

Study Guide and Commentary

ACIM® Text, Chapter 25

The Holy Spirit's Justice

Section I

Framed in Holiness

Explanation of underlining, italics and footnote formats can be found at the end of the commentary.

Overview of Section I

This section begins with a logical argument showing that the true you cannot be in a body. With Christ in us we perceive Christ everywhere, and our purpose in this world is exactly that: to see Him everywhere. We engage in this function in ways that seem to recognize separation, but this is necessary as long as any part of the Sonship believes that it *is* separate, in order to correct that error.

Paragraph 1

The Christ in you inhabits not a body. ²Yet He is in you. ³And thus must it be that you are not within a body. ⁴What is within you cannot be outside, and it is certain that you cannot be apart from what is at the very center of your life. ⁵What gives you life cannot be housed in death. ⁶No more can you. ⁷Christ is within a frame of holiness, whose only purpose is that He may be manifest to those who know Him not; that He may call to them to come to Him and see Him where they thought their bodies were. ⁸Then will their bodies melt away, that they may frame His holiness in them.

• Study Question •

1. (1:4-7). *These sentences add support to the syllogism in 1:1–3 (see commentary below), reinforcing the conclusion and the two premises in reverse order. Try to identify which thoughts support the conclusion, and which each of the two premises. Think about the logic behind what is being said.*

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The Course declares with emphasis that when it says Christ is in us, it does *not* mean that Christ is in our bodies. When it declares with equal emphasis that Christ *is* in us, then

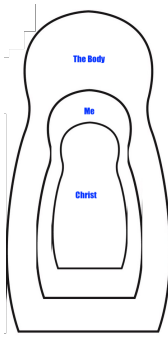
clearly we must be something other than a body, something that is not *within* the body (1:1–3). The logic is simple:

Christ is not in a body.

Christ is in you.

Therefore, you are not in a body.

When we first hear that Christ is in us, we do tend to think of it as something like a nested Russian doll:



That is *not* how it is, however. The body is outside of us (or so it seems). Christ is at the very center of our life; He is the Life that gives us life (1:4–5). How could Christ, Who is within us, be in something that is *outside of us* (1:4), something that dies (1:5)? Since Christ cannot be “housed” in the body, *neither can we* (1:6).

So let’s get that clearly in our minds. We are not a body. We are not even *in* a body, despite all the perceptual evidence that seems to prove we are!

Christ does not dwell in a body. He “is within a frame of holiness” (1:7).

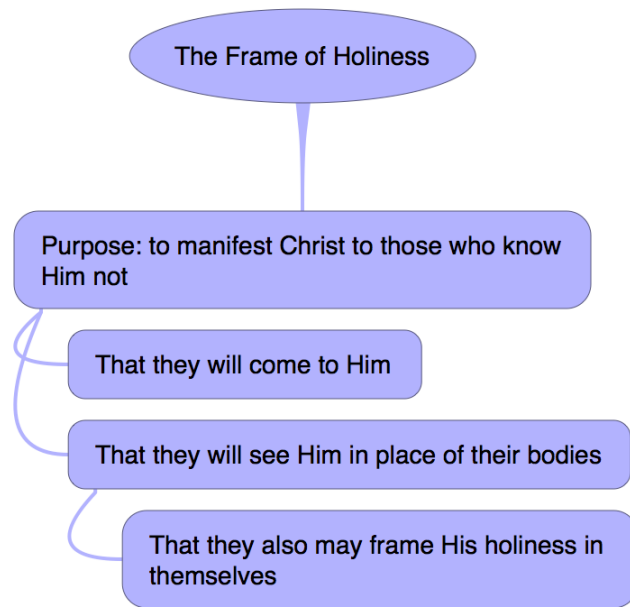
The phrase “frame of holiness” was used frequently in the preceding chapter, and will occur frequently in the next few sections (especially 25.II), so it would be good to have a clear idea of what it refers to.

In 24.VI.6:1–5, the frame is equated with your brother’s sinlessness and loveliness. It is not anything physical. It is more of an abstraction: his character, his true nature. This is summed up as his holiness. 24.VI.7:1 says, “Choose, then, his body or his holiness as what you want to see.”

