

# Commentary

## ACIM® CE Text

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.

### *Miracle Principles 27-32 T-1.27-32*

27. A miracle is a universal blessing from God through me to all my brothers. 2 It is the privilege of the forgiven to forgive. 3 Souls cannot rest until everyone has found salvation.

2. 1 The disciples were officially and specifically told to heal others, as physicians of the Lord.

Miracles are said to emanate from God and are transmitted from those who have been healed to those who are in need of healing. This outflow of blessings is available to everyone, making it a universal gift from God. Forgiveness is viewed as a privilege and not an obligation. However, it is also seen as an obligation since it is a specific teaching of Jesus' discipleship to extend healing and forgiveness to others. Contributing to the awakening and salvation of others is the privilege that forgiveness offers. It is only when everyone has found salvation that one can experience complete rest.

2. 2 They were also told to heal themselves. 3 And they were promised that I would never leave them or forsake them. 4 Atonement is the natural profession of the children of God, because they have professed me.

It's important to remember that miracles, healing, Atonement, and forgiveness are all connected and can be used interchangeably. They are different ways of understanding and experiencing the same thing. When the disciples were instructed to heal themselves, it also meant forgiving themselves and accepting Atonement and a miracle. Jesus is always present with us, as promised, so these things are fundamental aspects of being his disciples. Forgiveness, healing, and expressing love are natural qualities of anyone who follows him.

3. 1 The children need both strength and help. 2 You cannot help until you are strong. 3 The everlasting arms are your strength, and the wisdom of God is your help.

It seems that the term "the children" refers to all those who are around us. However, for Helen, it may have referred to the actual children she worked with. Our purpose is to provide strength and assistance to those individuals that God brings into our lives. In

order to do this, we must first find our own strength. God is the ultimate source of our strength and His wisdom is what helps us. We offer this strength and assistance to others with the hope that it will make a positive impact on their lives.

4. 1 "Heaven and Earth shall pass away" means that they will not always exist as separate states. 2 My word, which is the resurrection and the life, shall not pass away, because life is eternal.

In the Gospel of Matthew 24:35, Jesus spoke the words, "Heaven and Earth shall pass away." Here, he reinterprets his own words to mean that Heaven and Earth will not always be separate states, but rather they will be seen as one. Earth will become Heaven. Jesus further explained that his words will never pass away because they represent the resurrection and the life, which are eternal. Therefore, his words are eternal too, as they are the source of life.

5. 1 You are the work of God, and His work is wholly lovable and wholly loving. 2 This is how you must think of yourself in your heart, because this is what you are.

These are two of my favorite lines in the Course. We are not only wholly lovable, which is hard enough to believe. We are also wholly *loving*. Most of us, probably all of us, are painfully aware of our unloving thoughts and deeds. But that isn't the truth of us; *love is what we are*. Jesus says we *must* think of ourselves in this way! That is the goal of the Course for us as individuals: To recognize and accept the Truth about our divine Identity.

**28. Miracles are a means of organizing different levels of awareness.**

Speaking of levels of awareness, Jesus is referring here to levels of *consciousness or mind*.

2. 1 Miracles come from the below-conscious (subconscious) level. 2 Revelations come from the above-conscious (superconscious) level. 3 The conscious level is in between, and reacts to either subconscious or super-conscious impulses in varying ratios. 4 Freud was right about this basic classification, but wrong about the names. 5 He was also right that the content of consciousness is fleeting. 6 Consciousness is the level which engages in the world, and is capable of responding both to external and internal impulses. 7 Having no impulses from itself and being primarily a mechanism for inducing response, it can be very wrong.

Miracles, he says, come from the subconscious level of mind. Revelations (direct apprehensions of Truth) come from the super-conscious level. In between the two is the mind we are aware of, the conscious level.

*Super-conscious mind*: The is God-mind, in full awareness of Truth. When impulses from this level reach our conscious mind we experience a *revelation* of Truth, a direct experience of Oneness with God. The *Manual for Teachers* says it is rare for anyone to

sustain this awareness in this world (M-26.3:1-2). But we experience the effect of this level, constantly drawing us into awareness of Oneness.

*Conscious mind:* This is the mind we are always aware of, pushed and pulled in many directions by an endless flow of conflicting choices. Basically, it is always reacting to internal impulses from above or below, or from the external world. Its choices “can be very wrong” (2:7). (See Robert's footnote about the comments about Freud.) He agrees with Freud that our conscious mind's content, being “fleeting,” which seems to be the result of the constant bombardment of impulses from within (above and below) and the external world.

*Sub-conscious mind:* In paragraph 7 we are told that this level of mind is comprised of two aspects or regions: a deeper region filled with impulses to offer miracles in our inter-personal relationships, and a superficial region filled with the impulses of the world, which includes both external “temptations” and impulses arising within our bodies. It's fascinating that impulses to perform miracles come, not from above, but from the deeper level of the sub-conscious. This is a clear indication that, deep within we are wholly loving, and impulses to express that love in acts of healing arise from that loving Self.

