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Chapter 17.

FORGIVENESS AND THE HOLY RELATIONSHIP

I. Bringing Fantasy to Truth

T-17.I.1. The betrayal of the Son of God lies only in illusions, and all his "sins" are but his own imagining. 2 His reality is forever sinless. 3 He need not be forgiven but awakened. 4 In his dreams he has betrayed himself, his brothers and his God. 5 Yet what is done in dreams has not been really done. 6 It is impossible to convince the dreamer that this is so, for dreams are what they are *because* of their illusion of reality. 7 Only in waking is the full release from them, for only then does it become perfectly apparent that they had no effect upon reality at all, and did not change it. 8 Fantasies change reality. 9 That is their purpose. 10 They cannot do so in reality, but they *can* do so in the mind that would have reality be different.

T-17.I.2. It is, then, only your wish to change reality that is fearful, because by your wish you think you have accomplished what you wish. 2 This strange position, in a sense, acknowledges your power. 3 Yet by distorting it and devoting it to "evil," it also makes it unreal. 4 You cannot be faithful to two masters who ask conflicting things of you. 5 What you use in fantasy you deny to truth. 6 Yet what you give to truth to use for you is safe from fantasy.

T-17.I.3. When you maintain that there must be an order of difficulty in miracles, all you mean is that there are some things you would withhold from truth. 2 You believe truth cannot deal with them only because you would keep them from truth. 3 Very simply, your lack of faith in the power that heals all pain arises from your wish to retain some aspects of reality for fantasy. 4 If you but realized what this must do to your appreciation of the whole! 5 What you reserve for yourself, you take away from Him Who would release you. 6 Unless you give it back, it is inevitable that your perspective on reality be warped and uncorrected.

T-17.I.4. As long as you would have it so, so long will the illusion of an order of difficulty in miracles remain with you. 2 For you have established this order in reality by giving some of it to one teacher, and some to another. 3 And so you learn to deal with part of the truth in one way, and in another way the other part. 4 To fragment truth is to destroy it by rendering it meaningless. 5 Orders of reality is a perspective without understanding; a frame of reference for reality to which it cannot really be compared at all.

T-17.I.5. Think you that you can bring truth to fantasy, and learn what truth means from the perspective of illusions? 2 Truth *has* no meaning in illusion. 3 The frame of reference for its meaning must be itself. 4 When you try to bring truth to illusions, you are trying to make illusions real, and keep them by justifying your belief in them. 5 But to give illusions to truth is to enable truth to teach that the illusions are unreal, and thus enable you to escape from them. 6 Reserve not

one idea aside from truth, or you establish orders of reality that must imprison you. 7 There is no order in reality, because everything there is true.

T-17.I.6. Be willing, then, to give all you have held outside the truth to Him Who knows the truth, and in Whom all is brought to truth. 2 Salvation from separation would be complete, or will not be at all. 3 Be not concerned with anything except your willingness to have this be accomplished. 4 He will accomplish it; not you. 5 But forget not this: When you become disturbed and lose your peace of mind because another is attempting to solve his problems through fantasy, you are refusing to forgive yourself for just this same attempt. 6 And you are holding both of you away from truth and from salvation. 7 As you forgive him, you restore to truth what was denied by both of you. 8 And you will see forgiveness where you have given it.

II. The Forgiven World

T-17.II.1. Can you imagine how beautiful those you forgive will look to you? 2 In no fantasy have you ever seen anything so lovely. 3 Nothing you see here, sleeping or waking, comes near to such loveliness. 4 And nothing will you value like unto this, nor hold so dear. 5 Nothing that you remember that made your heart sing with joy has ever brought you even a little part of the happiness this sight will bring you. 6 For you will see the Son of God. 7 You will behold the beauty the Holy Spirit loves to look upon, and which He thanks the Father for. 8 He was created to see this for you, until you learned to see it for yourself. 9 And all His teaching leads to seeing it and giving thanks with Him.

T-17.II.2. This loveliness is not a fantasy. 2 It is the real world, bright and clean and new, with everything sparkling under the open sun. 3 Nothing is hidden here, for everything has been forgiven and there are no fantasies to hide the truth. 4 The bridge between that world and this is so little and so easy to cross, that you could not believe it is the meeting place of worlds so different. 5 Yet this little bridge is the strongest thing that touches on this world at all. 6 This little step, so small it has escaped your notice, is a stride through time into eternity, beyond all ugliness into beauty that will enchant you, and will never cease to cause you wonderment at its perfection.

