

WHY ARE YOU NOT REJOICING?

(Reflections on JOY from ACIM and the Bible)

• 1 Definition of Joy

- 1.1 joy: a feeling of great pleasure and happiness
- 1.2 joy n: feelings of great happiness or pleasure, especially of an elevated or spiritual kind
 - 1 *Joy is a substantial kind of happiness, with a spiritual overtone. Contrast "He is a happy man" and "He is a joyful man."*

• 2 The Call to Joy

• 2.1 Bible

- 1 *The Bible calls us to rejoice in the Lord always.*
 - "Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright." (Psalms 33:1 KJVS)
 - Praise is "becoming and appropriate".
 - "And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD." (Zechariah 10:7 KJVS)
 - As happy as if they'd been drinking...
 - "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe." (Philippians 3:1 KJVS)
 - "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." (Philippians 4:4-5 KJVS)
 - "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (1Thessalonians 5:18-19 KJVS)
 - The joy of the Lord is your strength.(Neh 8:10)
 - You will make known to me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
In Your right hand there are (E)pleasures forever. (Psalm 16:11 NASB)

• 2.2 ACIM

- 1 *A Course in Miracles agrees that joy should be our natural state of mind:*
 - "Be glad today" (W-pI.123.2:2)
 - **The Holy Spirit is the call to awaken and be glad.** The world is very tired, because it is the idea of weariness. Our task is the **joyous one** of waking it to the Call for God. (T-5.II.10:5-7)
 - Healing is a thought by which two minds perceive their oneness and **become glad.** This **gladness** calls to every part of the Sonship **to rejoice with them,** and lets God go out into them and through them. (T-5.I.1:1-2)
 - **Rejoice, then, that of yourself you can do nothing.** (T-8.VII.6:1)

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- To be whole-hearted you must be **happy**. If fear and love cannot coexist, and if it is impossible to be wholly fearful and remain alive, the only possible whole state is that of love. **There is no difference between love and joy. Therefore, *the only possible whole state is the wholly joyous.***
(T-5.In.2:1-4)
- **There is one thought in particular that should be remembered throughout the day. It is a thought of pure joy;** a thought of peace, a thought of limitless release, limitless because all things are freed within it.
(M-16.6:1-2)
- **God's Will for me is perfect happiness** (W-pI.101.title).

• **3 Reasons for Joy**

• **3.1 Bible**

- **1 *Because God is with us***
 - We've already read Ps. 16:11, "In Your presence is fullness of joy."
 - Quote, "Surely the presence of God is in this place..."
 - Zech. 2:10 "Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," declares the LORD.
 - Heb. 1:9 'You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.', quoting Ps 16:11.
- **2 *Because of what God has done; because He has created us; because He has redeemed us (brought us back to Himself)***
 - Psa. 92:4 For You, O LORD, have made me glad by what You have done, I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands.
 - Psa. 30:11 You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness,
 - Is. 65:18 "But be glad and REJOICE forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing And her people for gladness
- **3 *Because we see others being blessed and living as God's children***
 - Psa. 34:2 My soul will make its boast in the LORD; The humble will hear it and REJOICE.
 - Prov. 23:15-16 My son, if your heart is wise, My own heart also will be glad; And my inmost being will rejoice When your lips speak what is right.
- **4 *Because God reigns (is in charge)***
 - Psa. 97:1 The LORD reigns, let the earth REJOICE; Let the many islands be glad.
 - "Rejoice! The Lord is King..His Kingdom cannot fail; He rules o'er earth and heav'n." ***God is still on the throne, He never forsaketh His own;***

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*His promise is true, He will not forget you,
God is still on the throne. "*

