

# Study Guide and Commentary ACIM<sup>®</sup> Text, Chapter 11, Section IV

## The Inheritance of God's Son

### 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

The entire section presents the reasons why we must give up all attack and blame against our brothers and ourselves before we can truly enter God's Presence.

### Paragraph 1

1. <sup>1</sup>Never forget that the Sonship is your salvation, for the Sonship is your Self [Soul]. <sup>2</sup>As God's creation It is yours, and belonging to you It is His. <sup>3</sup>Your Self [Soul] does not need salvation, but your mind needs to learn what salvation *is*. <sup>4</sup>You are not saved *from* anything, but you **are** saved *for* glory. <sup>5</sup>Glory is your inheritance, given you [your Soul] by your Creator that you might **extend** it. <sup>6</sup>Yet if you hate part of your Self [your own Soul] **all** your understanding is lost, because you are looking on what God created **as yourself** without love. <sup>7</sup>And since what He created **is** part of Him, you are denying Him His place in His Own altar.

### • Study Question •

1. *When the first part of sentence 6 speaks of hate, who specifically is the target of that hate? In other words, what does the hate referred to here in abstract, metaphysical terms look like in everyday life?*

We have the hardest time realizing that we are not individuals. We are the Sonship. The Sonship is my Self, my Soul (1:1). There is no such thing as individual salvation because there is no such thing as an individual! In the world of physical manifestation, we have separate bodies. It's very clear where I leave off and you begin, even if we are crammed together in a telephone booth (if you can still find one someplace). But in the world of spirit, there is no separation, no division, no demarcation. There is nowhere that I leave off and you begin. There is just the One Sonship. That is what we must never forget. The awareness of that Oneness is our salvation, and when we forget it, we lose track of everything true.

In sentence 2, the pronoun “His” is capitalized, but its referent is unclear. Since the Urtext capitalizes it, the scribes seem to have understood that it refers to God, Who is mentioned earlier in the sentence. However, what then does “it is His” mean? What is “it”? The first sentence has said that the Sonship is your salvation. Now, in the second sentence, the logical referent for “it” is either the Sonship or salvation. Moving from the first to the second sentence, we can see that the first “it” in “As God’s Creation it is yours” must refer to the Sonship’s function as your salvation. But then, “belonging to you, it is his” cannot mean the Sonship is God’s because it belongs to you. I think the “his” here should not be capitalized, and that it refers to “God’s Son” as it did back in 11.IV.8:4. The whole point here is that we must include our brothers and sisters. We must recognize them all as equally the Son of God, members of the Sonship.

So this is how I would paraphrase these first few sentences:

Never forget that the Sonship is your salvation, for the Sonship is your Soul. Because God created it, the Sonship is your salvation, and because it belongs to you it also belongs to your brother. The Sonship, you Soul, does not need salvation, but your individual minds need to learn you’re your salvation is in the Sonship.

Traditional Christianity, when it speaks of being “saved,” is talking about salvation from hell and damnation, salvation from the power of sin and the inevitable punishment that comes from it, including death and the eternal wrath of God. The Course, and all forms of metaphysical Christianity, totally reject such an understanding of the word *salvation*. As the Course says here, we are not saved *from* anything at all. The Sonship needs no salvation, but our individual minds, our separated consciousnesses, need to rediscover that our salvation, our safe haven, lies in Union with God and with one another. We need to be saved *for glory* (1:4). We need to reawaken to our function to shine as the light of God, extending his glory into the entire universe (1:5). We *have* the glory but, as the Lover says in the Song of Solomon, “A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.” (Song 4:12 KJV) Our glory is hidden, our light concealed under a basket, instead of shining from a candlestick (Matt. 5:15).

When we hate (which simply means to look without love on) a brother or sister, someone who is actually *part of our Self*, part of our very Soul, we have completely lost track of the Truth of the One Sonship (1:6). We are denying him or her their place in God, and thus denying our own place, and denying God His place in the Creation He created to be the candlestick for his glory, His very altar—our brother, our sister.

## Paragraph 2

2. <sup>1</sup>Could you try to make God homeless and know that **you** are at home? <sup>2</sup>Can the Son deny the Father **without** believing that the Father has denied **him**? <sup>3</sup>God’s laws hold **only** for your protection, and they never hold in vain. <sup>4</sup>What you experience when you deny your Father is still for your protection, for the power of your will cannot be lessened without the intervention of God **against** it, and any limitation on **your** power is **not** the Will of God. <sup>5</sup>Therefore, look **only** to the power that God gave to save you, remembering that it is yours *because* it is His, and join with your brothers in His peace.