T-17.II.3. This step, the smallest ever taken, is still the greatest accomplishment of all in God's plan of Atonement. 2 All else is learned, but this is given, complete and wholly perfect. 3 No one but Him Who planned salvation could complete it thus. 4 The real world, in its loveliness, you learn to reach. 5 Fantasies are all undone, and no one and nothing remain still bound by them, and by your own forgiveness you are free to see. 6 Yet what you see is only what you made, with the blessing of your forgiveness on it. 7 And with this final blessing of God's Son upon himself, the real perception, born of the new perspective he has learned, has served its purpose.

T-17.II.4. The stars will disappear in light, and the sun that opened up the world to beauty will vanish. 2 Perception will be meaningless when it has been perfected, for everything that has been used for learning will have no function. 3 Nothing will ever change; no shifts nor shadings, no differences, no variations that made perception possible will still occur. 4 The perception of the real world will be so short that you will barely have time to thank God for it. 5 For God will take the last step swiftly, when you have reached the real world and have been made ready for Him.

T-17.II.5. The real world is attained simply by the complete forgiveness of the old, the world you see without forgiveness. 2 The great Transformer of perception will undertake with you the careful searching of the mind that made this world, and uncover to you the seeming reasons for your making it. 3 In the light of the real reason that He brings, as you follow Him, He will show you that there is no reason here at all. 4 Each spot His reason touches grows alive with beauty, and what seemed ugly in the darkness of your lack of reason is suddenly released to loveliness. 5 Not even what the Son of God made in insanity could be without a hidden spark of beauty that gentleness

could release.

T-17.II.6. All this beauty will rise to bless your sight as you look upon the world with forgiving eyes. 2 For forgiveness literally transforms vision, and lets you see the real world reaching quietly and gently across chaos, removing all illusions that had twisted your perception and fixed it on the past. 3 The smallest leaf becomes a thing of wonder, and a blade of grass a sign of God's perfection.

T-17.II.7. From the forgiven world the Son of God is lifted easily into his home. 2 And there he knows that he has always rested there in peace. 3 Even salvation will become a dream, and vanish from his mind. 4 For salvation is the end of dreams, and with the closing of the dream will have no meaning. 5 Who, awake in Heaven, could dream that there could ever be need of salvation?

T-17.II.8. How much do you want salvation? 2 It will give you the real world, trembling with readiness to be given you. 3 The eagerness of the Holy Spirit to give you this is so intense He would not wait, although He waits in patience. 4 Meet His patience with your impatience at delay in meeting Him. 5 Go out in gladness to meet with your Redeemer, and walk with Him in trust out of this world, and into the real world of beauty and forgiveness.

III. Shadows of the Past

T-17.III.1. To forgive is merely to remember only the loving thoughts you gave in the past, and those that were given you. 2 All the rest must be forgotten. 3 Forgiveness is a selective remembering, based not on your selection. 4 For the shadow figures you would make immortal are "enemies" of reality. 5 Be willing to forgive the Son of God for what he did not do. 6 The shadow figures are the witnesses you bring with you to demonstrate he did what he did not. 7 Because you bring them, you will hear them. 8 And you who keep them by your own selection do not understand how they came into your mind, and what their purpose is. 9 They represent the evil that you think was done to you. 10 You bring them with you only that you may return evil for evil, hoping that their witness will enable you to think guiltily of another and not harm yourself. 11 They speak so clearly for the separation that no one not obsessed with keeping separation could hear them. 12 They offer you the "reasons" why you should enter into unholy alliances to support the ego's goals, and make your relationships the witness to its power.

