

LESSON 335 • DECEMBER 1

“I choose to see my brother’s sinlessness.”

Practice instructions

See complete instructions. 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: The practice I will suggest now is a very powerful one, which I have used many times. I recommend using it with a number of people who come to mind. The idea behind it is that we see sinfulness in another *because* that will make us see sinfulness in ourselves, and that, crazily enough, is what we are after, what our ego wants. Just let one person after another come to mind, and apply the following lines to each one:

*I chose to see [name’s] sinfulness
Because I wanted to see my own.
I choose to see [name’s] sinlessness
Because I want to see my own.*

Commentary

This continues the thought from yesterday’s lesson about decision and choice. Yesterday we read about choosing to follow God’s Voice, and beholding our brother as sinless. Today we read:

Forgiveness is a choice. I never see my brother as he is, for this is far beyond perception. What I see in him is merely what I wish to see, because it stands for what I want to be the truth. (1:1–3)

In other words, what we see results from choices we have made about what we want to see. The Text speaks about “the decision for guiltlessness” (T-14.III). It says (see the fourth paragraph in that section) that we need to make the choice to see innocence and not to see guilt. If we make that decision, that is what we will see.

It is startling to be told that we *never* see our brothers as they are (1:2). Seeing, or perception (which is a dualistic form of knowing, requiring a seer separate from what is being seen), simply cannot apprehend the reality of what we are. What we are seeing is always a symbol, an imperfect representation. No wonder it is so easy for perception to be *misperception*.

Misperception in terms of guilt and innocence happens like this: I see guilt in myself. I want to get rid of it, so I project it onto a brother. I see him as guilty because I want to, I have chosen to. I think this will get rid of my guilt.

Correction of perception happens in reverse: I realize that I am not at peace and therefore I must have decided wrongly. I decide to see my brother as innocent. When I have truly made that choice, I will see his innocence. That is a law: “You see what you believe is there, and you believe it there because you want it there” (T-25.III.1:3). When you want only love, love is all you will see (T-12.VII.8:1).

What we are seeing is always what we *choose* to see because we want to see it. “It is to this alone that I respond, however much I seem to be impelled by outside happenings” (1:4). The Course is obviously aware that the way it describes perception is definitely not how it seems to us. We are utterly convinced that we are seeing what we are seeing because *that’s the way it is*. We believe it is the happenings outside of us that are forcing this perception upon us. When we see someone as guilty, it isn’t because we are choosing to see them that way—they *are* guilty! We think we are just seeing what is the truth. The Course hears our objections and replies, “No matter how much it seems that way to you, I am telling you, you are wrong; you are responding *only* to what you want to see, not what is really there.”

“Forgiveness is a choice” (1:1). We can see our brother as guilty, or as innocent, and the choice is one hundred percent up to us; it has nothing to do with what he did or did not do.

My willingness to see my brother as innocent is the harbinger of my willingness to see myself as innocent (1:6–7). When I am ready to choose to see my brother as innocent, it shows that I have begun to let go of the guilt in my mind that caused me to desire to see him as guilty.

Seeing one another as innocent, seeing one another as sinless, restores the memory of God to us (2:1). There is a formula that runs through the Course: First, we see the face of Christ in one another; then we remember God. “In him I find my Self, and in Your Son I find the memory of You as well” (2:3). So if I want to remember God, what can I do? *Make a choice* to see my brother as innocent instead of guilty. We find our way to God through our brothers.