- **5 Because we find God's Word (the truth)**
 - Psa. 119:162 I REJOICE at Your word, As one who finds great spoil.
 - 16Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and **thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart:** for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts. (Jeremiah 15:16)
- **6 Because of God's forgiveness**
 - Is. 49:13 Shout for joy, O heavens! And **REJOICE**, O earth! Break forth into **joyful shouting**, O mountains! For the LORD has comforted His people And will have compassion on His afflicted.
 - Is. 35:10 And the ransomed of the LORD will return And come with **joyful shouting** to Zion, With **everlasting joy** upon their heads. **They will find gladness and joy**, And sorrow and sighing will flee away.
 - Such is salvation's call, and nothing more. It asks that you accept the truth, and let it go before you, lighting up the path of **ransom from illusion**. It is not a ransom with a price. There is no cost, but only gain. Illusion can but seem to hold in chains the holy Son of God. It is but from illusions he is saved. As they step back, he finds himself again. (W-pl.155.8:1-7)
- **3.2 ACIM**
 - **1 Because we see innocence joined with us, and cannot attack**
 - Minds that are joined and recognize they are, can feel no guilt. **For they cannot attack, and they rejoice that this is so, seeing their safety in this happy fact. Their joy is in the innocence they see.** And thus they seek for it, because **it is their purpose to behold it and rejoice.** **Everyone seeks for what will bring him joy as he defines it.** It is not the aim, as such, that varies. Yet it is the way in which the aim is seen that makes the choice of means inevitable, and beyond the hope of change unless the aim is changed. And then the means are chosen once again, **as what will bring rejoicing is defined another way and sought for differently.** (T-25.IV.1:1-8)
 - Perception's basic law could thus be said, "**You will rejoice at what you see because you see it to rejoice.**" And while you think that suffering and sin will bring you joy, so long will they be there for you to see. Nothing is harmful or beneficent apart from what you wish. It is your wish that makes it what it is in its effects on you. Because you chose it as a means to gain these same effects, **believing them to be the bringers of rejoicing and of joy.** Even in Heaven does this law obtain. **The Son of God creates to bring him joy**, sharing his Father's purpose in his own creation, **that his joy might be increased**, and God's along with his. (T-25.IV.2:1-7)

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- **2** *Because we see the truth about ourselves*
 - Look inward now, and you will not behold a reason for regret, but **cause indeed for glad rejoicing** and for hope of peace.(T-29.II.2:1-8)
 - Today accept Atonement, not to change reality, but merely to accept the truth about yourself, and **go your way rejoicing** in the endless Love of God. It is but this that we are asked to do. (W-139.10:2-3)
- **3** *Because we have healed our minds*
 - The habit of engaging with God and His creations is easily made if you actively refuse to let your mind slip away. The problem is not one of concentration; it is the belief that no one, including yourself, is worth consistent effort. Side with me consistently against this deception, and do not permit this shabby belief to pull you back. The disheartened are useless to themselves and to me, but only the ego can be disheartened.
Have you really considered **how many opportunities you have had to gladden yourself**, and how many of them you have refused? (T-4.IV.7:1-8:1)
 - **To heal is to make happy.** I have told you to think how many opportunities you have had to gladden yourself, and how many you have refused. This is the same as telling you that you have refused to heal yourself. **The light that belongs to you is the light of joy.** (T-5.In.1:1-4)
- **4** *Because only the joyful can heal others*
 - **Radiance is not associated with sorrow. Joy calls forth an integrated willingness to share** it, and promotes the mind's natural impulse to respond as one. Those who **attempt to heal without being wholly joyous** themselves call forth different kinds of responses at the same time, and thus **deprive others of the joy** of responding whole-heartedly.
- **5** *Because we have been wrong about what is real, what we have done or can do, and who we are*
 - Only if the decision that reality is fearful is wrong can God be right. And I assure you that God is right. **Be glad, then, that you have been wrong**, but this was only because you did not know who you were. (T-9.IV.10:3-5)
 - Love waits on welcome, not on time, and the real world is but your welcome of what always was. Therefore **the call of joy is in it**, and your **glad** response is your awakening to what you have not lost. (T-13.VII.9:7-8)
 - Learn to be a **happy** learner. You will never **learn** how to make nothing everything. Yet see that **this has been your goal**, and recognize how foolish it has been. **Be glad it is undone**, for when you look at it in simple honesty, it is undone. (T-14.II.5:3-6)
- **6** *Because we do not understand the truth (how miracles work)*
 - And are you really safer in maintaining the reality of illusions than you would be in **joyously accepting truth for what it is**, and giving thanks for it?