T-17.III.2. It is these shadow figures that would make the ego holy in your sight, and teach you what you do to keep it safe is really love. 2 The shadow figures always speak for vengeance, and all relationships into which they enter are totally insane. 3 Without exception, these relationships have as their purpose the exclusion of the truth about the other, and of yourself. 4 This is why you see in both what is not there, and make of both the slaves of vengeance. 5 And why whatever reminds you of your past grievances attracts you, and seems to go by the name of love, no matter how distorted the associations by which you arrive at the connection may be. 6 And finally, why all such relationships become attempts at union through the body, for only bodies can be seen as means for vengeance. 7 That bodies are central to all unholy relationships is evident. 8 Your own experience has taught you this. 9 But what you may not realize are all the reasons that go to make the relationship unholy. 10 For unholiness seeks to reinforce itself, as holiness does, by gathering to itself what it perceives as like itself.

T-17.III.3. In the unholy relationship, it is not the body of the other with which union is attempted, but the bodies of those who are not there. 2 For even the body of the other, already a severely limited perception of him, is not the central focus as it is, or in entirety. 3 What can be used for fantasies of vengeance, and what can be most readily associated with those on whom vengeance is really sought, is centered on and separated off as being the only parts of value. 4 Every step taken in the making, the maintaining and the breaking off of the unholy relationship is a move toward further fragmentation and unreality. 5 The shadow figures enter more and more, and the one in whom they

seem to be decreases in importance.

T-17.III.4. Time is indeed unkind to the unholy relationship. 2 For time *is* cruel in the ego's hands, as it is kind when used for gentleness. 3 The attraction of the unholy relationship begins to fade and to be questioned almost at once. 4 Once it is formed, doubt must enter in, because its purpose is impossible. 5 The "ideal" of the unholy relationship thus becomes one in which the reality of the other does not enter at all to "spoil" the dream. 6 And the less the other really brings to the relationship, the "better" it becomes. 7 Thus, the attempt at union becomes a way of excluding even the one with whom the union was sought. 8 For it was formed to get him out of it, and join with fantasies in uninterrupted "bliss."

T-17.III.5. How can the Holy Spirit bring His interpretation of the body as a means of communication into relationships whose only purpose is separation from reality? 2 What forgiveness *is* enables Him to do so. 3 If all but loving thoughts have been forgotten, what remains is eternal. 4 And the transformed past is made like the present. 5 No longer does the past conflict with *now*. 6 This continuity extends the present by increasing its reality and its value in your perception of it. 7 In these loving thoughts is the spark of beauty hidden in the ugliness of the unholy relationship where hatred is remembered; yet there to come alive as the relationship is given to Him Who gives it life and beauty. 8 That is why Atonement centers on the past, which is the source of separation, and where it must be undone. 9 For separation must be corrected where it was made.

T-17.III.6. The ego seeks to "resolve" its problems, not at their source, but where they were not made. 2 And thus it seeks to guarantee there will be no solution. 3 The Holy Spirit wants only to make His resolutions complete and perfect, and so He seeks and finds the source of problems where it is, and there undoes it. 4 And with each step in His undoing is the separation more and more undone, and union brought closer. 5 He is not at all confused by any "reasons" for separation. 6 All He perceives in separation is that it must be undone. 7 Let Him uncover the hidden spark of beauty in your relationships, and show it to you. 8 Its loveliness will so attract you that you will be unwilling ever to lose the sight of it again. 9 And you will let this spark transform the relationship so you can see it more and more. 10 For you will want it more and more, and become increasingly unwilling to let it be hidden from you. 11 And you will learn to seek for and establish the conditions in which this beauty can be seen.

T-17.III.7. All this you will do gladly, if you but let Him hold the spark before you, to light your way and make it clear to you. 2 God's Son is One. 3 Whom God has joined as one, the ego cannot put asunder. 4 The spark of holiness must be safe, however hidden it may be, in every relationship. 5 For the Creator of the one relationship has left no part of it without Himself. 6 This is the only part of the relationship the Holy Spirit sees, because He knows that only this is true. 7 You have made the relationship unreal, and therefore unholy, by seeing it where it is not and as it is not. 8 Give the past to Him Who can change your mind about it for you. 9 But first, be sure you fully realize what you have made the past to represent, and why.

T-17.III.8. The past becomes the justification for entering into a continuing, unholy alliance with the ego against the present. 2 For the present *is* forgiveness. 3 Therefore, the relationships the unholy alliance dictates are not perceived nor felt as *now*. 4 Yet the frame of reference to which the present is referred for meaning is an *illusion* of the past, in which those elements that fit the purpose of the unholy alliance are retained, and all the rest let go. 5 And what is thus let go is all the truth the past could ever offer to the present as witnesses for its reality. 6 What is kept but witnesses to the reality of dreams.

