His “interpretation of perception” (7:1). When we are willing to see *with* the Holy Spirit, we finally recognize the unity that lies beneath all the apparent

diversity we see. Nothing is separate (7:3–5). As the telephone companies assure us, “We’re all connected.” Not only I, but everything has “one life...that [we] share with [God]” (W-pI.167.11:3).

Robert Perry and Greg Mackie, in their Text studies, have made a very interesting observation about the phrase “double vision” that occurs in 7:5.

We all have double vision, also called *diplopia*. Diplopia is a condition in which you see two images of the same object. Is this not true of us? We see two images, for instance, of the people in our lives. We look at one person and simultaneously see the sinner we hate and the saint we love. This is because we are interpreting each thing we see from the standpoint of two diametrically opposed thought systems. Jesus said this about Helen in the Urtext. He told her that her mind maintained a connection to knowledge, but also suffered from the ego’s intrusions. “The result,” he said, “is a kind of ‘double vision,’ which would have produced an actual diplopia, if she had not settled for nearsightedness.”

The only way to solve this double vision is to do what we just did in the previous paragraph: join with the Holy Spirit in seeing; let Him enter the abode of our dark thoughts—the source of one side of our seeing—and shine them away. Now we have one Source for our perception. Now we will see everything with one meaning, one emotion and one purpose (7:5). Just imagine that.

All creation exists for but “one Purpose” (7:6). We exist to radiate God to the ends of the universe, and to extend His Being forever. We exist to create with Him. That is the vision that will fill our minds as we allow the Holy Spirit to shine away our darkness. All of our resistance and reluctance will evaporate when our vision becomes clear enough, because the holy Purpose to which God has called us is so absolutely compelling and attractive (7:7). Nothing could possibly compete with it once we see it in all its glory (T-14.II.8).

When our vision has blended with that of the Holy Spirit, we will perceive oneness. In that oneness we come to recognize that we want what God wants. Our will is in total harmony with the Holy Spirit’s, and we share His own Love with which to carry out that Will. His purpose is achieved in operating through us, and God is glorified in all of it (7:8–9).

• **Study Question** •

9. *Summary. To the best of your ability, summarize the process of sharing perception with the Holy Spirit.*

•

Answer Key

1. A and B
2. E
3. B and C
4. (a) Dissociation is a mental process in which we manage to maintain two contradictory thought systems in our minds by compartmentalizing them, keeping them from interacting.

(b) To bring uncertainty to certainty is to allow the conflicting beliefs to be brought together in our minds, so that their incompatibility is apparent. Once this is done, the false belief will go, and only the true belief will remain, thus ending the split condition of the mind.
5. A
6. B
7. (a) A, C, D, E, F
(b) B, D, E, G
8. C
9. To share perception with the Holy Spirit means that I must actively seek to uncover my doubts, fears, guilt, and thoughts of attacking or being attacked, and to bring them into the presence of the Holy Spirit. To me, this is best accomplished in prayerful dialog with the Holy Spirit. The more I expose to Him, the less frightening it all will seem, and when I have exposed the darkness fully, it will disappear in His light. I will then see everything according to the judgment of the Holy Spirit. I will look upon it all without perceiving guilt anywhere.