

Study Guide and Commentary

ACIM® Text, Chapter 30

The New Beginning

Section IX

Changeless Reality

Explanation of underlining, italics and footnote formats can be found at the end of the commentary. See also the note there on the effects of switching from the FIP edition to the Complete and Annotated Edition.

Please note that the FIP and CE versions may differ in where paragraph breaks occur.

Overview of Section IX

Note: Words to watch for. The previous section talked a lot about stability versus shift and change. This section will speak even more about appearances, which shift and change, versus reality, which is changeless. The phrase “reality is changeless” (or close equivalent) occurs six times in this section. The words miracle and temptation frequently occur in the section and are associated with reality and appearances. You may wish to mark these words in your book.

Section VIII was titled “One Changeless Meaning.” This section’s title is “Changeless Reality.” The continuity of changelessness in the two sections is unmistakable, but the emphasis has switched from a changeless *meaning* to a changeless *reality*. We assign meaning to what we see by our thoughts. Reality is the fundamental idea behind the form we see in this world. The meaning we give to things changes. The reality behind visible things does not change, nor does the original meaning in the Mind of God. As we learn to focus on the reality behind forms, we will learn to see the same meaning in all forms. This section calls us to see the reality behind all appearances and to let go of any appearances we mistakenly prefer to hold onto.

• Study Question •

1. Refresh your memory of the previous section, because this section continues many of its themes. How would you summarize Section VIII in a few sentences?

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Paragraph 1

Appearances deceive but can be changed. ²Reality is changeless. ³It does not deceive at all, and if you fail to see beyond appearances you *are* deceived. ⁴For everything you see will change, and yet you thought it real before and now you think it real again. ⁵Reality is thus reduced to form, and capable of change. ⁶Reality is changeless. ⁷It is this that *makes* it real and keeps it separate from all appearances. ⁸It must transcend all form to be itself. ⁹It *cannot* change. ¹⁰The miracle is means to demonstrate that all appearances can change *because* they are appearances, and cannot have the changelessness reality entails.¹ ¹¹The miracle attests salvation from appearances by showing they can change.

• Study Questions •

2. *Where else, earlier in the chapter, have we read about appearances deceiving? What was the context of that earlier statement?*
3. **(1:1-9).** *Summarize two or three things that distinguish appearances from reality (use a table form if that seems natural).*
4. **(1:6-9).** *Which of the following is real, according to the Course's definition here?*
 - A. Love
 - B. A healthy body
 - C. Your house or apartment
 - D. The sun in the sky
 - E. The earth under your feet
 - F. Joy

Jesus again centers on the theme of appearances, as he did in Section IV. Appearances can deceive us; in fact, we made them to deceive us (T-30.IV.5:4 (FIP), T-30.V.5:4 (CE)) and, unless we look past them, we are deceived (1:3). But, because they are only appearances, they “can be changed” (1:1). By contrast, reality cannot change and never deceives (1:2-3).

Think for a moment about what changes and what is changeless. Is there anything in the physical world that is changeless? Bodies certainly change. Behavior changes. People's opinions change. The planet we live on changes. Stars change; galaxies come and go. Everything we see will change (1:4), and therefore, by the Course's definition, it is not real. “Reality is changeless” (1:2). Therefore, reality is not anything visible to the eyes. It must be spirit.

Note the word “for” in 2:4; why is it there? It means “because.” So what is the cause and effect relationship or the fact-to-reason relationship between the two statements?

¹ The assumption in this discussion is that the miracles you give your brother can deliver him from appearances of sickness, lack, disaster, loss, and suffering. By showing that these appearances are so changeable, the miracle proves that they are unreal, since reality is changeless.

...if you fail to see beyond appearances, you are deceived

BECAUSE

Everything you see will change, and yet you thought it real before, and now you think it real again.

