

Lesson 226 • August 14

“My home awaits me. I will hasten there.”

Practice instructions

See complete instructions in separate document. A short summary:

- **Read** the commentary paragraph slowly and personally.
- **Pray** the prayer, perhaps several times.
- **Morning and evening:** Repeat the idea and then spend time in Open Mind Meditation.
- **Hourly remembrance:** Repeat the idea and then spend a quiet moment in meditation.
- **Frequent reminders:** Repeat the idea often within each hour.
- **Response to temptation:** Repeat the idea whenever upset, to restore peace.
- **Read the “What Is” section** slowly and thoughtfully once during the day.

Practice comments: In the prayer, notice the image of God as parent waiting for us to return home. Like a mother at dinnertime, His Voice is calling us home. Like a parent who hasn’t seen us for a long time, His Arms are open, waiting to embrace us in joyous welcome. As you pray the prayer, you may want to visualize all this. It is true that God has no arms and no audible voice, but such earthly symbols can help carry our minds toward that which cannot be symbolized.

Commentary

Home. What an evocative word that is! “I’m going home.” Sometimes just thinking about going home, even in an abstract sense, can cause deep emotions to rise up in us—happy ones, I hope, although for some an unhappy home life has tainted the word. Even then, when our “real” home was unhappy, most of us are still filled with a deep longing for home *as it ought to be*. Our real home is in God. Our longings for home find their roots in our longing for this spiritual home in God.

How can I “go home”? There are songs that convey the common idea that we go home to Heaven when we die: spirituals such as “Goin’ Home.” But the Course here is extremely clear. It speaks of departing this world, and says, “It is not death which makes this possible, but it is a change of mind about the purpose of the world” (1:2).

As long as we think that the purpose of the world lies within itself, that somehow happiness, freedom, and contentment are to be found here, in the world, we will never leave it. Not even when we “die.” The chains that bind us to the world are mental, not physical. Our valuing of the world is what holds us to it. If I value the world “as I see it now” (1:3), it will hold on to me even when my body crumbles. But if I no longer see anything in this world “as I behold it” (1:4) that I want to keep or search for, I am free.

There is a world of meaning—literally!—in those phrases “as I see it now” and “as I behold it.” In the ego’s perception this world is a place of punishment and imprisonment, and simultaneously a place where I come to seek for what seems to be “lacking” in myself. As long as I somehow value that punishment and imprisonment, perhaps not for myself but almost always for others upon whom I have projected my guilt, I will be bound to the world, and I will not go home. As long as I think there is a lack in myself and continue to search for it outside myself, valuing the world for what I think it can give to me, I will always be bound to the world, and I will not go home.

“My home *awaits* me.” Our home is not under construction. It is ready and waiting, the red carpet rolled out, everything is ready, and God’s Arms are open and we hear His Voice (2:2). Home is available right now, if I only choose it. Let me be willing to look at what keeps me from choosing it, because those are the hindrances that keep me from finding it. Do I still wistfully

long for my prince to come (or my princess)? Do I still have things I want to do before I am ready to go? Do I still find secret pleasure when the “wicked” (in my sight) suffer? If this world could vanish an hour from now, what would I regret? Would I be ready to leave? If a shimmering curtain were to appear in the doorway and a Voice proclaim, “Pass this portal and you will be in Heaven,” would I go through? Why not?

This is not a fantasy. The Voice *is* calling us, and Heaven is here and now. We can pass the portal any time we choose to. If we are not experiencing Heaven, we *must* be choosing not to do so, and finding out what holds us back is the work we are assigned to in this classroom. This is what the world is for—to teach us to let it go.

“What need have I to linger in a place of vain desires and of shattered dreams, when Heaven can so easily be mine?” (2:3).