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Honor the truth that has been given you, and **be glad you do not understand it**. Miracles are natural to the One Who speaks for God. For His task is to translate the miracle into the knowledge which it represents, and which is hidden to you. Let His understanding of the miracle be enough for you (T-16.II.5:2-6)

- **Rejoice you have no eyes with which to see; no ears to listen, and no hands to hold nor feet to guide. Be glad that only Christ can lend you His, while you have need of them.** (T-24.V.5:1-2)
- **7 Because we are free of pain, sickness, misery, loss, and all effects of hatred and attack**
 - **Why are you not rejoicing? You are free of pain and sickness, misery and loss, and all effects of hatred and attack. No more is pain your friend and guilt your god, and you should welcome the effects of love.** (T-29.II.3:5-7)
- **8 Because God is always with us**
 - You can never be deprived of your perfect holiness because its Source goes with you wherever you go. You can never suffer because **the Source of all joy goes with you wherever you go**. You can never be alone because the Source of all life goes with you wherever you go. Nothing can destroy your peace of mind because **God goes with you wherever you go**. (W-pI. 41.4:1-4)

• 4 Why Don't We Rejoice?

• 4.1 Bible

- **1 The reverse of why we should rejoice:**
 - Because we don't recognize God's Presence
 - Because we don't acknowledge God's work in creating and redeeming us
 - Because we don't *want* others to be blessed and prosper; we hold grievances
 - Because we are in competition with God
 - Because we have not heard God's word
 - Because we have not experienced God's forgiveness
- **2 Because we hold onto our idols**
 - When Jesus heard this, He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." **But when he had heard these things, he became very sad**, for he was extremely rich. -- Luke 18:22-23
 - Psa. 90:10 As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years,
Or if due to strength, eighty years,

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Yet their pride is but labor and sorrow;
For soon it is gone and we fly away.

- **3** *Because we cling to special relationships*
 - John 16:5 “But now **I am going** to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ 6 “But because I have said these things to you, **sorrow has filled your heart.** 7 “But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.
- **4.2 ACIM**
 - **1** *Because we judge a brother*
 - But judge him not, for **you will hear no song** of liberation for yourself, nor see what it is given him to witness to, **that you may see it and rejoice** with him. (T-26.I.6:4)
 - Do not attribute your denial of joy to them, or you cannot see the spark in them that would bring joy to you. **It is the denial of the spark that brings depression**, for whenever you see your brothers without it, you are denying God. (T-10.V.2:4-5)
 - **Whenever you are not wholly joyous, it is because you have reacted with a lack of love to one of God's creations.** (T-5.VII.5:1)
 - **2** *Because we hold onto our idols*
 - Idols must fall *because* they have no life, and what is lifeless is a sign of death. You came to die, and what would you expect but to perceive the signs of death you seek? **No sadness and no suffering proclaim a message other than an idol found that represents a parody of life which, in its lifelessness, is really death, conceived as real and given living form.** Yet each must fail and crumble and decay, because a form of death cannot be life, and what is sacrificed cannot be whole. (T-29.VII.5:1-4)
 - Seek not outside yourself. For it will fail, and **you will weep each time an idol falls.** (T-29.VII.1:1-2)
 - **3** *Because I believe there is another will apart from God's*
 - God's Will is perfect happiness for me. And **I can suffer but from the belief there is another will apart from His.** (W-pI.116.1:2-3)
 - This corresponds to the biblical reason for joy: God reigns. God's Will is sovereign, unopposed. If we believe God is not in charge, or that God wills our unhappiness, we will not rejoice!
 - **4** *Because we are not fulfilling our God-given function*
 - You are not at peace **because you are not fulfilling your function.** God gave you a very lofty function that you are not meeting. Your ego has chosen to be afraid instead of meeting it. (T-4.I.9:4-6)