The point here, it seems to me, is that if we view an appearance and think it real, which then changes, and now we attribute reality to the new condition, which one is real? Say a bird is alive, is that “life” real? How can it be real if, a moment later, the bird can be dead? Is death now real? Reality is changeless by definition (1:6–7; the phrase occurs twice, in 1:2 and 1:6). If we think anything that changes is real, we don’t know what reality is. If we see an appearance and believe it to be real, we have defined reality as a form that can change. But being changeless is what makes reality real; it is the characteristic that distinguishes reality from appearance (1:7–8). It transcends form (1:8), and therefore all forms are merely temporary manifestations of something real. The reality behind everything “cannot change” (1:9).

This concept is basic Philosophy 101. It is the teaching of Plato and Plotinus, which is named Idealism. The view of the Course is nearly identical to Plato’s teaching on this point. One university web page has this summary:

IDEALISM of Plato

This is the view that the only reality is the ideal world. A well known exponent of this view was Plato, a philosopher in ancient Greece (428-347 B.C.). Plato believed that the physical world around us is not real; it is constantly changing and thus you can never say what it really is. There is a world of ideas which is a world of unchanging and absolute truth.

Paragraph 2

2 Your brother has a changelessness in him beyond appearance and deception both. ²It is obscured by changing views of him which you perceive as his reality. ³The happy dream about him takes the form of the appearance of his perfect health, his perfect freedom from all forms of lack, and safety from disaster of all kinds. ⁴The miracle is proof he is not bound by loss or suffering in any form because it can so easily be changed. ⁵This demonstrates that it was never real and could not stem from his reality, for that is changeless, and has no effects which anything in Heaven or on earth could ever alter. ⁶But appearances are shown to be unreal *because they change*.

• **Study Questions** •

5. *How does the miracle show that appearances are not real?*
6. **(2:3–4).** *These lines speak of our “changing views” about our brothers. What thoughts in the previous section might be referred to here?*
7. **(2:5).** *Does this sound like it is saying that miracles can literally bring us perfect health, perfect freedom from all kinds of lack, and safety from disaster of all kinds? Given the discussion about how the miracle demonstrates the unreality of appearances, could this discussion possibly be figurative or metaphorical?*

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Reality entails changelessness. Therefore, when a miracle causes an appearance to change—a sick person gets well, a lame person walks, water turns into wine, a feud ends in loving reconciliation, poverty turns into plenty—it proves that the appearance is not real. If it were real, it could not change (2:1). If a miracle can change appearances, then we cannot be limited by appearances nor threatened by them (2:2). Whatever the appearance may be that seems to threaten us or stand in our way, we can always know, “This can change!” Whatever appearance in our brother or sister seems to be immovable, incurable, or unforgivable, “This can change.” Furthermore, whatever the appearance may be, we can know that it is not real because it is not changeless.

Beyond that changing appearance, there is something in each of us that is real and unchanging. That reality will never deceive us; it is entirely dependable and one hundred percent reliable (2:3). We cannot see that unchanging reality because we are granting reality to our “changing views of him that [we] perceive as his reality” (2:4). We interpret him in the light of how well he plays the role we have assigned him, and we believe the image of him that we have formed is an accurate picture of who he really is. We mistake the malleable appearance for the unchanging truth.

We see a sick friend, and we believe that he or she is that sick body. We see a co-worker who spreads false rumors about us for personal gain, and we believe that he or she is a gossip and a liar. We see people in our city who are homeless and starving, and we believe that they are doomed to such poverty because of who they are. Then, a miracle happens. The sick friend is healed; the co-worker is forgiven and embraced as a friend; the homeless and starving are housed and fed. This is the happy dream (2:5)! It proves that appearances cannot bind anyone because appearances “can so easily be changed” (2:6, 8). By changing the appearance of things, the miracle proves that the appearance was never real (2:7, 9).