This depiction of the three levels of mind is referred to over and over in the next few chapters.

3. 1 For example, if the identification is with the body, consciousness may distort superconscious impulses by denying their source and seeking their impact in the orgasm. 2 This is the result of “mistaken identity.” 3 If you will look at the effects of revelation, you will see that there are some similarities in the experiential results, but hardly in the content.

So, here's Jesus talking about sex again. Suppose we strongly and mistakenly identify with our bodies. In that case, our conscious mind may interpret the impulse from the super-conscious to join in oneness with God, an experience in which the world of illusion may disappear from our awareness, as a desire for sexual orgasm, which sometimes has a similar “mind-blowing” effect. He points out that the experiential results may be similar, but the content certainly is not.

4. 1 Revelations induce complete but temporary suspension of doubt and fear. 2 They represent the original form of communication between God and His Sons, before the intrusion of “fire and ice” made this impossible. 3 It should be noted that they involve an extremely personal sense of closeness to creation, which human beings try to find in sexual relationships. 4 This confusion is responsible for the depression and fear which are often associated with sex.

Experience of oneness with the divine completely suspends all our doubts and fears (but only temporarily). Doubt and fear are what broke our original communication with God. (For “fire and ice,” see footnote.) Some people with such experiences describe feeling “one with everything.” Ken Wilber says he felt he was the trees, the mountains, and all of nature. The “extremely personal sense of closeness to creation” gets misinterpreted by our strong identity with the body to mean a desire for sexual relations. In doing that, we are preventing the suspension of doubts and fears, which is why “depression and fear are often associated with sex.”

5. 1 Sex frequently involves lack of love. 2 But revelation is purely a love experience. 3 Physical closeness cannot achieve this. 4 As was said before, the subconscious impulses properly induce miracles, which are interpersonal, and result in closeness to others.<sup>57</sup> 5 This can be misunderstood by a personally willful consciousness as an impulse toward sexual gratification.

Sex often involves a lack of love, while the subconscious miracle impulse that has been distorted into sexual desire is “purely a love experience.” That sort of experience can't be achieved by physical closeness. A miracle, which is interpersonal, results in true closeness of minds, a sense of shared needs and desires—an experience of pure love. But the desire for closeness is easily distorted into an impulse for sexual gratification if your consciousness is “personally willful,” which I understand to mean an ego-driven will for individual gratification.

So *both* the impulse from the superconscious and the impulse from the deep subconscious get distorted into sexual desire. They leave us feeling unsatisfied because being close to another body cannot bring closeness to God or truly close to another person.

6. 1 Revelation unites you directly with God. 2 Miracles unite you directly with others. 3 Neither emanates from consciousness, but both are experienced there. 4 This is essential, because consciousness is the state which produces action, though it does not inspire it. 5 You are free to believe what you choose. 6 What you do attests to what you believe.

Revelation is direct communication with God, resulting in a recognition of our union with God. Miracles, which are expressions of love, unite us with our brothers and sisters. Neither of these things originates in our conscious mind, although that is where we experience them. Conscious experience of revelation and miracles is *essential* because the conscious mind is the state that produces action, expressing our union with God and one another in our actions in this world. We can choose what we believe. We can choose revelation and miracles, or we can choose to respond to our egos. Our actions will be the evidence of what we believe.

7. 1 The deeper levels of your subconscious always contain the impulse to miracles, but you are free to fill its superficial levels, which are closer to consciousness, with the impulses of this world, and to identify yourself with them. 2 This results in denying yourself access to the miracle level underneath. 3 In conscious actions, then, your interpersonal relationships also become superficial, and miracle-inspired relating becomes impossible.

Subconscious mind seems to be a focal point of our experience. It has these two regions, superficial and deep. The deep region is *always* full of miracle impulses. This deep level is our True Self, the Christ nature we all share, but it is *subconscious* because we have suppressed it and denied its existence. We have forgotten the nature of our True Self, that we are “wholly lovable and wholly loving.” The superficial region is the part of our mind that we have willed with “the impulses of this world.” It contains all the repressed memories we have pushed out of awareness, all the self-doubts and self-judgments, all the teaching of the world that we have accumulated from our parents, our families, and our society. This superficial region is closer to our conscious mind than the deep region, so we tend to identify ourselves with them. This blocks our access to the deep region. Therefore, it takes a conscious choice to identify with the deep region full of miracle impulses.

Because of this false identification with the superficial region of our subconscious minds, our “interpersonal relationships also become superficial, and miracle-inspired relating becomes impossible.” It takes a strong and consistent effort on our part to affirm our identity with the loving Self we truly are.