In 24.VII.4:6 & 8, two “frames” are mentioned: using the body to see “a frame of loveliness around your hate,” versus choosing to weave “a frame of holiness around him.” So, in a way, the “frame” is the lens through which we view our brother, the meaning that we give to his being. 25.II tells us that “the frame is but a means to hold the picture up, so that it can be seen” (25.II.4:4 (CE)), and “Its purpose is but to set the picture off” (25.II.4:8 (CE)). A frame of holiness, then, is one that enables us to see the holiness of our brother.

Back, then, to 1:7: “Christ is within a frame of holiness.” The purpose of this frame, its *only* purpose, is to make Christ manifest to those who do not know Him. The frame sets Christ off, it presents Him to the world. Remember: This is the Christ Who is “in you.” In you, He wishes to become manifest to those who don’t know Him, framed in your holiness. Through you, others can come to see Christ as their identity rather than their bodies (1:7). Their bodies will “melt away” (out of their awareness, out of their picture of themselves) so that they in turn, like you, may “frame His holiness in them” (1:8). See T-31.VII.3:3–4:1 (CE), T-31.VII.2:8–3:4 (FIP)) for a better understanding of the sense in which the body “melts away.”

There is an interesting sequence of purposes and sub-purposes in 1:7–8.



These two sentences are really an excellent summary of the message of this entire section.

Paragraph 2

² No one who carries Christ in him can fail to recognize Him everywhere—*except in bodies*. ²And as long as they believe *they* are in bodies, where they think they are He *cannot* be. ³And so they carry Him unknowingly and do *not* make Him manifest. ⁴And thus they do not recognize Him where He *is*. ⁵The son of man is *not* the risen Christ. ⁶Yet does the Son of God abide *exactly* where he is, and walks with him within his holiness, as plain to see as is his specialness set forth within his body.¹

• Study Question •

2. (2:4). Based on this and the previous two sentences, why might you be failing to recognize Christ in your brothers?

When we are identified with the Christ within ourselves, we recognize Christ *everywhere—except in bodies*” (2:1). That tells us that when we are seeing the Christ in another person, we are *not* focused on or really aware of their body at all. We are seeing with a non-physical kind of vision. As the Course puts it in Chapter 31, the only sense in which we are aware of the body is as “a shadow circling round the good” (T-31.VII.3:3 (FIP), T-31.VII.3:6 (CE)). In Chapter 23 we were told something similar:

¹. “He” in this sentence is “the son of man,” who can be equated here with the *separated* Son of God.

Nothing around you but is part of you. Look on it lovingly, and see the light of Heaven in it. (T-23.I.5:6-6:2 (CE), T-23.Int.6:1 (FIP))

Thinking of it this way helps me: What the vision of Christ sees is something that is part of me. A person's body isn't part of me, just as my own body is not part of me.

Anyone who believes they are in their body cannot be aware of their identity as Christ (2:2). Christ *is* in them. Everyone has Christ, Christ is all life, but those who identify with their body don't know it and do not "manifest" or make Christ visible. Nor do they recognize Christ "where He *is*," which is everywhere and in everyone (2:3-4).

The fifth sentence is apt to be confusing: "The son of man is *not* the risen Christ" (2:5). We've been told that Christ is part of pretty much everything, so what can this mean? We need to be clear on how the Course is using the phrase, "son of man." Its meaning is not the same as it is in the Bible, where it is actually one of the titles of Jesus. There, it has dual meanings: just a person, a mortal, but also a divine deliverer prophesied by Daniel. The meaning in the Course comes from the last paragraphs of the last chapter, where it spoke of two sons, God's son and ours, a son made by us that appears to be outside of us. It is the child of specialness, the body. Thus "son of man" refers to our brother or sister *as a body*. The body is not the Christ.

Yet Christ lives in exactly the same place as our image of our brother as a body. Where our brother is, Christ is. Christ walks with our brother as his holiness, which is just as visible as is his specialness (2:6). We can choose which we see.

Paragraph 3

3 The body needs no healing. ²But the mind that thinks it *is* a body is sick indeed! ³And it is here that Christ sets forth the remedy. ⁴His *purpose* folds the body in His light and fills it with the holiness that shines from *Him*. ⁵And nothing that the body says or does but makes *Him* manifest. ⁶To those who know Him not it carries Him in gentleness and love to heal their minds. ⁷Such is the mission that your brother has for *you*. ⁸And such it *must* be that *your* mission is for *him*.