In various Course groups, we spend a lot of time stressing that, in the Course, a miracle does not refer to outward changes; it is a healing of the mind. Yet, in this paragraph, the Course very clearly teaches that the miracle changes appearances and that that visible change is the proof that what has changed is not real. I developed a definition of a miracle based on the Course that attempts to unite these two concepts:

“A miracle is the activity of the Holy Spirit that shifts our perception from false to true and thereby grants us unconditional, instantaneous and free deliverance from the imprisoning (yet illusory) problems of this world. We accept miracles (into our own minds), extend them (to others) and so recognize that we have received them.”

“The miracle is the activity of the Holy Spirit, which enters our minds in a holy instant when normal thought and perception is momentarily suspended, when we have been willing to bring cause (our thinking) and effect (our pain) together. The miracle then shifts our minds from false perception to true perception, from belief in this world’s reality to realization of true reality, from fear to love, from bondage to freedom. It thus releases our minds from the painful emotional effects of false perception (based on belief in sin), including fear, guilt, anger, and anxiety. It frees us as well from the physical effects of our supposed sins, proving that those effects are not real because they can change, and proving that their cause (sin) is not real because it has no effects.”

Paragraph 3

3 What is temptation but a wish to make illusions real? ²It does not *seem* to be the wish that no reality be so. ³But it is an assertion that some forms of idols have a powerful appeal which makes them harder to resist than those you would not want to have reality. ⁴Temptation, then, is nothing more than this: a prayer the miracle touch not some dreams, but keep their unreality obscure and give to them reality instead. ⁵And Heaven gives no answer to the prayer, nor can the miracle be given you to heal appearances you do not like. ⁶You have established limits. ⁷What you ask is given you, but not of God, Who knows no limits.² ⁸You have limited yourself.

• Study Question •

8. *Think of some things you experience as temptations. How were they a wish to make illusions real?*

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These first three sentences bear a strong resemblance to an earlier passage in this chapter:

“There is no surer proof idolatry is what you wish than a belief there are some forms of sickness and of joylessness forgiveness cannot heal. This means that you prefer to keep some idols, and are not prepared, as yet, to let all idols go. And thus you think that some appearances are real and not appearances at all. Be not deceived about the meaning of a fixed belief that some appearances are harder to look past than others are. It always means you think forgiveness must be limited.” (T-30.VI.6:1-5 (FIP)), T-30.VII.7:1-5 (CE))

Temptation is a wish to make illusions real (3:1). (You may want to memorize that statement. Temptation will be a prominent subject in Chapter 31.) We wish that we could actually have a special love relationship. We may even imagine that a holy relationship is a very special special relationship. We may wish that our bodies were real, that we could be the most famous and

² Matthew 7:7 (RSV): “Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” In the above reference, rather than asking for and being given miracles, you ask that “the miracle touch not some dreams,” and you are given this—but by yourself, not by God.

beloved persons in the world, or that some moment in time could last forever. We want the changing illusions to be real and to be unchanging. And that is what keeps us anchored in the material world.

It may seem innocuous. Of course, we want good times to last forever! Who doesn't? But wishing illusions were permanent is wishing that reality wasn't real (3:2). We tell ourselves that our cravings are only natural, that some forms of idols are simply irresistible. Sure, we are willing to let some idols go—the ones we don't want (3:3). Maybe other people want them, but we don't. And, of course, there lies the ground for war and conflict. We're always ready to sacrifice other people's idols, but not our own.

Wishing that some illusions were permanent is a form of prayer. Instead of asking God to dispel the illusions, our wish asks God to hide their unreality and give them reality instead (3:4). God does not answer this kind of prayer, but unfortunately, because we have “established limits,” that is, put certain illusions on the “hands off” list, God can't give us a miracle to dispel the illusions that we don't want to keep (3:5–6). We have said “No” to miracles. Our belief is a variant of the maxim from George Orwell's *Animal Farm*: All illusions are unreal, but some are more unreal than others. It won't work. You can't dispel one illusion and leave the others intact any more than you can disinfect a wound and choose which germs to leave alive, or turn on a light but leave a little of the darkness undisturbed.