**29. Miracles are a way of earning release from fear.**

2 1 Revelation induces a state in which fear has already been abolished. 2 Miracles are thus a means, and revelations are an end. 3 In this sense, they work together. 4 Miracles do not depend on revelation. 5 They induce it. 6 You are quite capable of miracles already, even if you may be still too fearful for revelations. 7 Revelation will occur after you engage at the visionary level in a process of denying fear.

Miracles induce revelation. This relationship between the two is important for us to understand. When we identify with our loving Self and express that love, offering a miracle to those around us, we, in a sense, *earn* release from fear. It's *revelation*, however, that actually “induces a state in which fear has already been abolished.” The abolition of fear is inherent in our union with the divine. We are filled with the thinking that always fills Heaven, and that thinking contains no fear. This is how miracles and revelation work together. In connecting with our loving Self our conscious minds become open to God, and revelation occurs. We do not need revelation to work miracles; miracles *induce* revelation.

It's good that miracles don't depend on revelation. The experience of revelation can be terrifying if we are still identified with our body and our ego! Because we are *always*

capable of miracles, we can actively deny fear and extend love; revelation is then free to occur and to open us to accept the complete abolition of fear. This initial denial of fear at the visionary level is a *process*. When fearful thoughts arise, as they will, we must *deny* them. We can affirm, "These thoughts I do not want, I choose instead," some appropriate thought of love and confidence in our Self and in God.

**3** 1 Revelation is intensely personal, and is actually not translatable into conscious content at all. 2 That is why any attempt to describe it in words is usually incomprehensible, even to the writer himself at another time. 3 This is why the Book of Revelation is essentially incomprehensible.

This is fascinating to me, and I find it very helpful to be told that my experience of revelation cannot be translated "into conscious content at all." This is why words fail to describe such experiences. Revelation is *intensely* personal. When one person tries to describe it to another, the other will find it "incomprehensible." If the one who experiences it tries to write it down, very often even they will be unable to understand it at another time! This is why the book of Revelation in the Bible is "essentially incomprehensible."

**4** 1 Revelation induces only experience. 2 Miracles, on the other hand, induce interpersonal action. 3 In the end, these are more useful, because of their impersonal nature. 4 In this phase of learning, working miracles is more valuable, because freedom from fear cannot be thrust upon you. 5 The experience cannot last. 59 6 Miracles, therefore, are the essential course of action for everyone.

Revelation is not the communication of some kind of higher idea, a thought that could be expressed in words. It's an experience. But miracles are different; they "induce interpersonal action." Pay attention to the word "interpersonal." This is "A Course in Miracles." So we can call it "a course in interpersonal action." Miracles unite two or more people in an expression of love. Miracles, therefore, are actually more useful than revelations! Miracles are "impersonal," which means that miracles disregard any differences between people and see all people as equally deserving, as the CE points out in Footnote 58.

In our gradual learning process, working miracles is more valuable than receiving revelations (although miracles do *induce* revelation). Freedom from fear can't be forced on us against our will. The conscious choice to offer a miracle, which is to express love, is always within our reach. Even when we are released from fear through revelation, the experience is temporary. Again, the footnote explains it well: "The experience of revelation cannot last until miracles have prepared us for permanent release from fear." This is why working miracles is *essential* for everyone!

**30. Miracles praise God through you.**

2 1 They praise God by honoring His creations, affirming their perfection. 2 They heal because they deny body-identification and affirm spirit-identification. 3 By perceiving the spirit, they adjust the levels and see them in proper alignment. 60 4 This places the spirit at the center, where minds can communicate directly.

Another reason miracles are more valuable than receiving revelations is that miracles praise God through us. The interpersonal exchange between miracle giver and miracle receiver involves the giver's recognition of the receiver as a perfect creation of God. That's what forgiveness is. If the miracle involves physical healing, that is produced by affirming our identification as spirits rather than bodies. This, too, honors God as our Creator.

The remaining lines of Paragraph 2 seem to move past the basic idea of Principle 30 about praising God to expand on the two levels of self-identification: body or spirit, as in Principle 26. (Principle 28 also deals with levels, but there the levels in question are levels of mind or consciousness.) When we perceive another as the spirit they are, we are placing the levels in proper alignment, with spirit as our primary identity. When we make spirit central, it enables mind-to-mind communication.

Because of our overwhelming identification with our bodies, we believe that all communication must involve the body's senses: ears, eyes, touch—even smell can be involved. But mind alone? It seems impossible. Yet, according to the Course, it is happening all the time. We just aren't aware of it. We have no idea of how much our thinking affects those around us, nor how much *their* thinking affects us. Our daily practice of the Workbook is said to bring awakening thoughts to thousands of minds around the world, affecting even the minds of those no longer in the world or those yet to come. How we think of another person directly affects how they see themselves. When spirit takes precedence in our perception of another, it triggers the possibility within their mind of seeing themselves as spirit, not as body, and this can bring health to their bodies. This is how a miracle heals.