• Study Question •

2. *The first two sentences of this paragraph present a situation in which we think that what we're doing to ourselves is actually being done to us by God. What mechanism of the mind, not specifically referred to here, is responsible for this seeming reversal of causation?*

When we withhold love from a brother we are disrupting the unity of the Sonship, and that unity is God's dwelling place. There is no way we can do that and still retain the firm knowledge that *we* are at home in God (2:1). We have believed that God kicked us out of our home in the garden, but it is we who have tried to banish Him from His home. What a concept! God, homeless! When attempt to banish God, we inevitably project our thought and believe He has banished us (2:2). And that blasphemous belief has ruled Western religion for centuries.

Traditional religion teaches that we have broken God's laws, and that the justice of God demands our punishment. But "God's laws hold *only* for your protection," not for your punishment (2:3)! The laws are intended to protect us, to correct us, to cause us to readjust our course. As Ernest Holmes (founder of Religious Science) once wrote, "There is no sin but a mistake, and no punishment but an inevitable consequence." When we "break the law" we suffer unpleasant consequences, but: "What you experience when you deny your Father is still for your protection" (2:4). Our will is powerful, and God will not intervene against our will, because it is not His Will to place any kind of limitation on our power (2:4). If we allow unloving thoughts in our minds, we will suffer for it. All thoughts produce form at some level.

If we deny God (by denying God in a brother or sister, for instance), we *will* suffer the consequences. We will lose our own knowledge of Divine Union because we have chosen to deny it. In that sense, "the wages of sin is death," as the Bible teaches. But that experience of separation is meant for our protection, meant to motivate us back into unity with God and one another. We can draw on that very power of mind God has given us and use it to join our brothers in peace (2:5).

### Paragraph 3

3. <sup>1</sup>Your peace [The peace of *your* Soul] lies in its limitlessness. <sup>2</sup>Limit the peace you share, and your Self [*your own* Soul] **must** be unknown to you. <sup>3</sup>Every altar to God is part of you [*your* Soul], because the light He created is one with Him. <sup>4</sup>Would you cut off a brother from the light that is yours? <sup>5</sup>You would not do so if you realized that **you can darken only your own mind**. <sup>6</sup>As you bring **him** back, so will you [*your* mind] return. <sup>7</sup>That is the law of God, for the protection of the wholeness of His Son.

• Study Question •

3. *When the paragraph speaks of limiting the peace we share, in what sense do you think it means we are limiting it?*

Again we need to identify the referent for a pronoun. "Its limitlessness" is the phrase; is it your Soul that is being limited, or the Soul's peace? (3:1) Sentence 2 makes it clear:

“Limit the peace you share...”. So then, *how* are we limiting that peace? When we hold a grudge against someone and continue to think of them without love, we are excluding them from the peace of God. But to be complete, our peace must be without limits. Same as in the first paragraph: You can't know peace yourself if you won't share it with everyone. In fact, you can't know your Self if you won't include everyone as part of It (3:2).

Each of us is an altar to God, a place from which God's glory is meant to shine like the Shekinah glory shone from the Ark of the Covenant in Moses' day (3:3). And every such altar is a part of our Soul, because God's light is one light. We would never harbor even the seed of a thought like “Go to hell!” about another person if we realized that all denial of the light will darken our own minds (3:4–5). We must, mentally, bring each brother and sister back into the light. Not that they ever left in truth! But we have seen them without the light in them, and we must rejoin them to the light *in our minds*. Doing so will return our own minds to the light (3:6).

The law of God that protects us is such that the wholeness of the Son can never be broken (3:7). Separation is impossible. You *cannot* condemn another brother to hell, or deny him the peace of God, without affecting yourself. But that same law guarantees that as you welcome each brother back into the light of God with you, your awareness of and certainty of the light within yourself will grow proportionately.

## Paragraph 4

4. <sup>1</sup>Only you can deprive yourself of anything. <sup>2</sup>Do not oppose this realization, for it is truly the beginning of the dawn of light. <sup>3</sup>Remember also that the denial of this simple fact takes many forms, and these you must learn to recognize and to oppose steadfastly, **without exception**. <sup>4</sup>This is a crucial step in the reawakening. <sup>5</sup>The beginning phases of this reversal are often quite painful, for as blame is withdrawn from without, there is a strong tendency to harbor it within. <sup>6</sup>It is difficult at first to realize that this is **exactly** the same thing, for there **is** no distinction between within and without.

