

Lesson 210 • July 29

Central theme:

“I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me.”

Review of:

(190) “I choose the joy of God instead of pain.”

Practice instructions

See instructions in separate document.

Commentary

If we saw, clearly, that this was our choice—*joy* or *pain*—would there be any difficulty in making the choice?

Learning that this *is* the only choice is what takes so much time.

We are so confused about what brings us joy. We are quite convinced that our bodies can bring us joy. We are certain that a good romantic relationship would bring us joy. (Is that an oxymoron, “a good romantic relationship”?) We are very sure that giving up certain things in this world would bring us a great deal of pain. It takes time, and sometimes the illusion of “giving up,” to learn that we give up nothing. “It takes great learning both to realize and to accept the fact that the world has nothing to give” (M-13.2:1).

“Pain is my own idea” (1:2). What a stunning statement! Pain is an idea I thought up independently of God. In fact, pain *is* thinking independently of God. Pain is trying to find happiness *in this world*. I have taught myself that the greatest pleasure of all is total autonomy, complete independence, absolute self-sufficiency. I have chosen this, and in doing so, invented pain. Now, I am unlearning what I taught myself. Now, I am learning to choose God’s Will instead of what I made, joy instead of pain. “I am teaching you to associate misery with the ego and joy with the spirit” (T-4.VI.5:6).

Let me realize today that in saying, “I am not a body,” I am choosing joy instead of pain. In continuing to affirm, “I am a body,” I am choosing pain instead of joy.