“Anything in this world that you believe is good and valuable and worth striving for can hurt you and will do so. Not because it has the power to hurt, but just because you have denied it is but an illusion and made it real. And it is real to you. It is not nothing. And through its perceived reality has entered all the world of sick illusions. All belief in sin, in power of attack, in hurt and harm, in sacrifice and death, has come to you. For no one can make one illusion real, and still escape the rest. For who can choose to keep the ones that he prefers, and find the safety that the truth alone can give? Who can believe illusions are the same, and still maintain that even one is best?” (T-26.VI.1)

We do receive what we have asked for; our illusions remain intact; they continue to seem real to us. But it isn't God Who gives this to us; we give it to ourselves (3:7–8). Such is the power of our minds.

This principle explains why we cannot be healed if we are unwilling to grant healing to everyone. Nor can we be forgiven while we hold grievances against others. We are trying to hold on to some illusions, which prevents us from knowing that all illusions are unreal.

Paragraph 4

4 Reality is changeless. ²Miracles but show what you have interposed between reality and your awareness is unreal, and does not interfere at all. ³The cost of the belief there must be some appearances beyond the hope of change is that the miracle cannot come forth from you consistently. ⁴For you have asked it be withheld from power to heal all dreams. ⁵There is no miracle you cannot have when you desire healing, but there is no miracle that can be given you unless you want it. ⁶Choose what you would heal, and He Who gives all miracles has not been given freedom to bestow His gifts upon God's Son. ⁷When he is tempted, he denies reality, and he becomes the willing slave of what he chose instead.

• Study Questions •

9. (4:4–6). *What is the one prerequisite to receiving healing or a miracle?*
10. (4:7–9). *Paraphrase sentence 7 in your own words; it is a bit difficult to understand.*

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Once again, Jesus sounds His theme: “Reality is changeless” (4:1). Apparently this is important enough to bear frequent repetition. He then restates another teaching of this section: that the appearances *we* have used to keep ourselves unaware of reality are themselves not real, and do “not interfere at all” (4:2). In other words, we do not need to allow appearances to hide the truth from us. What encouraging news! Although we have made bodies, sickness, disaster, and death to conceal our endless life, it is possible to overlook or look beyond those appearances and to perceive the reality of our true nature—our own, or our sister's or brother's.

When we wish for some illusions to remain, what we are really wishing for are inconsistent miracles. Sometimes we want to see past the illusion, and other times, we don't. Because we wish for inconsistency, that's what we get: “the miracle cannot come forth from you consistently” (4:3) because we *asked* to have limits on the healing power of miracles (4:4).

When we truly *desire* complete healing we will have it (4:5). And no miracle can be given to us against our will (4:6). Trying to pick and choose among miracles, wishing some things to be healed and some not, wanting some illusions to be dispelled and some not, makes it impossible for God to heal *everything* and dispel *all* illusions (4:7). The principle by which healing happens is that *only* reality is changeless, and if it isn't changeless it isn't real. Deny that principle by attempting to hold on to some illusion and you deny reality (7:8). Remember, temptation is the desire to make illusions real (3:1); thus, when you are tempted you are denying reality! Even worse, the illusion you preferred to reality will enslave you *by your own consent* (4:9; see T-29.IX.1:1). Your freedom will be limited to the degree that you value that idol.

The inevitable question this discussion raises is, “What about sickness that continues even though I want *very much* to be healed?” Our thinking runs like this: I don't like this sickness. I want to be healed. The Course says there is no miracle I cannot have when I desire healing. I *do* desire healing. So why am I not healed?

