

Lesson 249 • September 6

“Forgiveness ends all suffering and loss.”

Practice instructions

See complete instructions in a 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 suggestion: Again I would recommend applying the idea specifically. Pick a person in your life and say, “*My forgiveness of [name] ends all suffering and loss.*”

Commentary

Unforgiveness is painful. There is a tightening, a hardening, an armoring of the heart. It hurts to shut someone out of my heart. Forgiveness ends that suffering, that pain, that loss, that aloneness.

To believe that forgiveness ends *all* suffering and loss is not that easy. It still seems that some of my pain is not related to unforgiveness; yet it is, all of it:

Certain it is that all distress does not appear to be but unforgiveness. Yet that is the content underneath the form. (W-pI.193.4:1–2)

If I do not suffer and have no loss, if I forgive in the sense the Course speaks of so that I see that there was no sin, that I was not hurt, and that I lost nothing, then “anger makes no sense” (1:1). If there is no anger, there is no attack. If forgiveness were accepted by the minds of all of us—forgiveness received as well as given—there would be no more suffering, no more loss.

The world becomes a place of joy, abundance, charity and endless giving. (1:5)

This is how I will see the world when I look with the eyes of Christ. Jesus, even when he was being crucified, saw the world in this way, and his heart held nothing but “charity and endless giving” for those who condemned him and drove in the nails.

To see the “real world” does not mean that suddenly everyone around us becomes transformed into angelic beings. Jesus saw the real world and he was crucified. But he did not suffer, nor did he lose! He was no longer identified with his body; he knew that the body could not die because it was never alive, so he was not losing his life. Likewise for us, attaining the real world through forgiveness does not mean that all our life becomes a flower-strewn pathway to glory. There may be resistance. There may be those who attempt to harm us. Our bodies may still become sick. Loved ones will still die, cars will still be stolen, houses will still burn down, jobs will still be lost. The healed mind will not see loss, nor experience suffering, knowing that “nothing real can be threatened” (T-In.2:2).

I do believe that as more and more minds embrace forgiveness, the physical reflection of those minds will transform as well, becoming more peaceful, more loving, more abundant, more full of kindness and charity. The transformation of the physical reflection, however, is a side-benefit, not the goal. It is our *minds* that we return to God.

When our minds have reached this height of true perception, Heaven is very near. The world will quickly be “transformed into the light that it reflects” (1:6).

Let me, then, return my mind to God today. Let me release myself from the vise of bitterness, and ease my mind of its fear of violence and death. Let me rest myself in God today. Let me forgive all things that seem to wish me harm, and in so doing, free myself from suffering. May I be free of suffering today. May I be at peace.