### • Study Question •

4. *In paragraphs 4 and 5, we are told two seemingly contradictory things: 1) We should take full responsibility for our deprivation (4:1), and 2) We should not blame ourselves for our deprivation (5:3-4). Based on your understanding of the Course, can this seeming contradiction be resolved?*

Sentence 4:1 is one of the key concepts of *A Course in Miracles*. As Jesus says, “it is truly the beginning of the dawn of light” (4:2). Nothing and no one *beside your own self* can deprive you of anything. The Course says this over and over in many ways: “I am affected only by my thoughts” (W-pII.338). “The secret of salvation is but this: That you are doing this unto yourself” (T-27.VIII.10:1). “...nothing outside yourself can hurt you, or disturb your peace or upset you in any way” (W-pI.70.2:2).

Our perceptions, our senses, our past experiences all convey a different message. We believe that other people can deprive us. Our parents or our children can deprive us. The government can deprive us. Sickness can deprive us of health. Time and death can

deprive us of the company of loved ones. Everything seems to contradict what the Course is telling us. We question, "How can you say it's all coming from me? From my thoughts? How can it be that I am doing all this to myself?"

Is it hard to accept? Yes. We must deny the evidence of our senses over and over again (4:3). Again, I've found this message echoed in the writings of Charles Fillmore: "In the study of Truth you are not under any circumstances to listen to the testimony of your external senses." (*Essential Charles Fillmore*, p. 59). And also in the Bible: "Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment." (John 7:24 NRSV) We must look past the seeming evidence of sin, of sickness, of deprivation, and of death, and affirm the reality of eternal spirit. We must recognize that we are seeing only what, in some deranged part of our minds, we want to see: "There is no world apart from what you wish, and herein lies your ultimate release. Change but your mind on what you want to see, and all the world must change accordingly" (W-pI.132.5:1-2).

It is difficult, but it is also "a crucial stop in the reawakening" (4:4). What makes it especially hard to accept the fact that only I can deprive myself of anything is that all the blame I formerly placed on things *beside* myself now seems to fall squarely back on my own shoulders! (4:5) If you have even barely begun to grasp the lesson being taught here, you almost surely have experienced the guilt, the self-blame, that it can seem to induce. We think, "How did I create this for myself? What is wrong with me? Why, *how*, could I do this to myself?"

Jesus makes a key point here. Blaming yourself is "exactly the same thing" as blaming something outside yourself. How can that be? Because "there is no distinction between within and without" (4:6). Or as he says elsewhere, "There *is* nothing outside you." There is only the One.

Guilt is guilt, and whether held to my own bosom or spewed out on others, it is a false emotion. There is *never* any reason for guilt. "God has condemned me not. No more do I" (W-pII.228). One of the most glorious lines in the Bible, one I memorized many, many years ago, is Romans 12:1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." (The only change in my understanding between then and now is that *everyone* is "in Christ Jesus.")

The next paragraph expands on the need to undo all blame, whether without or within.

## Paragraph 5

5. <sup>1</sup>If your brothers are part of **you** and you blame **them** for your deprivation, you **are** blaming yourself. <sup>2</sup>And you cannot blame yourself **without** blaming them. <sup>3</sup>That is why blame must be **undone**, **not** seen elsewhere [*not re-allocated*]. <sup>4</sup>Lay it to yourself and you cannot **know** yourself, for **only the ego blames at all**. <sup>5</sup>Self-blame is therefore ego identification, and as much [*as strong*] an ego defense as blaming others. <sup>6</sup>*You cannot enter God's Presence if you attack His Son.* <sup>7</sup>When His Son lifts his voice in praise of his Creator, he **will** hear the Voice for his Father. <sup>8</sup>Yet the Creator cannot be praised **without** His Son, for Their glory is shared and They are glorified together.

We are all one, so blaming yourself is blaming others, and blaming others is blaming yourself (5:1–2). The goal is not to shift blame “to the right person or thing,” since there is no “other” person, and there is no blame for the one Son of God. “Blame must be *undone, not seen elsewhere*” (5:3). To let go of blame *entirely* is such a radical idea! The Workbook tells us that *everything* is a lesson God wants us to learn, and that lesson is one thing: “I will forgive, and this will disappear” (W-pI.193.13:3). If you find that you can’t seem to find any way to look at something without blaming someone or something, all you can do is to tell the Holy Spirit, “I am willing to see this differently.” Just be *willing* to let go of blame, and the Holy Spirit will help transform your mind to see the situation without blame.

