

## LESSON 126 • MAY 6

**“All that I give is given to myself.”**

### **Practice instructions**

**Purpose:** To understand the idea that giving is not loss, but receiving.

**Longer:** Two times, for fifteen minutes.

Today’s idea is so alien to our normal way of thinking that we need inner help from the Holy Spirit to really understand it. It cannot be done with the intellect alone. To seek this help, “close your eyes...and seek sanctuary in the quiet place” (10:1) where you go in meditation. Once you reach that place, “repeat today’s idea, and ask for help in understanding what it really means” (10:2). Be willing to lay aside your false belief that giving is loss, and to gain a whole new understanding, in which you realize that giving is a gift to yourself. See the Holy Spirit as present in your practice period, and be prepared to repeat your request for true understanding until you receive that understanding.

**Remarks:** If you “only catch a tiny glimpse” (8:5) of the idea, of the real meaning of giving, it is a glorious day for you and for the world. For this idea would make forgiveness no longer a strain, but something you would be naturally compelled to give all the time, as a way of giving to yourself.

**Frequent reminders:** As often as you can (do not forget for long), for a moment.

Repeat, “*All that I give is given to myself. The Help I need to learn that this is true is with me now. And I will trust in Him.*” Then do a miniature version of the longer practice period: quiet your mind and open it to the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to replace your false beliefs about giving with the truth. Through these practice periods, you can keep the sense alive all day long that your goal today is of great importance.

### **Commentary**

This is a lesson that clearly aims at thought reversal (1:1). It begins with the presumption that we have false ideas about forgiveness: “You do not understand forgiveness” (6:1). In the sixth paragraph it explains that our false understanding of forgiveness is the reason we cannot understand how forgiveness brings us peace, how it is a means for our release, nor how forgiveness can restore our awareness of unity with our brothers. Our misunderstanding of forgiveness is the reason that we may have had trouble really entering in to Lessons 121 and 122, which told us that forgiveness is the key to happiness and offers us everything we want.

The idea that “all that I give is given to myself” is crucial to reversing our thought; understanding it would make forgiveness effortless. Paragraph 2 goes through a list of “what you do believe, in place of this idea” (2:1). So, let’s practice some thought reversal, and reverse the meaning of this paragraph to see what is implied by this key idea for the day.

If we understood that everything we give is given to ourselves, we would realize that other people are not apart from us. Their behavior does have bearing on our thoughts, and our behavior has bearing on their thoughts. Our attitudes affect other people. Their appeals for help are intimately related to our own. They cannot be seen as “sinners” without affecting our perception of ourselves. We cannot condemn their sin without condemning ourselves and losing our peace of mind.

If we understood all this and believed it, forgiveness would happen naturally. We would realize that judging someone as sinful causes our own guilt and loss of peace, and we would not

choose to do it. We would realize that how we see the other person is how we see ourselves, and we would not want to see ourselves that way. We would learn very quickly to perceive that their ego actions are not sins but calls for help, closely tied to our own calls for help, and we would respond accordingly. We would know that our judgmental attitude has an adverse effect on the behavior of others, and would choose to change our attitude. We would adjust our thoughts so as to have a beneficial effect on their behavior instead of a detrimental effect. We would recognize that we are not separate and apart, but share in the same struggle with fears and doubts, as well as sharing in the release from those things.

Given all this, we could understand how forgiveness is the key to happiness. We would see that if judging causes loss of peace, then forgiveness could bring us to peace again. We would understand how forgiveness restores our awareness of unity with one another. We could see how forgiveness can release us from what *seems* to be a problem with someone else.

The practice today is really a kind of thinking meditation. We are asked to come to the Holy Spirit with today's idea, "All that I give is given to myself," and to open ourselves to His help in learning that it is true, "opening your mind to His correction and His love" (11:6). We are asking for help in understanding what today's idea means (10:2), and what forgiveness really means. We are reflecting on the ideas with His assistance, asking for new insights, new understandings.

Our behavior, our attitudes, and our painful experiences in this world are all evidence that we do need to have our thoughts corrected. If we truly believed what today's idea says, we would not be having these painful experiences. We must have false ideas still lodged in our minds, and we need to be healed. Perhaps we think we understand what is being said, and no doubt there is a part of us that resonates with them or we would not be studying these lessons. It is the other part we are concerned about, the hidden warriors, the contrary beliefs we have dissociated and even hidden from conscious awareness.

If we ask for help sincerely, help will be given (8:3). Today will bring new understanding. Perhaps it will come in the form of new insights as we meditate. Perhaps it will come in the laboratory of life, as circumstances shock us into awareness of how we still believe one or another of the ideas this lessons mentions in describing what we do believe in place of today's idea. But it will come.

The help I need to learn that this is true is with me now. And I will trust in Him.  
(11:4-5)