

LESSON 80 • MARCH 21

“Let me recognize my problems have been solved.”

Practice instructions

Purpose: To claim the peace to which you are entitled by the fact that God has solved your only problem.

Longer: Two times, for ten to fifteen minutes.

This is an exercise in just basking in the awareness that you are problem-free. I see it as being much like Lesson 50 (you may want to review those instructions now), where you thought about the idea and rested in the peace that it provided. So do that here. Close your eyes and realize that, having recognized the problem (yesterday), you have also accepted the answer. This means that your one problem has been solved. Reflect on this. Think about the fact that all your problems are gone. Reflect on the fact that you are totally conflict-free. You have only one problem and God has solved it. Use these thoughts to claim the peace that now belongs to you. Lean back and relax in that peace. Rest in the feeling of being carefree.

Frequent reminders: As frequently as possible.

Repeat the idea (you may want to shorten it to “*My problems have been solved*”), with gratitude and with deep conviction. If you will, try now repeating it once with gratitude, and then try repeating it with deep conviction.

Response to temptation: Whenever a specific problem arises, especially an interpersonal one.

Immediately say, “Let me recognize this problem has been solved.” Be determined not to saddle yourself with problems that don’t exist.

Commentary

“One problem, one solution” (1:5). “The problem must be gone, because God’s answer cannot fail” (4:2). So I must be at peace—whether I know it or not. I have no more problems. Seeing and understanding this, accepting it wholly, is the essence of salvation (1:8; 2:5; 5:6).

To see a problem as unresolved is to accumulate a grievance and to block the light from my awareness. An unresolved problem is an occasion of unforgiveness. It represents something I do not approve of, a cause of judgment in my mind. “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). When the Course speaks of our forgiving the world, it means the same thing as our recognizing that all problems are only forms of separation, which has already been resolved. The answer to every problem, therefore, is forgiveness, or accepting the Atonement, recognizing that nothing, whatever form nothing takes, can separate me from the love of God; nothing can take away my peace.

I am writing this on the last day (1995) of a visit with my son in California. I have spent two nights sleeping on an air mattress. Last night, the air mattress sprang a leak, and I woke about five o’clock with most of my body on the ground and my arms and legs still half floating several inches higher, a most uncomfortable position. I couldn’t get back to sleep, so I am feeling short of sleep. I’m concerned about driving home from Phoenix late tonight, two hours in the dark desert, alone, and sleepy.

That seems to be a problem. How is that a form of unforgiveness? How is this problem of short sleep a manifestation of separation?

If I recognize that my only problem is separation and that it has been solved, I can realize that a lack of sleep cannot separate me from God’s Love and peace. I can forgive the air mattress, or

forgive my son for providing a flawed bed. I can forgive myself for worrying about the drive. I can accept that nothing is wrong and that my life is in the hands of God, and all will work out just as it should. Perhaps my body will be energized enough that I will not be sleepy as I drive home. Perhaps I will spend the night with friends in Phoenix even though that is not "my" plan. Perhaps I will pull off the road and sleep in my truck. Whatever happens, I do not need to be pulled out of peace by this event; my problem has been solved. I can be at peace *now*.

Or, if I so choose, I can destroy my last day with my son and grandchildren by obsessing about my problem. I can worry about falling asleep at the wheel. I can be upset because I may be forced to change my plan. I can be grumpy and grouchy and miss out on the love that is around me with my grandchildren. Is that really a choice I want to make?

A collapsing air mattress is not my problem. The only problem is allowing that, or anything like it, to disturb the peace of God that is always mine if I choose to have it. The only problem is separation from God. The events in our lives do not, and cannot, cause us to separate from Him. When we seem to be upset it is always a choice we make; the events we connect to that loss of peace are only a convenient excuse. Forgiveness involves recognizing our responsibility and lifting the blame for loss of peace from the persons and events of our lives and accepting that the peace of God has not been taken from us, cannot be taken from us, and indeed has never left us. We have merely closed our eyes to it. And we can open them again at any instant we choose to do so.

The events and persons may or may not change as a result. The Atonement does not plug the leak in the mattress. It may or may not supply me with more energy to make the drive to Sedona. Sometimes those things happen, sometimes they don't; it depends on what plan the Holy Spirit has for me. What happens externally is not the problem, and the solution lies not in externals, but within me. Will I choose peace, or choose upset? Will I forgive, or will I project my rejection of peace onto the external things and blame them?

Peace lies in acceptance. I accept God's peace *whatever* happens. I refuse to believe that anything can separate me from the Love of God. I refuse to deceive myself about what the problem really is. I recognize the problem is within me, and I bring the problem to the answer. And I rest, trusting the Holy Spirit to arrange the circumstances as He sees fit, not as I think they should be. I am out of conflict; I am free and at peace.