There is a passage in the Manual for Teachers that deals with the apparent failure of healing:

One of the most difficult temptations to recognize is that to doubt a healing because of the appearance of continuing symptoms is a mistake in the form of lack of trust...Doubt not the gift and it is impossible to doubt its result. This is the certainty that gives God's teachers the power to be miracle workers, for they have put their trust in Him. (M-7.4:1,8-9)

If you doubt the result you must be doubting the gift. If you know that sickness is an illusion and health is the truth, you won't doubt that healing has been given *even when the symptoms continue*. Instead of saying, "Why am I still sick?" you should be saying, "Thank You, God, for healing me. Thank You for my perfect health." One of the key principles taught by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Emile Couey, two of the progenitors of New Thought and Religious Science, is, do not affirm the negative (e.g., "I am sick"); do not say "I will be healed" but rather "I am healed *now*." By repeating to ourselves that we have not been healed, we are reinforcing our belief in the sickness. We need, instead, to repeat affirmations of faith in our healing. In the Bible, Jesus said, "Out of the abundance [overflow] of the heart, the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34). What we believe in our hearts is what comes out of our mouths, so if we are always talking about being sick, in our hearts we believe in sickness. No matter that we *say* we desire healing; we are reinforcing our sickness with every word of doubt we speak. There is a deep part of our mind that is holding on to the sickness for some reason. Perhaps we do not want to have a miracle prove to us that our body isn't real. Perhaps there is some lingering guilt that believes we *deserve* to be sick. Perhaps there is still an unforgiveness in your mind, preventing you from complete faith that "Nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal exists" (T-In.2:2-3). The answer to apparently delayed healing is not to question the healing, but to examine our hearts and to watch our words. Heal your mind and the body will follow.

Let us be glad that you will see what you believe, and that it has been given you to change what you believe. The body will but follow. (T-31.III.6:1-2)

Paragraph 5

5 *Because reality is changeless is a miracle already there to heal all things that change, and offer them to you to see in happy form, devoid of fear. ²It will be given you to look upon your brother thus. ³But not while you would have it otherwise in some respects, for this but means you would not have him healed and whole. ⁴The Christ in him is perfect. ⁵Is it this that you would look upon? ⁶Then let there be no dreams about him that you would prefer to seeing this, and you will see the Christ in him because you *let* Him come to you. ⁷And when He has appeared to you, you will be certain you are like Him, for He is the changeless in your brother *and* in you.³*

³ 1 John 3:2 (RSV): "Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." In the Course version, when Christ appears to us, we will be like Him because He is our true Self.

• Study Question •

11. (5:1) *Try to follow the logic here. It's difficult because there are two premises and one conclusion, but one of the premises is not stated, but rather assumed. Try to list the two premises and the conclusion.*
12. (5:2–4). *When will it be given to you to see your brother “in happy form, devoid of fear”?*

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The fact that “reality is changeless” is such fruitful ground; we can conclude so many wonderful things based on this premise! Here (5:1), Jesus points out that since reality is changeless, then (if miracles are real) miracles must always be present. Another way of looking at this is that since a miracle simply shifts our awareness from the unreal to the real, and since reality is always already present, the opportunity and ability to make that shift, which is inherent in a miracle, is also always already present. To be more specific: I do not need to be healed, I need to recognize that *I am* already whole. I do not need to be forgiven, I need to become aware that I am guiltless and already forgiven. I do not need to be provided for, I need to realize I already have everything I need. I am *always* whole, *always* guiltless, *always* abundant. Our prayers need to change from entreaty or begging to affirmation and thanksgiving. To quote Emerson’s “Self-reliance” again:

Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul. It is the spirit of God pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to effect a private end is theft and meanness. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg.

Notice that a miracle heals the changing things of the world and gives them back to us “to see in happy form, devoid of fear” (5:1). We see things differently, but we still *see things*. We still have our relationships, we still have our possessions, we still have our jobs and our families and our pleasures. We see them differently. We no longer cling to them and think our happiness lies outside of us, in them.

