

LESSON 46 • FEBRUARY 15

“God is the Love in which I forgive.”

Practice instructions

Longer: At least three times, for five full minutes.

- Repeat the idea as you close your eyes. Search your mind for those you have not completely forgiven. This shouldn't be hard—any lack of total love is a sign of unforgiveness. To each one, say, “*God is the Love in which I forgive you, [name].*” This will “put you in a position to forgive yourself” (5:1).
- After a minute or two of this, tell yourself, “*God is the Love in which I forgive myself.*” Then spend the rest of the time letting your mind come up with thoughts related to this idea. They need not be a restatement of it, but don't get too far away from it, either. Draw upon the instruction you have received in letting related thoughts come.
- Conclude by repeating the original idea.

Frequent reminders: As many as possible.

Repeat the idea, in original form or in the form of a related thought.

Response to temptation: When you have a negative reaction to anyone, “present or not” (7:3).

Tell that person silently, “*God is the Love in which I forgive you.*”

Commentary

The whole of the Course's teaching on the Atonement principle is contained in the first sentence: “God does not forgive because He has never condemned.” Over and over the Course emphasizes that God is not a God of vengeance, that God is not angry with us, that He knows nothing of punishment. God does not condemn; He never has. His heart remains eternally open to us all. To me specifically.

In this world of illusions, where mutual condemnation has become a way of life (or death?), forgiveness is necessary—not God's forgiveness, but our own. Forgiveness is the way we release ourselves from illusions. All condemnation is self-condemnation; the guilt we see in others is our own reflecting back at us, and as we release others from our condemnation, we are released. “As you condemn only yourself, so do you forgive only yourself” (1:5).

As later lessons will make clear, our whole purpose in this world is to bring forgiveness to it, to release it from the burden of guilt that we have laid upon it. This is what returns our mind to the awareness of God. We find God by liberating those around us, lifting our judgment from them, and acknowledging them as worthy creations of God along with ourselves. “God...is approached through the appreciation of His Son” (T-11.IV.7:2).

Lifting the chains of judgment from everyone that I know puts me in a position to forgive myself (5:1). It brings a warm feeling inside when I can say, “God is the Love in which I forgive myself” (5:3). I may not even be aware of any guilt consciously, but when I bless myself with forgiveness, something melts, and I know that the forgiveness was needed. There is a subliminal self-criticism that is nearly always going on; and when I break into it, picturing the Love of God pouring over me like molten gold, knowing and accepting (maybe just in that moment) His total acceptance of me, I rarely escape the moment without tears of gratitude.