T-17.III.9. It is still up to you to choose to join with truth or with illusion. 2 But remember that to choose one is to let the other go. 3 Which one you choose you will endow with beauty and reality, because the choice depends on which you value more. 4 The spark of beauty or the veil of ugliness,

the real world or the world of guilt and fear, truth or illusion, freedom or slavery'd0it is all the same. 5 For you can never choose except between God and the ego. 6 Thought systems are but true or false, and all their attributes come simply from what they are. 7 Only the Thoughts of God are true. 8 And all that follows from them comes from what they are, and is as true as is the holy Source from which they came.

T-17.III.10. My holy brother, I would enter into all your relationships, and step between you and your fantasies. 2 Let my relationship to you be real to you, and let me bring reality to your perception of your brothers. 3 They were not created to enable you to hurt yourself through them. 4 They were created to create with you. 5 This is the truth that I would interpose between you and your goal of madness. 6 Be not separate from me, and let not the holy purpose of Atonement be lost to you in dreams of vengeance. 7 Relationships in which such dreams are cherished have excluded me. 8 Let me enter in the Name of God and bring you peace, that you may offer peace to me.

IV. The Two Pictures

T-17.IV.1. God established His relationship with you to make you happy, and nothing you do that does not share His purpose can be real. 2 The purpose God ascribed to anything is its only function. 3 Because of His reason for creating His relationship with you, the function of relationships became forever "to make happy." 4 *And nothing else.* 5 To fulfill this function you relate to your creations as God to His. 6 For nothing God created is apart from happiness, and nothing God created but would extend happiness as its Creator did. 7 Whatever does not fulfill this function cannot be real.

T-17.IV.2. In this world it is impossible to create. 2 Yet it *is* possible to make happy. 3 I have said repeatedly that the Holy Spirit would not deprive you of your special relationships, but would transform them. 4 And all that is meant by that is that He will restore to them the function given them by God. 5 The function you have given them is clearly not to make happy. 6 But the holy relationship shares God's purpose, rather than aiming to make a substitute for it. 7 Every special relationship you have made is a substitute for God's Will, and glorifies yours instead of His because of the illusion that they are different.

T-17.IV.3. You have made very real relationships even in this world. 2 Yet you do not recognize them because you have raised their substitutes to such predominance that, when truth calls to you, as it does constantly, you answer with a substitute. 3 Every special relationship you have made has, as its fundamental purpose, the aim of occupying your mind so completely that you will not hear the call of truth.

T-17.IV.4. In a sense, the special relationship was the ego's answer to the creation of the Holy Spirit, Who was God's Answer to the separation. 2 For although the ego did not understand what had been created, it was aware of threat. 3 The whole defense system the ego evolved to protect the separation from the Holy Spirit was in response to the gift with which God blessed it, and by His blessing enabled it to be healed. 4 This blessing holds within itself the truth about everything. 5 And the truth is that the Holy Spirit is in close relationship with you, because in Him is your relationship with God restored to you. 6 The relationship with Him has never been broken, because the Holy Spirit has not been separate from anyone since the separation. 7 And through Him have all your holy relationships been carefully preserved, to serve God's purpose for you.

T-17.IV.5. The ego is always alert to threat, and the part of your mind into which the ego was accepted is very anxious to preserve its reason, as it sees it. 2 It does not realize that it is totally insane. 3 And you must realize just what this means if you would be restored to sanity. 4 The insane protect their thought systems, but they do so insanely. 5 And all their defenses are as insane as what they are supposed to protect. 6 The separation has nothing in it, no part, no "reason," and no attribute that is not insane. 7 And its "protection" is part of it, as insane as the whole. 8 The special

relationship, which is its chief defense, must therefore be insane.

T-17.IV.6. You have but little difficulty now in realizing that the thought system the special relationship protects is but a system of delusions. 2 You recognize, at least in general terms, that the ego is insane. 3 Yet the special relationship still seems to you somehow to be "different." 4 Yet we have looked at it far closer than we have at many other aspects of the ego's thought system that you have been more willing to let go. 5 While this one remains, you will not let the others go. 6 For this one is not different. 7 Retain this one, and you have retained the whole.