We will even see our brother in this way, devoid of fear (5:2). That may be hard to accept in regard to certain people *but it is still true*. After all, we are talking about *miracles* here! If you feel it would take a miracle for you to see so-and-so “in happy form, devoid of fear,” you are right and it isn’t a problem! That’s what the Course is about. It can happen; it *will* happen, “but *not* while you would have it otherwise in some respects” (5:3), which clearly means you don’t want them to be *whole* (5:4). There may be “dreams about him [or her] that you would prefer to seeing this” (5:7). Perhaps you want to hold onto your image of them as guilty, or as less than yourself. Perhaps you want their body to be real. Perhaps you want to gloat over their continued problems. Perhaps you want to blame them for your unhappiness. Such dreams will block the sight of the perfect Christ in them. Do you really *want* to see Christ’s perfection in your brother or sister (5:5–6)? When you want it you will see it (5:8), and you will know that *you* are perfect as well because Christ “is the changeless in your brother *and* in you” (5:9). You will see them as whole, and as you do, the appearances that deny wholeness will be changed by the miracle, proving that they are only appearances.

Practice Suggestion: (5:5–9). Try turning these lines into a personal exercise with a particular individual. For instance, “The Christ in **my mother** is perfect. This is what I would look upon. Let there be no dreams about **my mother** that I would prefer to seeing this.” And so on.

Paragraph 6

6 This will you look upon when you decide there is not one appearance you would hold in place of what your brother really is. ²Let no temptation to prefer a dream allow uncertainty to enter here. ³Be not made guilty and afraid when you are tempted by a dream of what he is. ⁴But do not give it power to replace the changeless in him in your sight of him. ⁵There is no false appearance but will fade if you request a miracle instead. ⁶There is no pain from which he is not free if you would have him be but what he is. ⁷Why should you fear to see the Christ in him? ⁸You but behold yourself in what you see. ⁹As he is healed are *you* made free of guilt, and his appearance is your own to you.⁴

• Study Question •

13. Read 5:5–6, followed immediately by 6:1. What do you think “this” refers to in 6:1?

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For the second time in this section, Jesus assures us that we *will* see Christ in our brother or sister as soon as we decide there is nothing *else* we’d rather see (6:1). Making such a decision does not mean that we won’t be tempted again to see something else. If temptation occurs (Once again: *What is temptation?*), don’t be surprised. But don’t let it shake your confidence, either, or make you waver in your decision (6:2). Above all, when we become aware of such temptation in ourselves we must not be “made guilty and afraid” (6:3). The ego loves to hold us to up ideals not its own and belittle us for not reaching them. “There you go again, lusting for sex (or fame or power or money). Aren’t you supposed to be spiritual? What good did it do to decide to see only Christ in your brothers?” Don’t listen! As Ken Wapnick often says, “So you have an ego? What else is new?” If you wake up in a body and still need food, drink, and sleep, you almost certainly still have an ego. Don’t be made guilty or afraid because your ego pops up!

When temptation occurs, don’t let it drag you down. Instead, rise above it. “Do not give it power to replace the changeless in [your brother] in your sight of him” (6:4). Being tempted is normal, but giving in to temptation is not necessary. Speaking of temptation, Martin Luther used to say, “The birds of sin may fly about my head, but I don’t have to let them make a nest in my hair.” Don’t give the temptation any power! “Request a miracle instead,” and the illusion you are tempted to hold on to will fade and lose its appeal (6:5). You can bring healing to your brother and free him of any pain if you are willing to see him only as the perfect Christ that he is (6:6).

⁴ See Cameo 30: “As You See Him You Will See Yourself.”

Don't be afraid; there is no reason for fear about seeing Christ in anyone. You are only seeing yourself, whatever you see (6:7–8). See him as guilty, lacking, weak, or sick, and you are seeing yourself in that same way. See him as Christ, and you will see Christ in you (6:9).

[I have borrowed the practice suggestion that follows from Robert Perry's "ACIM Text Reading" notes for 2006, since it is exactly what I wanted to do, and I saw no reason to reinvent the wheel.]

