LESSON 35 • FEBRUARY 4

"My mind is part of God's. I am very holy."

Practice instructions

Purpose: To show you who you really are. You see yourself according to the place you occupy in your environment. Since you think your environment is the physical world, your identity seems to be determined by the part you play in this world, by how you behave in earthly situations. Yet your true environment is not this world, it is God's Mind. Your place *there* is what determines your real identity. If you truly believed you were part of that environment, you would instantly understand that you are holy.

Longer: Three times, for five minutes.

Repeat the idea, then close your eyes. Search your mind for descriptive terms you would apply to yourself, positive or negative (do not discriminate). Find them by picking up specific situations that occur to you and identifying the term you think applies to you in that situation. Say, *"I see myself as [failing, helpless, charitable, etc.]."* After each one, add, *"But my mind is part of God's. I am very holy."* If, after a while, no specific terms occur to you, don't strain to dig up more. Relax and repeat the idea until another comes to mind. For complete instructions, see paragraphs 4–8.

Frequent reminders: As often as possible.

This practice can take one of two forms:

1. Notice the attribute you are applying to yourself in the current situation and plug it into the formula you used in the longer practice (*"I see myself as...But my mind is..."*).
2. If no attributes occur to you, just repeat the idea slowly with eyes closed.

Commentary

The Text tells us that "you do not understand how lofty the Holy Spirit's perception of you really is." (T-9.VII.4:2). In the following section of the same chapter, it says:

> You did not establish your value and it needs no defense. Nothing can attack it nor prevail over it. It does not vary. It merely *is*. Ask the Holy Spirit what it is and He will tell you, but do not be afraid of His answer, because it comes from God. It is an exalted answer because of its Source, but the Source is true and so is Its answer. Listen and do not question what you hear, for God does not deceive. He would have you replace the ego's belief in littleness with His Own exalted Answer to what you are, so that you can cease to question it and know it for what it is. (T-9.VIII.11:2–9)

As the lesson points out, we do not normally think of ourselves in terms such as "lofty" and "exalted." Notice, though, that the Course is saying this is true of us, not because of anything we have done, but because of our Source (3:2). What makes us what we are is not ourselves, but God. That is why the Course lays so much stress on the idea "I am as God created me." Our little view of ourselves comes from our attempts to create ourselves; our true grandeur derives from the fact that we are God's creations. Our unwillingness to recognize this connection with our Source is what keeps us locked in our smallness. We resist acknowledging God as our Source because it seems, to our egos, to put us in second place and to make us dependent. It does not *make* us

dependent—we *are* dependent. That is not our shame; it is our glory. It is what establishes our grandeur.

We have difficulty believing that "I am very holy." Our refusal to believe it is why we are in this world, in this environment we think we want. We want it because it supports our image of ourselves as separate beings, independent of God.

When we look at the world, and look at ourselves living in the world, the things we see do not support the idea of this lesson. And yet the eyes, ears, nose, and touch we use to gather evidence are part of the very image of this world. They exist within the constraints of the world's image which we have constructed, very carefully, *not* to show us our union with God. Of course, they bring us very little evidence to contradict the ego's image of us; we made them to function that way.

One very strong emphasis of the Course is on looking directly at our darkness and confronting our fears. The more we look at fear, says the Course, the less we will see it. Simply bringing the darkness into the light dispels the darkness. Looking at our ego, and even the full extent of our hatred, is crucial to our growth, it tells us. This lesson reflects the other side, which is sometimes neglected when looking at the ego is overemphasized. The other side is reminding ourselves, firmly, of the truth of our exalted reality: "My mind is part of God's. It is very holy." In the Text we are told:

> Whenever you question your value, say:
>
> *God Himself is incomplete without me.*
>
> Remember this when the ego speaks, and you will not hear it. (T-9.VII.8:1–3)

Reminding ourselves of the truth about us is another powerful technique the Course recommends for transcending our egos.

The list of attributes and terms we use to describe ourselves given in the lesson is just a sample. As you practice the lesson today, try to notice how you think about yourself, and how different all of those thoughts, good and bad both, are from the lesson's statement about you. I could add some of my own terms to the list: forgetful, disorganized, intelligent, clever, falling behind, skillful at what I do. What terms do you think of?

You should have noticed that the lessons are now calling for three longer practice periods of five minutes each. We are getting into heavier practice. Some of us, if we have not meditated previously, may find it difficult to sit for five minutes with our eyes closed doing these exercises. I encourage you to do them anyway. Anything new is difficult at first, but becomes easier with practice; that is what the practice is for.