T-17.IV.7. It is essential to realize that all defenses *do* what they would defend. 2 The underlying basis for their effectiveness is that they offer what they defend. 3 What they defend is placed in them for safe-keeping, and as they operate they bring it to you. 4 Every defense operates by giving gifts, and the gift is always a miniature of the thought system the defense protects, set in a golden frame. 5 The frame is very elaborate, all set with jewels, and deeply carved and polished. 6 Its purpose is to be of value *in itself*, and to divert your attention from what it encloses. 7 But the frame without the picture you cannot have. 8 Defenses operate to make you think you can.

T-17.IV.8. The special relationship has the most imposing and deceptive frame of all the defenses the ego uses. 2 Its thought system is offered here, surrounded by a frame so heavy and so elaborate that the picture is almost obliterated by its imposing structure. 3 Into the frame are woven all sorts of fanciful and fragmented illusions of love, set with dreams of sacrifice and self-aggrandizement, and interlaced with gilded threads of self-destruction. 4 The glitter of blood shines like rubies, and the tears are faceted like diamonds and gleam in the dim light in which the offering is made.

T-17.IV.9. Look at the *picture*. 2 Do not let the frame distract you. 3 This gift is given you for your damnation, and if you take it you will believe that you *are* damned. 4 You cannot have the frame without the picture. 5 What you value is the frame, for there you see no conflict. 6 Yet the frame is only the wrapping for the gift of conflict. 7 The frame is not the gift. 8 Be not deceived by the most superficial aspects of this thought system, for these aspects enclose the whole, complete in every aspect. 9 Death lies in this glittering gift. 10 Let not your gaze dwell on the hypnotic gleaming of the frame. 11 Look at the picture, and realize that death is offered you.

T-17.IV.10. That is why the holy instant is so important in the defense of truth. 2 The truth itself needs no defense, but you do need defense against your acceptance of the gift of death. 3 When you who are truth accept an idea so dangerous to truth, you threaten truth with destruction. 4 And your defense must now be undertaken, to keep truth whole. 5 The power of Heaven, the Love of God, the tears of Christ, and the joy of His eternal Spirit are marshalled to defend you from your own attack. 6 For you attack Them, being part of Them, and They must save you, for They love Themselves.

T-17.IV.11. The holy instant is a miniature of Heaven, sent you *from* Heaven. 2 It is a picture, too, set in a frame. 3 Yet if you accept this gift you will not see the frame at all, because the gift can only be accepted through your willingness to focus all your attention on the picture. 4 The holy instant is a miniature of eternity. 5 It is a picture of timelessness, set in a frame of time. 6 If you focus on the picture, you will realize that it was only the frame that made you think it *was* a picture. 7 Without the frame, the picture is seen as what it represents. 8 For as the whole thought system of the ego lies in its gifts, so the whole of Heaven lies in this instant, borrowed from eternity and set in time for you.

T-17.IV.12. Two gifts are offered you. 2 Each is complete, and cannot be partially accepted. 3 Each is a picture of all that you can have, seen very differently. 4 You cannot compare their value by comparing a picture to a frame. 5 It must be the pictures only that you compare, or the comparison is wholly without meaning. 6 Remember that it is the picture that is the gift. 7 And only on this basis are you really free to choose. 8 Look at the pictures. 9 Both of them. 10 One is a tiny picture, hard

to see at all beneath the heavy shadows of its enormous and disproportionate enclosure. 11 The other is lightly framed and hung in light, lovely to look upon for what it is.

T-17.IV.13. You who have tried so hard, and are still trying, to fit the better picture into the wrong frame and so combine what cannot be combined, accept this and be glad: These pictures are each framed perfectly for what they represent. 2 One is framed to be out of focus and not seen. 3 The other is framed for perfect clarity. 4 The picture of darkness and of death grows less convincing as you search it out amid its wrappings. 5 As each senseless stone that seems to shine from the frame in darkness is exposed to light, it becomes dull and lifeless, and ceases to distract you from the picture. 6 And finally you look upon the picture itself, seeing at last that, unprotected by the frame, it has no meaning.