• Study Question •

3. (3:6). *Where have we seen the phrase "carries Him" in a recent paragraph? If you put these two occurrences of the phrase "carries Him" together you get that our illumined body carries Christ to those who think they are a body and thereby know not they carry Him.*

What?

"The body needs no healing" (3:1)? What a startling statement! It's true because physical illness is always a reflection of mental illness. We experience physical ills because our minds need to be healed (3:3). The basic mental illness is just thinking that we live in a body (3:2). We've been told not to focus on the body's healing earlier in the Text, multiple times and very directly:

"The guiltless mind cannot suffer. Being sane, the mind heals the body because *it* has been healed" (T-5.V.5:1-2 (FIP), T-5.VI.9:1-2 (CE)).

"Every situation, properly perceived, becomes an opportunity to heal the Son of God. And he is healed *because* you offered faith to him, giving him to the Holy Spirit and releasing him from every demand your ego would make of him. Thus do you see him free, and in this vision does the Holy Spirit share. And since He shares it He has given it, and so He heals through you. It is this joining Him in a united purpose that makes this purpose real, because you make it whole. And this *is* healing. The body is healed because you came without it, and joined the Mind in which all healing rests.

The body cannot heal, because it cannot make itself sick. It *needs* no healing. Its health or sickness depends entirely on how the mind perceives it, and the purpose that the mind would use it for. " (T-19.I.2:1-3:3 (FIP), T-19.I.2:1-3:3 (CE)).

"When the ego tempts you to sickness do not ask the Holy Spirit to heal the body, for this would merely be to accept the ego's belief that the body is the proper aim of healing. Ask, rather, that the Holy Spirit teach you the right *perception* of the body, for perception alone can be distorted. Only perception can be sick, because only perception can be wrong" (T-8.IX.1:5-7 (FIP), T-8.VIII.2:1-3 (CE)).

When your mind is healed by joining in Christ's purpose of bringing healing to the Son of God (which occurs as we acknowledge the Christ in them), that healing purpose "folds the body in His light and fills it with the holiness that shines from Him" (3:4). Just as in cooking one might "fold in" whipped egg whites into a mixture, gently stirring so as to not break down the egg whites, the holy purpose of Christ gently integrates his holiness into our bodies, transforming the way they manifest in the world. His holiness shines out from us, even from our bodies, "And nothing that the body says or does but makes Him manifest" (3:5). That transformation heals our body as well, as we saw in the quotations I gave just above. It's like the physical healing is a mere side effect, the body functioning smoothly as it becomes aligned with the divine purpose.

But the big difference is that our transformed bodies, fueled with a different purpose, bring Christ in gentleness and love "to those who know Him not", thus healing their minds (3:6). Whenever we encounter another person, this healing is the mission that person brings to us, and equally is the mission we bring to them (3:7-8).

Paragraph 4

4 It *cannot* be that it is hard to do the task that Christ appointed you to do, since it is *He* that does it. ²And in *doing* it, you learn the body merely *seems* to be the means to do it. ³For the Mind is *His*, and so it *must* be yours. ⁴*His* holiness directs the body *through* the mind at one with Him, and *you* are manifest unto your holy brother, as he to you. ⁵Here is the meeting of the holy Christ unto Himself; nor are *any* differences perceived to stand between the aspects of His holiness,² which meet and join and raise Him to His Father, whole and pure and worthy of His everlasting love.³

• Study Question •

4. (4:2). *If the body only seems to be the means for doing the task Christ appointed you, what really is the means?*

We are here to heal the world. The Course says it over and over:

You are among the ministers of God.
Salvation of the world depends on me.
I came for the salvation of the world.
In me salvation's means and end are one.
My part is essential to God's plan for salvation.
Salvation is my only function here.

When we first hear these words we are intimidated. “Me? Save the world? You must be joking!” But there is no need to feel intimidated. The job God has given you to do *cannot* be hard to do because it isn't “you” that must do it; “*He* does it” (4:1). The Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians that “It is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me” (Gal. 2:20). It is the Mind of Christ as our mind that directs the body (4:4). The body as the actor is more like a tool used by the mind than the actual doer of its actions (4:2). The mind that is the actual doer is the Mind of Christ which is also yours (4:3). As the Mind of Christ directs your body, you reveal your true Self to your brother, and his true Self to you (4:4).