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- Allowing insanity to enter your mind means that you have not judged sanity as wholly desirable. If you want something else you will make something else, but because it is something else, it will attack your thought system and divide your allegiance. You cannot create in this divided state, and you must be vigilant against this divided state because only peace can be extended. **Your divided mind is blocking the extension of the Kingdom, and its extension is your joy. If you do not extend the Kingdom, you are not thinking with your Creator and creating as He created.**
- In this depressing state the Holy Spirit reminds you gently that **you are sad because you are not fulfilling your function as co-creator with God, and are therefore depriving yourself of joy.** This is not God's choice but yours. (T-7.VI.12:1-13:2)
- **To fulfill the Will of God perfectly is the only joy and peace that can be fully known,** because it is the only function that can be fully experienced. When this is accomplished, then, there is no other experience. Yet **the wish for other experience will block its accomplishment,** because God's Will cannot be forced upon you, being an experience of total willingness. (T-8.III.2:1-3)
- And **unless I fulfill my function, I will not experience the joy that God intends for me.** (W-pI.rII.82.3:4)
- **5 We are pursuing ego goals rather than God's goal**
 - The ego believes that to accomplish its goal is happiness. But it is given you to know that God's function is yours, and **happiness cannot be found apart from your joint Will.** Recognize only that the ego's goal, which you have pursued so diligently, has merely brought you fear, and it becomes difficult to maintain that fear is happiness. (T-11.V.12:3-5)
- **6 We are using relationships to fill our imagined needs rather than simply to extend happiness**
 - God established His relationship with you to make you **happy,** and nothing you do that does not share His purpose can be real. The purpose God ascribed to anything is its only function. Because of His reason for creating His relationship with you, **the function of relationships became forever "to make happy."** And nothing else. To fulfill this function you relate to your creations as God to His. For nothing God created is apart from happiness, and nothing God created but would extend happiness as its Creator did. Whatever does not fulfill this function cannot be real.
 - In this world it is impossible to create. Yet it is possible to make happy. I have said repeatedly that the Holy Spirit would not deprive you of your special relationships, but would transform them. And all that is meant by that is that **He will restore to them the function given them by God. The**

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function you have given them is clearly not to make happy. But the holy relationship shares God's purpose, rather than aiming to make a substitute for it. Every special relationship you have made is a substitute for God's Will, and glorifies yours instead of His because of the illusion that they are different. (T-17.IV.1:1-2:7)

- You can place any relationship under His care and be sure that it will not result in pain, if you offer Him your willingness to have it serve no need but His. **All the guilt in it arises from your use of it.** All the love from His. **Do not, then, be afraid to let go your imagined needs,** which would destroy the relationship. Your only need is His. (T-15.V.5:4-8)
- **7 Guilt, leading to fear of God**
 - Fear is associated then with love, and its results become the heritage of minds that think what they have made is real. These images, with no reality in truth, bear witness to the fear of God, **forgetting being Love, He must be joy.** This basic error we will try again to bring to truth today, and teach ourselves:

God, being Love, is also happiness.

To fear Him is to be afraid of joy. (W-pI.103.2:1-5)

• 5 How To Become More Joyful

• 5.1 Bible

- **1 By viewing attack as an opportunity to gladden ourselves**
 - Matt. 5:12 “REJOICE and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
- **2 Finding what has been lost; blessing or awakening our brothers and sisters (in the Course's terms, being saviors, fulfilling our function)**
 - Luke 15:3 So He told them this parable, saying, 4 “What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? 5 “When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 “And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘**Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!**’ 7 “**I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.**
 - Luke 15:8 “Or what woman, if she has ten silver coins and loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? 9 “When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘**Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!**’

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10 “In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

- Luke 15:11 And He said, “A man had two sons. 12 “The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.’ So he divided his wealth between them. 13 “And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. 14 “Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished. 15 “So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 “And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him. 17 “But when he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! 18 ‘I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.”” 20 “So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 “And the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ 22 “But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; 23 and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24 for **this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.**’ **And they began to celebrate.**
- Luke 15:25 “Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 “And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be. 27 “And he said to him, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.’ 28 “But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. 29 “But he answered and said to his father, ‘Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; 30 but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.’ 31 “And he said to him, ‘Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 ‘**But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.**”
- **5.2 ACIM**
 - **1 *By giving without limit***