T-17.IV.14. The other picture is lightly framed, for time cannot contain eternity. 2 There is no distraction here. 3 The picture of Heaven and eternity grows more convincing as you look at it. 4 And now, by real comparison, a transformation of both pictures can at last occur. 5 And each is given its rightful place when both are seen in relation to each other. 6 The dark picture, brought to light, is not perceived as fearful, but the fact that it is just a picture is brought home at last. 7 And what you see there you will recognize as what it is; a picture of what you thought was real, and nothing more. 8 For beyond this picture you will see nothing.

T-17.IV.15. The picture of light, in clear-cut and unmistakable contrast, is transformed into what lies beyond the picture. 2 As you look on this, you realize that it is not a picture, but a reality. 3 This is no figured representation of a thought system, but the Thought itself. 4 What it represents is there. 5 The frame fades gently and God rises to your remembrance, offering you the whole of creation in exchange for your little picture, wholly without value and entirely deprived of meaning.

T-17.IV.16. As God ascends into His rightful place and you to yours, you will experience again the meaning of relationship and know it to be true. 2 Let us ascend in peace together to the Father, by giving Him ascendance in our minds. 3 We will gain everything by giving Him the power and the glory, and keeping no illusions of where they are. 4 They are in us, through His ascendance. 5 What He has given is His. 6 It shines in every part of Him, as in the whole. 7 The whole reality of your relationship with Him lies in our relationship to one another. 8 The holy instant shines alike on all relationships, for in it they *are* one. 9 For here is only healing, already complete and perfect. 10 For here is God, and where He is only the perfect and complete can be.

V. The Healed Relationship

T-17.V.1. The holy relationship is the expression of the holy instant in living in this world. 2 Like everything about salvation, the holy instant is a practical device, witnessed to by its results. 3 The holy instant never fails. 4 The experience of it is always felt. 5 Yet without expression it is not remembered. 6 The holy relationship is a constant reminder of the experience in which the relationship became what it is. 7 And as the unholy relationship is a continuing hymn of hate in praise of its maker, so is the holy relationship a happy song of praise to the Redeemer of relationships.

T-17.V.2. The holy relationship, a major step toward the perception of the real world, is learned. 2 It is the old, unholy relationship, transformed and seen anew. 3 The holy relationship is a phenomenal teaching accomplishment. 4 In all its aspects, as it begins, develops and becomes accomplished, it represents the reversal of the unholy relationship. 5 Be comforted in this; the only difficult phase is the beginning. 6 For here, the goal of the relationship is abruptly shifted to the exact opposite of what it was. 7 This is the first result of offering the relationship to the Holy Spirit, to use for His purposes.

T-17.V.3. This invitation is accepted immediately, and the Holy Spirit wastes no time in introducing the practical results of asking Him to enter. 2 At once His goal replaces yours. 3 This is accomplished very rapidly, but it makes the relationship seem disturbed, disjunctive and even quite distressing. 4 The reason is quite clear. 5 For the relationship as it *is* is out of line with its own goal, and clearly unsuited to the purpose that has been accepted for it. 6 In its unholy condition, *your* goal was all that seemed to give it meaning. 7 Now it seems to make no sense. 8 Many relationships have been broken off at this point, and the pursuit of the old goal re-established in another relationship. 9 For once the unholy relationship has accepted the goal of holiness, it can never again be what it was.

T-17.V.4. The temptation of the ego becomes extremely intense with this shift in goals. 2 For the relationship has not as yet been changed sufficiently to make its former goal completely without attraction, and its structure is "threatened" by the recognition of its inappropriateness for meeting its new purpose. 3 The conflict between the goal and the structure of the relationship is so apparent that they cannot coexist. 4 Yet now the goal will not be changed. 5 Set firmly in the unholy relationship, there is no course except to change the relationship to fit the goal. 6 Until this happy solution is seen and accepted as the only way out of the conflict, the relationship may seem to be severely strained.

T-17.V.5. It would not be kinder to shift the goal more slowly, for the contrast would be obscured, and the ego given time to reinterpret each slow step according to its liking. 2 Only a radical shift in purpose could induce a complete change of mind about what the whole relationship is for. 3 As this change develops and is finally accomplished, it grows increasingly beneficent and joyous. 4 But at the beginning, the situation is experienced as very precarious. 5 A relationship, undertaken by two individuals for their unholy purposes, suddenly has holiness for its goal. 6 As these two contemplate their relationship from the point of view of this new purpose, they are inevitably appalled. 7 Their perception of the relationship may even become quite disorganized. 8 And yet, the former organization of their perception no longer serves the purpose they have agreed to meet.