**31. Miracles should inspire gratitude, not awe. 2 Human beings should thank God for what they really are. 3 The children of God are very holy. 4 The miracle honors their holiness.**

We tend to think of miracles as awesome things, leaving us dumbstruck. That isn't their purpose. We misunderstand if we think a miracle is some kind of spectacle intended to shock people into belief (T-1.10). Miracles inspire gratitude. When a person offers a miracle to another, the recipient is drawn to see the truth about themselves. They are not sinners; they are very holy. Notice this the next time someone extends love to you; you naturally feel grateful. This isn't just because they give you something; it is because they see you *as worthy* of such a gift. Even a friendly smile in the aisle of a supermarket brings that kind of warm glow of gratitude. You feel in that moment like a worthy human being. Notice when this kind of thing happens to you. Don't you feel grateful?

2 1 God's creations cannot lose their holiness, though it can be hidden. 2 The miracle uncovers it and brings it into the light where it belongs. 3 Holiness can never be really hidden in darkness, but a person can deceive himself on this point. 4 This illusion makes him fearful, because in his heart he knows it is an illusion. 5 As with all illusions, he exerts enormous efforts to establish its validity. 6 The miracle sets validity where it belongs. 7 Eternal validity belongs only to the spirit. 8 The miracle acknowledges only the truth. 9 It thus dispels a person's illusions about himself and puts him into communion with himself and with God.

The good news is you cannot lose your holiness; you are *always* worthy of love, even though you can hide your True Self under a layer of fear or anger. We fear opening ourselves to other people because we're afraid they will discover that we are really awful people who don't deserve their love, or at best, that we are drab and uninteresting. We can't imagine that what they will see if they look deeply enough is that we are "very holy." But a miracle uncovers our holiness and "brings it into the light where it belongs."

Holiness cannot really be hidden by darkness. It's similar to trying to hide a burning candle in a dark room. The darkness is driven away by the candle. Nevertheless, we convince ourselves that we can hide what we are. But deep down, we *know* we can't hide it, and—strangely—that makes us *afraid* because we think we are ugly sinners, not holy saints. We are trying to cover ourselves with the tissue paper of the ego, presenting ourselves as strong, independent, and maybe even dangerous. We try very, very hard to maintain the reality of our invented self, all the time growing more and more afraid that "the truth will out." Not the real Truth but the delusion about ourselves that we believe is true.

When we receive a miracle, it validates the real Truth—Truth of our spirit. A miracle always acknowledges that Truth. It dispels our illusions about ourselves and restores our communion with our Self and with God.

**32. Christ inspires all miracles, which are essentially intercessions. 2 They intercede for a person's holiness and make him holy. 3 They place him beyond the physical laws and raise him into the sphere of celestial order. 4 In this order, he is perfect.**

Christ, our shared Self, is what inspires all miracles. It "intercedes" for our holiness. Our ego is advocating for its shabby illusion of us, but when a miracle is offered, the universal Christ steps in between our ego and our Self and acts as a mediator on behalf of our Self, convincing our conscious mind that we really *are* as God created us—very holy! We are released from what we think are the laws of this world. We are lifted up at that moment to see ourselves in the light of God's judgment: "This is my holy Son, forever innocent, forever loving and forever loved, completely changeless and forever pure" (WI-10.5:1).



2 1 The spirit never loses its communion with God. 2 Only the mind needs Atonement. 3 The miracle joins in the Atonement of Christ by placing the mind in the service of the spirit. 4 This establishes the proper function of mind and abolishes its errors.

You may think you are out of touch with God, but “the spirit never loses its communion with God.” You—your true Self—does not need Atonement; only your confused conscious mind needs it. Miracles bring Atonement to your mind. This places your mind in the service of the spirit. Your conscious mind can serve the ego or the spirit. The miracle “establishes the proper function of mind,” serving your spirit, and cleanses your mind of its errors. You forget your madness and accept your loving, holy identity as God’s holy creation. You recognize the Truth about yourself and everyone else, and you join Jesus in his great crusade of Atonement to free everyone’s mind from their errors. This, indeed, is the “plan of Atonement”: “Those released by Christ must join Him in releasing their brothers, for this is the plan of Atonement” (T-1.34.2:4).

**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 Foundation for Inner Peace (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. 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 Differing Editions of the Course**

There were significant changes made in the CE, although for the most part there was no alteration in the meaning of the text, and the *Manual for Teachers* 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. When there is a major difference I will indicate it with a footnote.

I have attempted for all references to add a separate FIP reference if it differs from the CE 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 Text 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.*