

Lesson 256 • September 13

“God is the only goal I have today.”

Practice instructions

See complete instructions in a separate document. 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.

Commentary

The title of the lesson talks about our goal. The first two sentences speak of the *means* to the goal:

The way to God is through forgiveness here. There is no other way. (1:1–2)

We are speaking of means and end. Just the other day I read the Text section on “Consistency of Means and End” (T-20.VII), which reasons how, if we accept the goal, we must accept the means for getting there.

The means is forgiveness, and the Course continually insists that forgiveness is not difficult and cannot be difficult, because all it asks is that we recognize that what has never been has not occurred, and only the truth is true. How can it be difficult to be what you already are? If we experience forgiveness as difficult, there can only be one reason: we do not want the means because we still do not want the goal.

In other words, any difficulty stems not from something inherent in forgiveness, but from my unwillingness. It points me right back to recognizing what I am choosing, back to recognizing that I always have exactly what I want. Forgiveness seems difficult because I want it to seem difficult, and I want the means to appear difficult so I can project my unwillingness out onto the means God provided, blaming that means instead of recognizing myself as the cause of the problem.

“There is no other way” (1:2). If the problem is sin and the whole idea of sin, the only solution must be forgiveness. “If sin had not been cherished by the mind, what need would there have been to find the way to where you are?” (1:3). We are trying to find our way to God and we’re already there! There would have been no need for such foolishness if we had not “cherished” sin. We (in listening to our ego thoughts) wanted to find a reason for separation, and sin, guilt, and fear provided the reason. We made it all up, and we must be the ones to let it go.

If we simply woke up, the dream of sin would be over. But we are too terrified to wake up, and the dream of sin and guilt has seemingly become self-sustaining. There seems to be no way out. “Here we can but dream” (1:7). But—and this is a big “but”—“we can dream we have forgiven him in whom all sin remains impossible, and it is this we choose to dream today” (1:8).

So I spend my days, noticing the dream of sin and forgiving it, over and over, more and more, until there is nothing left to forgive. At that point, my fear of God will be gone, and I will awake.

As I notice fear or guilt in myself today, or judging thoughts about those around me, let me look at those thoughts and recognize how insignificant they are, how meaningless. Let me be undisturbed by it all, and know my peace is inviolate. Let me understand that none of it matters, and I am still at rest in God. It is not this I want; I have no goal except to hear God’s Voice.