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- **To give without limit** is God's Will for you, because **only this can bring you the joy that is His** and that He wills to share with you. (T-11.I.6:7)
- **2 By deciding with God and not by ourselves**
 - Your function here is only to **decide against deciding what you want**, in recognition that you do not know. How, then, can you decide what you should do? Leave all decisions to the One Who speaks for God, and for your function as He knows it. **So will He teach you to remove the awful burden you have laid upon yourself by loving not the Son of God, and trying to teach him guilt instead of love. Give up this frantic and insane attempt that cheats you of the joy of living with your God and Father**, and of waking gladly to His Love and Holiness that join together as the truth in you, making you one with Him. (T-14.IV.5:2-6)
- **3 By teaching only love**
 - Let me remember **love is happiness, and nothing else brings joy**. And so I choose to entertain no substitutes for love. (W-pI.117:2-3)
 - If you are God's Will and **do not accept His Will, you are denying joy**. The miracle is therefore a lesson in what joy is. Being a lesson in sharing it is **a lesson in love, which <is> joy**. Every miracle is thus a lesson in truth, and by offering truth you are learning the difference between pain and joy. (T-7.X.8:3-6)
- **4 By fulfilling our function as saviors of the world**
 - **You have a function** in salvation. **Its pursuit will bring you joy**. (T-24.II.2:5-6)
 - What is dependable except God's Love? And where does sanity abide except in Him? The One Who speaks for Him can show you this, in **the alternative He chose especially for you. It is God's Will that you remember this, and so emerge from deepest mourning into perfect joy. Accept the function that has been assigned to you in God's Own plan to show His Son that hell and Heaven are different, not the same**. (T-25.VII.10:1-5)
 - Forgiveness is my function as the light of the world. **I would fulfill my function that I may be happy**. (W-pI.62.5:2-3)
 - **Only by fulfilling the function given you by God will you be happy**. That is because your function is to be happy by using the means by which happiness becomes inevitable. There is no other way. Therefore, **every time you choose whether or not to fulfill your function, you are really choosing whether or not to be happy**. (W-pI.64.4:1-4)
 - **My happiness and my function are one**. (W-pI.66.title)
 - You have surely noticed **an emphasis throughout our recent lessons on the connection between fulfilling your function and achieving happiness. This is because you do not really see the connection. Yet**

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there is more than just a connection between them; they are the same. Their forms are different, but their content is completely one. (W-pI. 66.1:1-4)

- **5 *By responding to temptation (to see guilt as real) with forgiveness; seeing Christ in others***
 - What is temptation but a wish to make illusions real? (T-30.VIII.3:1)
 - What is temptation but a wish to make the wrong decision on what you would learn, and have an outcome that you do not want? It is the recognition that it is a state of mind unwanted that becomes the means whereby the choice is reassessed; another outcome seen to be preferred. You are deceived if you believe you want disaster and disunity and pain. Hear not the call for this within yourself. But **listen, rather, to the deeper call beyond it that appeals for peace and joy. And all the world will give you joy and peace.** (T-31.I.11:1-6)
 - **Forgiveness is the only function here, and serves to bring the joy** this world denies to every aspect of God's Son where sin was thought to rule. (T-26.VII.8:5)
 - And he will **reinterpret all temptation as just another chance to bring him joy.** (T-25.III.6:8)
 - Would you not have your holy brother lead you there? His innocence will light your way, offering you its guiding light and sure protection, and shining from the holy altar within him where you laid the lilies of forgiveness. Let him be to you the savior from illusions, and look on him with **the new vision that looks upon the lilies and brings you joy.** (T-20.II.9:1-3)
 - Here is the role the Holy Spirit gives to you who wait upon the Son of God, and would **behold him waken and be glad.** He is a part of you and you of him, because he is his Father's Son, and not for any purpose you may see in him. Nothing is asked of you but to accept the changeless and eternal that abide in him, for your Identity is there. The peace in you can but be found in him. **And every thought of love you offer him but brings you nearer to your wakening to peace eternal and to endless joy.** (T-29.V.3:1-5)
 - Can you imagine **how beautiful those you forgive will look to you?** In no fantasy have you ever seen anything so lovely. Nothing you see here, sleeping or waking, comes near to such loveliness. And nothing will you value like unto this, nor hold so dear. **Nothing that you remember that made your heart sing with joy has ever brought you even a little part of the happiness this sight will bring you.** For you will see the Son of God. You will behold the beauty the Holy Spirit loves to look upon, and which He thanks the Father for. (T-17.II.1:1-7)

• 6 Closing Meditation

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• 6.1 Workbook Lesson 66

- 1 *[[It's worth reading and commenting on the entire Lesson 66, if time permits.]]*
- 2 My happiness and my function are one.