The Christ in you meets the Christ in another, each of you an aspect of Christ's holiness, finding no differences but only perfect unity, joining together to present the Christ to His Father, “whole and pure and worthy of His everlasting love” (4:5).

We can see here that we do have tasks to carry out in the world that require the use of our bodies, but only as they are directed by Him. In the Workbook, Jesus calls us clearly to this ministry:

². The “aspects of His holiness” are the Sons of God—ourselves and our brothers.

³. Jeremiah 31:3 (KJV): “The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love.”

For this alone I need: that you will hear the words I speak and give them to the world. You are my voice, my eyes, my feet, my hands, through which I save the world. The Self from Which I call to you is but your own. To Him we go together. Take your brother's hand, for this is not a way we walk alone. In him I walk with you and you with me. Our Father wills His Son be one with Him. What lives but must not then be one with you? (W-170.9:2–9 (CE))

In what might be a response, we can declare:

My eyes, my tongue, my hands, my feet today
have but one purpose: to be given Christ
to use to bless the world with miracles. (W-353)

Paragraph 5

5 How can you manifest the Christ in you *except* you look on holiness and see Him there? ²Perception tells you *you* are manifest in what you see. ³Behold the body, and you *will* believe that you are there. ⁴And every body that you look upon *reminds* you of yourself—*your* sinfulness, *your* evil, and above all, your *death*. ⁵And would you not despise the one who tells you this, and seek *his* death instead? ⁶The message and the messenger *are* one, and you *must* see your brother as yourself.⁴ ⁷Framed in his body, you will see *your* sinfulness, wherein *you* stand condemned. ⁸Set in his holiness, the Christ in him proclaims *Himself* as you.

• Study Question •

5. (5:1). *The previous paragraph spoke of manifesting the Christ via Him directing our bodies (to serve our brothers). This sentence gives us another aspect of manifesting the Christ. What is it?*

Looking upon a brother or sister and seeing the holiness of Christ in them is the only way you will ever manifest the Christ in you. What else would the Christ in you see but the holiness in others (5:1)? This is perfectly clear when you realize that whatever you perceive in others *always* shows you how you see yourself (5:2). If you see only bodies, that's what you will see about yourself, and that will always speak to you of "*your* sinfulness, *your* evil, and above all, your *death*" (5:3–4).

Whenever this happens we blame the messenger for the message that is delivered. When what we see reminds us of our own death, we (perhaps unconsciously) want to kill the person showing it to us (5:5–6). If you see any person framed in their body, you will see your own sinfulness and condemnation (5:7). But if you see any person framed in their holiness, the Christ in that person will deliver the message that *the Christ is you*

⁴ Mark 12:31 (RSV): "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." The biblical injunction says that you *ought* to love your neighbor the way you love yourself. The above Course allusion says that you *will* see your brother the way you see yourself.

(5:8). And, as the next paragraph points out in its first sentence, the choice of what you see is up to you.

Paragraph 6

6 Perception is a choice of what you want *yourself* to be; the world you want to live in and the state in which you think your mind will be content and satisfied. ²It chooses where you think your safety lies at your decision. ³It reveals yourself to you as *you* would have you be. ⁴And *always* is it faithful to your purpose, from which it never separates, nor gives the slightest witness unto anything the purpose in your mind upholdeth not.⁵ ⁵Perception is a *part* of what it is your purpose to behold, for means and end are never separate. ⁶And thus you learn what seems to have a life apart has none.

• Study Question •

6. (6:6). In the context of this paragraph, what exactly “seems to have a life apart”?

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Pronoun note: Except for Sentence 5, the oft-repeated pronoun “it” in this paragraph always refers to *perception*, which is introduced in Sentence 1. I think it is interesting to read the paragraph that way, substituting “perception” wherever “it” occurs.