“Only the ego blames at all” (5:4). If you are blaming, you are thinking with your ego, and that includes self-blame (5:5). To blame yourself or to blame another is to attack God’s Son, and doing that is going to drive out any consciousness of the Presence of God (5:6). When the Course says you cannot “enter” God’s Presence, it has to be a figure of speech, because God is everywhere present. There is nowhere that God is not (T-21.I.8:6; T-29.VIII.7:6), so it is impossible *not* to be in God’s Presence. However, we can be (and usually are) unaware of God’s Presence, and I think that is what is meant here. Attacking the Son deadens our spiritual sense, and we lose touch with God; we no longer hear Him or see Him. Conversely, when we acknowledge the Creator, which includes of necessity acknowledging the glory of the Son as well, we “*will* hear the Voice for [our] Father” (5:7–8).

## Paragraph 6

6. <sup>1</sup>Christ is at God’s altar, waiting to welcome His [God’s] Son. <sup>2</sup>But come wholly without condemnation, for otherwise you will believe that the door is barred and you cannot enter. <sup>3</sup>The door is **not** barred, and it is impossible that you cannot enter the place where God would have you be. <sup>4</sup>But love yourself with the Love of Christ, for so does your Father love you. <sup>5</sup>You **can** refuse to enter, but you **cannot** bar the door that Christ holds open. <sup>6</sup>Come unto me who hold it open **for** you, for while I live it cannot be shut, and I live forever. <sup>7</sup>God is my life and **yours**, and **nothing** is denied by God to His Son.

### • Study Question •

5. *The next two paragraphs use beautiful imagery to illustrate the restoration of our true Identity—Christ, Whose glory is our inheritance—to our awareness. In simple terms, what single thing must we do to enable this restoration to take place?*

The first sentence can be a bit confusing, read in isolation: “Christ is at God’s altar, waiting to welcome His Son” (6:1). You have Christ, you have God, and you have the Son—“His Son.” But is it Christ’s Son or God’s? Clearly, it must be God’s Son. But isn’t Christ God’s Son? How then can Christ be at the altar waiting to welcome the Son? Is he waiting for himself? Oddly enough, I think he is.

I think the opening line of paragraph 7 explains the meaning here in 6:1: “At God’s altar Christ waits for the restoration of Himself in *you*” (7:1). Christ, the spiritual Ideal Son, is waiting at the altar to see Himself perfectly restored *in you*.

But, as we’ve been told, we can’t enter that temple and appear before that altar (in God’s Presence) if we harbor condemnation in our hearts—not because *God* would keep us out, but because “you will believe that the door is barred and you cannot enter” (6:2). There are no bars on the door. God wants us at that altar, perfectly individualized manifestations of Christ, and if God wants us there *nothing* can keep us out except our own refusal to enter (6:3–5). *The way is open. We are welcome to enter.* If we love ourselves with the love of Christ, the way the Father loves us, we can enter (6:4). But that means ending self-condemnation.

Christ stands holding the door open, calling us to come to Him. He calls forever because He lives forever. His life is our life, and His life is God (6:7). God denies us nothing (6:7).

To me, the experience of this is what awaits me in every period of meditation. To the degree I can undo any blame or condemnation in my mind, I can experience the welcoming Presence of God and Christ. This is the discovery and the goal of the mystics. As I sit to meditate, let me say: “Into His Presence would I enter now” (W-pI.157).

Into Christ's Presence will we enter now, serenely unaware of everything except His shining face and perfect Love. The vision of His face will stay with you, but there will be an instant which transcends all vision, even this, the holiest. This you will never teach, for you attained it not through learning. Yet the vision speaks of your remembrance of what you knew that instant, and will surely know again (W-pI.157.9:1-4).

## Paragraph 7

7. <sup>1</sup>At God's altar Christ waits for the restoration of Himself in **you**. <sup>2</sup>God knows His Son as wholly blameless as Himself, and He is approached through the appreciation of His Son. <sup>3</sup>Christ waits for your acceptance of Him as **yourself**, and of His Wholeness as **yours**. <sup>4</sup>For Christ is the Son of God, Who lives in His Creator and shines with His glory. <sup>5</sup>Christ is the extension of the Love and the Loveliness of God, as perfect as His Creator and at peace with Him.

Christ waits to see Himself in you (7:1). God knows you, as His Son, are as blameless as God Himself! You may approach God (enter His Presence, in the sense we’ve discussed—opening our spiritual senses to the inner awareness of the ever-present Spirit, the endless field of Love. But the *way* to approach God is “through the appreciation of His Son” (7:2)! That is one of my most favorite lines in the Course. My way to God is *you*. I find God through appreciating you as God’s creation, God’s expression on earth.