Practice Suggestion: *Think of someone you know and love, and then think of some outward appearance or circumstance of this person that you are attached to because you find that it pleases you, or entertains you, or comforts you. Now repeat:*

I am being tempted to value a dream of what [name] is.

I will not let this make me feel afraid or guilty.

But I will not give it power to replace the changeless in my sight of [name].

I behold the changeless Christ in [name].

I value this sight over any appearance.

For this gives me power to free [name] from all painful appearances.

And it lets me behold the Christ in me.

Answer Key

1. Instead of seeing people and things as having a purpose I have assigned to them, to meet my imagined needs, and interpreting them on that basis, I need to begin seeing everything in this world with one, single purpose: forgiveness. With that purpose in mind I should overlook appearances and listen to the Holy Spirit for his interpretation of everything, and join with my brothers in achieving that common purpose of forgiveness.
2. We read of appearances deceiving in T-30.IV.5:1: "Appearances deceive *because* they are appearances and not reality." They were said to be like children's toys, but without a single meaning. If we can see them that way they cannot touch us. They are meant to hide the truth, and therefore we should not dwell on them.
3. Comparison of appearances and reality:

Appearances	Reality
deceive	never deceives
can be changed	is changeless
changeable form	formless

4. A and F.
5. The miracle shows that appearances are not real by showing that appearances can change. That which changes is not real. (To do this, obviously, a miracle must therefore change appearances, e.g. heal a body, bring manifest reconciliation between enemies, etc.)
6. The "changing views" could refer to the shifting, changing interpretations and meanings we see in the outside world because we are holding on to isolated, separate, and changing goals and purposes. See Section VII, paragraphs 2–4 and 7.

7. In my opinion, the Course cannot possibly mean these statements as simply some kind of metaphor. They must literally mean what they say or they are meaningless! How could a “figurative” miracle that does not really change any appearances in the physical world demonstrate that “appearances are...unreal *because* they change”?
8. While you have to answer for yourself, a personal example may help: During a certain period of my life, I believed that I had to be married to a particular woman to be fully happy. She didn't want to get married. My idol, of course, was my special love relationship with her. I wanted that illusion to be real; that was my temptation.
9. To receive a miracle, you must want the miracle without reservation (or without limiting its application).
10. If you select some things to be healed and omit others, you are not giving God the freedom to give His gifts to every aspect of God's Son.
11. *Premise 1*: Reality is changeless.
Premise 2 (unstated): Miracles are part of reality.
Conclusion: Miracles are already present, ready to heal all things that change.
12. You will see your brother “in happy form, devoid of fear,” when you no longer limit the miracle by wanting him to remain unhealed of illusions in certain ways, for instance, wanting his or her body to be real; wanting to blame him or her for some of your discomfort.
13. The perfect Christ in my brother.

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.

Effects of Switching Editions of the Course

The commentaries on Chapters 29, 30, and 31 were written prior to the publication of the Complete and Annotated Edition (CE) of the Course in 2017. Originally they were based on the edition published by the Foundation for Inner Peace (FIP). The references to other parts of the Course were based on the FIP edition, and the comments themselves were based on the same edition. There were significant changes made in the CE, although for the most part there was no alteration in the meaning of the text, and these final chapters had far fewer changes. There are some changes in section and paragraph breaks and sentence structure that result in different numbering in references to the same text in the two editions.

I have attempted for all references to add a separate CE reference if it differs from the FIP reference, but I may have missed some. If so, I apologize. Please let me know of any referencing problems you find.

I have also tried to edit my commentary so as to reflect any wording changes in the CE. For instance, the CE restored the plural use of "you" where the FIP had substituted the phrase "you and your brother." One such instance will illustrate the kind of change, significant in actual words but nearly identical in overall meaning:

FIP: Thus you and your brother but shared a qualified entente, in which a clause of separation was a point you both agreed to keep intact.

CE: You shared a qualified entente, in which a clause of separation was a point which you had both agreed to keep intact.