“Perception is a choice” (6:1). In T-21.V.2, the central message of this paragraph was already introduced to us. We were told,

Perception is a choice and not a fact. But on this choice depends far more than you may realize as yet. For on the voice you choose to hear and on the sights you choose to see depends entirely your whole belief of what you are. Perception is a witness but to this, and never to reality. (T-21.V.2:1–4 (CE), T-21.V.1:7-10 (FIP))

Summarizing that passage: The choice of what we want to see determines our belief about ourselves. Sentence 1 begins with that thought and the rest of the paragraph expands on it. “Perception is a choice of what you want *yourself* to be” (6:1). It affects not only what we think we *are*, but also our views of the ideal world and the ideal state of mind. That is, what we want to be determines the kind of world we want to live in and the conditions we think will bring us contentment and satisfaction.

Remember, though, that very recently we were told this: “Specialness is the function that you gave yourself.” “You wanted specialness to be the truth” (T-24.VI.11:1, 5). So if

⁵. “Upholdeth” is used in Psalms 37, 63, and 145 in the King James Bible, referring to God holding up the righteous and weak when the wicked seek to bring them down. Psalm 37:17 (KJV): “For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholdeth the righteous.” In the above passage, it refers to the power of your mind to uphold its chosen purpose.

what we want to be is special, to be the ego, we will see everyone and everything in the world through that lens. We will want the world, and the other people in it, to be something that supports our specialness. People will be seen as bodies and as egos. We will see ourselves how we *want* to see ourselves (6:3). And we will *not* see things that do not support our belief and desire for specialness (6:4).

As hard as it may be to accept about yourself, if you are primarily seeing people as their ego and their body, and are finding it difficult if not impossible to see their holiness, to see the face of Christ in them, there is no escaping the fact that you are still embedded in the choice to be an ego yourself. “Means and end are *never* separate” (6:5). If the “end” is a perception of specialness, then its “means” or cause must also be present: Your desire to see things that way. What you perceive is *always* a choice of what you want to be. The world that *seems* to exist independently from yourself, “to have a life *apart*,” is in fact inextricably connected to your choices, which give shape to your perceptions (6:6).

Paragraph 7

7 You are the means for God; *not* separate, nor with a life apart from His. ²His life is manifest in you who are His Son. ³Each aspect of Himself is framed in holiness and perfect purity, in love celestial and so complete it wishes *only* that it may release *all* that it looks upon unto itself.⁶ ⁴Its radiance shines through each body that it looks upon, and brushes *all* its darkness into light merely by looking *past* it to the light.⁷ ⁵The veil is lifted through its gentleness, and *nothing* hides the face of Christ from its beholders. ⁶And *both* of you stand there before Him now, to let *Him* draw aside the veil that *seems* to keep you separate and apart.

• Study Question •

7. (7:5-6). These lines refer to one of the Course's most important images. Where is this image from?

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Just as you are the means to the end that is the world of specialness, you are also “the means for God,” that through which God is manifest. And just as your choices are not separate with a life apart from the world you see, “you are not separate, nor with a life apart from His” (7:1). Your life and God’s life are one life. That “life is manifest in you who are His Son” (7:2). You, I, and all of us share the life of God. As Ernest Holmes wrote: “There is one Life, that Life is God, that Life is perfect, that Life is my life now.”

⁶. This means that each aspect of God—each Son—is so beautifully and perfectly framed that it (the aspect) wishes only that it may release all that it looks upon unto the sight of itself (the aspect).

⁷. Pronoun clarification: “Its [This aspect’s] radiance shines through each body that it looks upon, and brushes *all* its [that body’s] darkness into light merely by looking *past* it [the darkness] to the light.”

Each son of God is an aspect of God. We are all aspects of God, “framed in holiness and perfect purity, in love celestial and so complete it wishes *only* that it may release *all* that it looks upon unto itself” (7:3).

Ask yourself now, “What do the “its” in 7:3 refer to?”

- A. Each aspect of God;
- B. Holiness;
- C. Celestial love

Each aspect is framed in holiness, purity, and love, love that is so complete that it (the aspect) has only one wish: to release all the imprisoned beauty that it looks on and perceives in others and in the world, so that it (the aspect) can *experience* what is now hidden. (I think that is the meaning of the words, “release unto itself.”) In other words, when we are identified with the Christ in us, the only desire we will have is to release the Christ in others so we can share in it, bask in it! This is the motivation that has driven Jesus to express Himself in the Course: He sees all the beauty that is in each of us and wants to release it. Even in the gospels there is an account of Jesus looking at Jerusalem and its inhabitants, and exclaiming,

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, ...How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!” (Matthew 23:37 ESV)

The radiance in each aspect (the light of holiness, purity, and love) penetrates like an X-Ray all the bodies it looks on, seeing past or through all the “darkness” of that person *to* the light that is within *them* (7:4). The veil of flesh disappears from this gentle, forgiving spiritual vision; *nothing* can hide the face of Christ from this inner radiance, a radiance we all possess (7:5). In each of our relationships, just as with Helen and Bill (the original referents of “both of you”), you and the other person are standing always before the face of Christ, with the ability to ask Him to “draw aside the veil that *seems* to keep you separate and apart” (7:6), the veil of our physical identities and behaviors.

