

LESSON 39 • FEBRUARY 8

“My holiness is my salvation.”

Practice instructions

Purpose: To get you in touch with your holiness, which is your salvation from the hell of guilt.

Longer: Four times (more are encouraged), for five full minutes (longer is encouraged).

- Repeat the idea.
- Close your eyes and slowly search your mind for unloving thoughts, thoughts with any kind of negative feeling attached to them. This includes specific situations, events, or personalities associated with angry, worried, or depressed thoughts. Make no exceptions and try to treat each one the same. With each, say, “*My unloving thoughts about _____ are keeping me in hell. My holiness is my salvation.*” Your unloving thoughts keep you in hell by producing guilt. Your holiness saves you by showing you that your true nature is untouched by sin and guilt, and it proves this by blessing everything it sees.
- Because sustained concentration is hard for you at this stage, you may want to intersperse this practice with several periods of just repeating the the idea slowly, or relaxing and not thinking of anything. You can also introduce variety, which seems to mean varying the wording of the idea. Make sure, however, that you retain its central meaning: that your holiness is your salvation.
- Conclude by repeating the idea and asking yourself, “*If guilt is hell, what is its opposite?*” (For the answer, see 4:2).

Frequent reminders: At least three or four per hour.

Ask yourself, “*If guilt is hell, what is its opposite?*” Or repeat the idea. Preferably both.

Response to temptation: Whenever you are tempted to give in to unloving thoughts.

Apply the idea specifically: “*My holiness is my salvation from this.*”

Commentary

The opposite of hell is salvation; the opposite of guilt is holiness. If guilt is hell, then holiness must be salvation. The question is: Do I believe that guilt is hell? Or do I, perhaps, feel that guilt serves a useful function in my life?

The Course teaches that guilt is at the root of all our problems, and yet at the beginning we don't even suspect guilt as the cause. We lay the problems at the feet of many different things, but rarely at the feet of guilt. “Of one thing you were sure: Of all the many causes you perceived as bringing pain and suffering to you, your guilt was not among them” (T-27.VII.7:4). Guilt *is* hell. This is part of what the Course is trying to teach us—a large part.

As long as you believe that guilt is justified in any way, in anyone, whatever he may do, you will not look within, where you would always find Atonement. The end of guilt will never come as long as you believe there is a reason for it. For you must learn that guilt is always totally insane, and has no reason. (T-13.X.6:1–3)

All salvation is escape from guilt. (T-14.III.13:4)

Guilt is interference, not salvation, and serves no useful function at all. (T-14.III.1:4)

Perhaps we may object. Perhaps it seems that guilt is necessary to keep us from wrongdoing; but that presumes something within us that is inherently evil and perverse, something that will always do wrong unless it is kept caged, or punished when it misbehaves. Guilt serves no useful function; guilt is hell. Guilt is what we need to escape from. Guilt does not keep us from wrongdoing; it keeps us locked into it. It is guilt that has driven us insane.

As this lesson says, if we wholly believed that guilt is hell, we would immediately understand the entire Text and have no need for a Workbook. We would have salvation, full and complete, for salvation *is* escape from guilt. This is not a part of the Course's message; it is the whole of it. This is why my holiness is my salvation; holiness is freedom from guilt.

Notice the emphasis in practice on "unloving thoughts" (6:2; 7:1; 8:3). Unloving thoughts are guilty thoughts; they both stem from guilt and produce more of it. Holiness is lovingness. If my thoughts are unloving, I will be fearful and guilty; my holiness is my salvation from guilt. As we realize that our unloving thoughts are keeping us in hell, we will let them go.

Today's practice instructions are fiercely demanding: a minimum of four sessions of five full minutes each, with "longer and more frequent practice sessions...encouraged" (5:1). Then there are shorter applications, "which should be made some three or four times an hour and more if possible" (11:1). Plus there are responses to temptation. Today's idea must be very important! It must be very hard for our minds to absorb, so that we need to frequently immerse our minds in this thought.