God's Will is your salvation. Would He not have given you the means to find it? If He wills you to have it, He must have made it possible and easy to obtain it. *Your brothers are everywhere* [my emphasis]. You do not have to seek far for salvation. Every minute and every second gives you a chance to save yourself (T-9.VII.1:1-6).

What is Christ waiting for? “The restoration of Himself in *you*.” “Your acceptance of Him *as yourself*.” “Your acceptance...of His Wholeness as *yours*” (7:1,3). Dare you say it? “I am Christ!” “Christ is my Self.” “The Wholeness of Christ is mine.” Can you say “What is true of Christ is true of me”? I live in my Creator and shine with His glory (7:4). I am the extension of the Love and the Loveliness of God, as perfect as my Creator and at peace with Him (7:5).

What we are seeing here is that everything that can be said of Jesus can be said of each of us. The only difference between us, as he said back in Chapter 1, is that he has *only* what has come from God, while we have obscured our glory with the ego. He has realized fully what is only potential in us:

There is nothing about me that you cannot attain. I have nothing that does not come from God. The difference between us now is that I have nothing else. This leaves me in a state which is only potential in you (T-1.II.3:10-13).

You may feel that making statements such as “I am Christ” is presumptuous. But it isn't, because *you are*. Christ is your true Self; he is waiting for the restoration of Himself in you. And affirming the truth of that is a powerful way to entrain our minds to more complete acceptance of his Wholeness as ours. You may not *feel* like the extension of God's Love and God's Loveliness, but that's exactly why you need to affirm that you *are*.

## Paragraph 8

8. <sup>1</sup>Blessed is the Son of God whose radiance is of his Father, and whose glory he wills to share as his Father shares it with him. <sup>2</sup>There is no condemnation in the Son, for there is no condemnation in the Father. <sup>3</sup>Sharing the perfect Love of the Father the Son must share what belongs to Him, for otherwise he will not know the Father or the Son. <sup>4</sup>Peace be unto you who rest in God, and in whom the whole Sonship rests.

### • Study Question •

6. *If you are having trouble letting go of a grievance against someone, sentence 2 is a breath of fresh air. Try changing the sentence into the first person and applying it to yourself: “There is no condemnation in me, for there is no condemnation in my Father.” Repeat this to yourself a few times and notice how you feel. Notice what reactions come up for you.*



The blessing being offered here is offered to you and to me. There is an inner radiance that each of us inherits from God (T-2.I.2:4). Do you not want to share God's glory with others, as God shares it with you? (8:1) Condemning your brother blocks the glory. But there is no condemnation in the Father and therefore, because you are the image of the Father, there can be no condemnation *in you* (8:2). If we identify with that divine nature within us, we must have the same mind as Christ, and as God. We must love; we must welcome. The way to share *in* God is to share *of* God (8:3). "Holiness must be shared, for therein lies everything that makes it holy" (T-14.V.11:6).



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

“Peace be unto you who rest in God,” says Jesus, and then adds, “and in whom the whole Sonship rests” (8:4). Wow! Think about that. “The whole Sonship rests in me.” You are a haven of rest to every living thing. You are completely free of all judgment, all condemnation. As the perfect expression of God’s Love and God’s Loveliness, you can say, as Jesus did, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28, KJV).

## Answer Key

1. The target of that hate is our brothers, who are part of our shared Self. Thus the hate referred to here is expressed in everyday life in the form of hating our brothers, holding grievances against them.
2. The mechanism of *projection*. See my commentary on paragraph 2 for a more detailed explanation of how this works.
3. We are limiting the peace by excluding certain people from it.
4. As I understand the Course, this seeming contradiction is resolved by recognizing that there is a big difference between *taking responsibility* for something and *blaming* yourself for something. Taking responsibility simply means acknowledging that your own choices—and nothing else—have brought about your experience. But the connotation of the word “blame” is that not only are you responsible for what you have done, but you are also *guilty* for what you have done.  
The Course says that the only way in which we could be truly guilty is if we did something that caused *real harm* to ourselves or others. But the Course is clear that any seeming harm we cause ourselves or others is *unreal*. And this is the key to resolving our seeming contradiction. In a nutshell, we are responsible for our deprivation, but our deprivation is not real; therefore, we are not *to blame* for it. “Blaming” here means “seeing someone’s actions as causing real harm, and thus meriting guilt and condemnation.” Blaming is what the ego does, and this is what we are *not* to do.
5. In short, we must love the entire Sonship—our brothers and ourselves—without reservation. We must let go of condemnation entirely (6:2), and love and appreciate the entire Sonship as our Father does (6:4, 7:2).
6. No written answer is expected.