Paragraph 8

8 Since you believe that you are separate, Heaven presents itself to you as separate too—*not* that it is the truth, but that the link⁸ that has been given you to *join* the truth may reach to you through what you understand. ²Father and Son and Holy Spirit are as one, as all your brothers join as one in truth. ³Christ and His Father *never* have been separate, and Christ abides within your understanding in the part of you that *shares* His Father’s will. ⁴The Holy Spirit links the other part—the tiny, mad desire to be separate, different, and special—*to* the Christ, to make the oneness clear to what is *really* one. ⁵In this world this is not understood, but *can* be taught.

⁸. The “link” is the Holy Spirit, as is made clear later in the paragraph: “The Holy Spirit links the other part.”

• **Study Question** •

8. **(8:1).** *This sentence refers to two previous passages (at least). The first is in 24.VII.6-8, which said that we do not understand the oneness of means and end, and so the Course deals with them as if they are separate. What other very recent passage does this sentence refer to?*

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This paragraph and the two that follow have both a localized application and a general one. The localized application clearly addresses and embellishes the central theme of the section, which is learning to accept our purpose in this world of seeing Christ in everyone and releasing that radiance from within them. But it also is important in a more general sense. The general application addresses the whole apparent contradiction between the Course's twin emphases on oneness and the importance of relationships, which is in turn a specific instance of an even more general issue: Is God an impersonal Principle, or a Person we can relate to. I'll deal with the localized issue first, and will return to the more general one at the end of the section.

If none of us are separate from Heaven, why does the Course seem to instruct us in how to get there or experience It? If we remain as God created us, why must we do *anything*? Simply put, the answer is, "Because you believe that *you* are separate" (8:1). In other words, we believe in separation, so the Course attempts to reach us in our delusion of separateness and even *through* our delusion.

Before he goes into that in detail, though, Jesus wants to make certain that we understand that Heaven is not separate *in truth* (8:1). Nevertheless, he must work with the situation as it seems to be. He has to work through what we understand (such as our separation from another person) to enable us to use the Holy Spirit within us to join with the truth (8:1). This is why he is focusing on seeing Christ in a brother.

The reality, of course, is that God the Father and God the Son, along with all of our brothers, *in truth* are only One (8:2). Christ has never been separate from God, and since Christ lives in each of us, we are part of that union. There is a part of us that understands and shares the Father's will, and another part comprised of "the tiny, mad desire to be separate, different and special" (8:3-4). The Holy Spirit links this latter part to the Christ in us, making oneness clear to the truth of us that is already one. This is not something that we understand at first, but it can be taught, and that is the whole purpose of the teaching about relationships and forgiveness (8:5).

Paragraph 9

9 The Holy Spirit holds Christ's purpose in your mind, so that the aim of specialness *can* be corrected where the error lies. ²Because His purpose still is one with both the Father *and* the Son, He *knows* the will of God and what you *really* will. ³But this is understood by mind *perceived* as one, *aware* that it is one, *and so experienced*. ⁴It is the Holy Spirit's function to teach you *how* this oneness is experienced, *what* you must do that it can *be* experienced, and *where* you should go to do it. ⁵All this takes note of time and place *as if* they were discrete, for while *you* think that part of *you* is separate, the concept of a oneness *joined* as one is meaningless.

• Study Question •

9. (9:1). What is "the error" and where does it lie?

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Oneness *is*; that's the truth. But there is an error in our minds; we believe we are separate. Yet there is something in us, something the Course terms the Holy Spirit, that retains awareness of the truth and of God's will that all be One (9:1). The Holy Spirit remains in Oneness with Father and Son. He "*knows* the will of God and what you *really* will" (9:2). That latter phrase tells us that we do not fully know our own mind and will. The Truth of us is totally united with the Will of God. But there is another part of us that is confused and thinks we have a separate will—and that is *not* the truth.