1. ¹ You have surely noticed an emphasis throughout our recent lessons on the connection between fulfilling your function and achieving happiness. ² This is because you do not really see the connection. ³ Yet there is more than just a connection between them; they are the same. ⁴ Their forms are different, but their content is completely one.

2. ¹ The ego does constant battle with the Holy Spirit on the fundamental question of what your function is. ² So does it do constant battle with the Holy Spirit about what your happiness is. ³ It is not a two-way battle. ⁴ The ego attacks and the Holy Spirit does not respond. ⁵ He knows what your function is. ⁶ He knows that it is your happiness.

3. ¹ Today we will try to go past this wholly meaningless battle and arrive at the truth about your function. ² We will not engage in senseless arguments about what it is. ³ We will not become hopelessly involved in defining happiness and determining the means for achieving it. ⁴ We will not indulge the ego by listening to its attacks on truth. ⁵ We will merely be glad that we can find out what truth is.

4. ¹ Our longer practice period today has as its purpose your acceptance of the fact that not only is there a very real connection between the function God gave you and your happiness, but that they are actually identical. ² God gives you only happiness. ³ Therefore, the function He gave you must be happiness, even if it appears to be different. ⁴ Today's exercises are an attempt to go beyond these differences in appearance, and recognize a common content where it exists in truth.

5. ¹ Begin the ten-to-fifteen-minute practice period by reviewing these thoughts:

² God gives me only happiness.

³ He has given my function to me.

⁴ Therefore my function must be happiness.

⁵ Try to see the logic in this sequence, even if you do not yet accept the

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conclusion. ⁶ It is only if the first two thoughts are wrong that the conclusion could be false. ⁷ Let us, then, think about the premises for a while, as we are practicing.

6. ¹ The first premise is that God gives you only happiness. ² This could be false, of course, but in order to be false it is necessary to define God as something He is not. ³ Love cannot give evil, and what is not happiness is evil. ⁴ God cannot give what He does not have, and He cannot have what He is not. ⁵ Unless God gives you only happiness, He must be evil. ⁶ And it is this definition of Him you are believing if you do not accept the first premise.

7. ¹ The second premise is that God has given you your function. ² We have seen that there are only two parts of your mind. ³ One is ruled by the ego, and is made up of illusions. ⁴ The other is the home of the Holy Spirit, where truth abides. ⁵ There are no other guides but these to choose between, and no other outcomes possible as a result of your choice but the fear that the ego always engenders, and the love that the Holy Spirit always offers to replace it.

8. ¹ Thus, it must be that your function is established by God through His Voice, or is made by the ego which you have made to replace Him. ² Which is true? ³ Unless God gave your function to you, it must be the gift of the ego. ⁴ Does the ego really have gifts to give, being itself an illusion and offering only the illusion of gifts?

9. ¹ Think about this during the longer practice period today. ² Think also about the many forms the illusion of your function has taken in your mind, and the many ways in which you tried to find salvation under the ego's guidance. ³ Did you find it? ⁴ Were you happy? ⁵ Did they bring you peace? ⁶ We need great honesty today. ⁷ Remember the outcomes fairly, and consider also whether it was ever reasonable to expect happiness from anything the ego ever proposed. ⁸ Yet the ego is the only alternative to the Holy Spirit's Voice.

10. ¹ You will listen to madness or hear the truth. ² Try to make this choice as you think about the premises on which our conclusion rests. ³ We can share in this conclusion, but in no other. ⁴ For God Himself shares it with us. ⁵ Today's idea is another giant stride in the perception of the same as the same, and the different as different. ⁶ On one side stand all illusions. ⁷ All truth stands on the other. ⁸ Let us try today to realize that only the truth is true.

11.. ¹ In the shorter practice periods, which would be most helpful today if undertaken twice an hour, this form of the application is suggested:

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² My happiness and function are one, because
God has given me both.

³ It will not take more than a minute, and probably less, to repeat these words
slowly and think about them a little while as you say them.