That knowledge of union with God and all that is can only be understood "by mind *perceived* as one, *aware* that it is one, *and so experienced*" (9:3). The next sentence then says that the job of the Holy Spirit is to teach us how to experience it, what to do to experience it, and where to go to experience it (9:4). It's clear to me from that that it is possible for us, even in this world, to experience Oneness. It's also clear that to achieve that, we must relate to what seems to be a separate Being or Presence within us, something that is not us (although in truth it is us). We must relate to God the Holy Spirit as if He were other, a separate Being, in order to experience the oneness that will demonstrate to us that He is *not* separate from us.

The entire learning process takes place in what seems to be a sequence of places spread over an expanse of time (9:5). As long as we think we are separate beings, the separating qualities of time and space will be part of what we think is real. The Course tells us time is an illusion. It tells us that we will eventually realize that we are everywhere, not limited as to place (W-Review 1.5:4). But until we have learned to experience Oneness, we will continue to experience time and space as part of our "reality." We cannot really conceive of what Oneness means until we experience It.

Paragraph 10

10 It is apparent that a mind so split could *never* be the teacher of the oneness which unites *all* things within itself. ²And so What *is* within this mind and *does* unite all things together *must* be its Teacher. ³Yet must It use the language which this mind can understand in the condition in which it *thinks* it is. ⁴And It must use all learning to transfer illusions *to* the truth, taking all *false* ideas of what you are and leading you *beyond* them to the truth that *is* beyond them. ⁵All of this can very simply be reduced to this: What is the same cannot be different, and what is one cannot **not** have separate parts.

• Study Question •

10. (10:1). True or false: The Holy Spirit does not deal with time and space because He knows that they are illusory?
11. (10:2). True or false: Because you are divine, no one is worthy to be your teacher but yourself?

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This makes sense. How could a mind that believes in separateness teach itself “the oneness which unites *all* things within itself”? (10:1) That is why we need the Holy Spirit—something apparently separate and yet within us that exists in and experiences that Oneness—to teach us (10:2). That Oneness-experiencing part of us has to use separation language because that is the only language we can understand (10:3). This inner Teacher takes our illusions and transfers them to truth; it leads us past our false ideas about ourselves “to the truth that *is* beyond them” (10:4).

The final summarizing sentence can be understood to summarize the last few paragraphs, the whole section, or even the entire Course. It is a reaffirmation of Oneness, despite all the seeming appearance of separateness and the necessity of utilizing that separateness and operating within its parameters as part of the learning process.

GENERAL APPLICATION: THE PARADOX OF IMMANENCE VS TRANSCENDENCE.

Another way this might be viewed is the conflict between oneness and duality. These paragraphs show that viewing God as a separate being we relate to is, in fact, ultimately false. Nor are there three beings as parts of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There are not 7 billion separate human beings. “What is one cannot have separate parts.” And yet, they also show us that to *experience* that Oneness, we *must* work within the illusion of separation.

There are people who have been entranced with the notion of Oneness to the extent that they claim they no longer believe in or engage with a God that is somehow distinct from themselves. They no longer ask for guidance or help of any kind. They claim they have realized that “He” is really “us.”

Of course what they are saying is the truth. But there is something off about their claim. If they are still bound by time and space (I know of no one who is not so bound), the odds are very good (like 100%) that they are still living a separate experience and are not living in full realization of absolute Oneness.

There are distortions on both sides of the question. The old saw about being “too heavenly minded to be of any earthly use” might describe some people who so stress “oneness” that they ignore the mundane experiences of separation and conflict that most of us have all the time. They fail to work at healing their relationships, claiming the division is “just an illusion.” And, avoiding anything that smacks of duality, they deprive themselves of the help, comfort, and guidance that can come from a relationship with the Holy Spirit. A person may have a truly high realization of Oneness and still be ego-bound and full of themselves, proud of their spiritual advancement and certain they are better than others who have not had the spiritual highs they have had.

Too much stress on relating to God as other, without the simultaneous affirmation of oneness, can leave us feeling trapped in separation and duality. We can get stuck in a childish belief in a God Who has to be cajoled into helping us, and a God who perhaps favors our group over other groups that do not acknowledge God as we do. After all, Oneness is the goal, isn't it?

As I see it, the trick is to affirm *both* oneness and duality. God is both immanent and transcendent. These paragraphs give an explanation of why we have to approach Heaven as if it were separate, even when we know it isn't: We may know that *intellectually* but we do not really *believe* it. Relationships (between beings who begin by believing in their separateness) offer perhaps the most powerful opportunities to transcend the ego and discover Oneness. We work with the illusions of separateness to learn that they are illusions.

When I am feeling lost and down and confused, sometimes I can be restored by strong affirmations of my oneness with God. But sometimes that does not work. In those times, I often find help by talking *to* God (or Jesus) instead of trying to talk *as* God, asking for help, perhaps, or just reminding myself that I am not alone, but accompanied always by a powerful ally, teacher, and friend. When I do, I still know that the ultimate truth is Oneness, that there is no god apart from me, and yet simultaneously I know that *I can experience God that way*. It is the Truth of Ultimate Reality filtered through the lens of my imperfect perceptions, and at that moment, that is just what I need.

In this regard, you may find the section of the Workbook titled “What is the Holy Spirit?” explains this intermediate experience with the Holy Spirit more thoroughly in Course terms (page 1461 in the CE, between lessons 280 and 281), and also the section on the Holy Spirit in the Clarification of Terms, page 1670 in the CE, #5 in the Clarification of Terms section at the end of the Course. In that final section, it gives a description of the Holy Spirit that perfectly illustrates the paradoxical dynamic between immanence and transcendence, between oneness and duality, between form and formlessness, showing how Reality in effect shapes Itself to our ignorance until It can lead us out of ignorance to knowledge:

The Holy Spirit abides in the part of your mind that is part of the Christ Mind. He represents your Self and your Creator, Who are one. He speaks for God and also for you, being joined with both. And therefore it is He Who proves them one. He seems to be a Voice, for in that form He speaks God's Word to you. He seems to be a Guide through a far country,³¹ for you need that form of help. He seems to be whatever meets the needs you think you have. But He is not deceived when you perceive yourself entrapped in needs you do not have. It is from these He would deliver you. It is from these that He would make you safe.

Once we have awakened, these dualistic appearances of Voice, Guide, and helper are no longer needed. "And then the Voice is gone, no longer to take form but to return to the eternal formlessness of God."

Legend:

Light underscoring indicates emphasis that appears in the Urtext or shorthand notes.

The Text is taken from the Circle of Atonement's Complete and Annotated Edition (which I refer to as the "CE" for "Complete Edition" or "Circle Edition"). Please be aware that, even when the wording is identical to the FIP version, the division into paragraphs is often entirely different in the CE, which restores the paragraph breaks found in the original notes. This results in different reference numbering as well. I will indicate for each paragraph the corresponding sentences in the FIP edition. You should be able to locate specific sentences in that edition if you need to, with a minimum of visual clutter in the commentary. Passages that lie outside the current section will continue to have footnoted references. References to quotations are from the CE unless another version is being quoted, in which case that version is indicated.

Footnotes by the commentary author are shown in this font and size. Other footnotes come from the Complete Edition itself.

Answer Key

1. (c) is defended by sentence 4. If we are in bodies, and Christ is in us, He must be in our bodies; He cannot be outside of us. But he is not in a body; therefore, we cannot be in bodies. (b) is defended by sentence 5. (a) is defended by sentence 6. Sentence 7 comes full circle, and reinforces the conclusion (c) again.
2. Because I am believing I am in a body, and not recognizing Christ within myself.
3. 2:3
4. The Christ. Sentence 1 says this and sentence 3 and 4 could read, “For the Mind that does it is His. This Mind directs your body.”
5. Seeing Him in our brothers.
6. What you perceive as “outside” you.
7. T-19.IV(D)—“The fear of God” subsection in “The Obstacles to Peace.”
8. 6:5-7:1, where it said that means and end are not separate, and so you, being the means for God, are not separate from Him.
9. The error is “the aim (or purpose) of specialness” and it lies “in your mind.”
10. False. He deals with time and space because He must reach you who still believe in them.
11. False. You cannot teach yourself because your mind is split between separateness and oneness (and you are aware only of the separateness half of the split).