T-17.V.6. This is the time for *faith*. 2 You let this goal be set for you. 3 That was an act of faith. 4 Do not abandon faith, now that the rewards of faith are being introduced. 5 If you believed the Holy Spirit was there to accept the relationship, why would you now not still believe that He is there to purify what He has taken under His guidance? 6 Have faith in your brother in what but seems to be a trying time. 7 The goal *is* set. 8 And your relationship has sanity as its purpose. 9 For now you find yourself in an insane relationship, recognized as such in the light of its goal.

T-17.V.7. Now the ego counsels thus; substitute for this another relationship to which your former goal was quite appropriate. 2 You can escape from your distress only by getting rid of your brother. 3 You need not part entirely if you choose not to do so. 4 But you must exclude major areas of fantasy from your brother, to save your sanity. 5 *Hear not this now!* 6 Have faith in Him Who answered you. 7 He heard. 8 Has He not been very explicit in His answer? 9 You are not now wholly insane. 10 Can you deny that He has given you a most explicit statement? 11 Now He asks for faith a little longer, even in bewilderment. 12 For this will go, and you will see the justification for your faith emerge, to bring you shining conviction. 13 Abandon Him not now, nor your brother. 14 This relationship has been reborn as holy.

T-17.V.8. Accept with gladness what you do not understand, and let it be explained to you as you perceive its purpose work in it to make it holy. 2 You will find many opportunities to blame your brother for the "failure" of your relationship, for it will seem at times to have no purpose. 3 A sense of aimlessness will come to haunt you, and to remind you of all the ways you once sought for satisfaction and thought you found it. 4 Forget not now the misery you really found, and do not breathe life into your failing ego. 5 For your relationship has not been disrupted. 6 It has been saved.

T-17.V.9. You are very new in the ways of salvation, and think you have lost your way. 2 *Your way is lost*, but think not this is loss. 3 In your newness, remember that you and your brother have started again, *together*. 4 And take his hand, to walk together along a road far more familiar than you now believe. 5 Is it not certain that you will remember a goal unchanged throughout eternity? 6 For you have chosen but the goal of God, from which your true intent was never absent.

T-17.V.10. Throughout the Sonship is the song of freedom heard, in joyous echo of your choice. 2 You have joined with many in the holy instant, and they have joined with you. 3 Think not your choice will leave you comfortless, for God Himself has blessed your holy relationship. 4 Join in His blessing, and withhold not yours upon it. 5 For all it needs now is your blessing, that you may see that in it rests salvation. 6 Condemn salvation not, for it has come to you. 7 And welcome it together, for it has come to join you and your brother together in a relationship in which all the Sonship is together blessed.

T-17.V.11. You undertook, together, to invite the Holy Spirit into your relationship. 2 He could not have entered otherwise. 3 Although you may have made many mistakes since then, you have also made enormous efforts to help Him do His work. 4 And He has not been lacking in appreciation for all you have done for Him. 5 Nor does He see the mistakes at all. 6 Have you been similarly grateful to your brother? 7 Have you consistently appreciated the good efforts, and overlooked mistakes? 8 Or has your appreciation flickered and grown dim in what seemed to be the light of the mistakes? 9 Perhaps you are now entering upon a campaign to blame him for the discomfort of the situation in which you find yourself. 10 And by this lack of thanks and gratitude you make yourself unable to express the holy instant, and thus lose sight of it.

T-17.V.12. The experience of an instant, however compelling it may be, is easily forgotten if you allow time to close over it. 2 It must be kept shining and gracious in your awareness of time, but not concealed within it. 3 The instant remains. 4 But where are you? 5 To give thanks to your brother is to appreciate the holy instant, and thus enable its results to be accepted and shared. 6 To attack your brother is not to lose the instant, but to make it powerless in its effects.

T-17.V.13. You *have* received the holy instant, but you may have established a condition in which you cannot use it. 2 As a result, you do not realize that it is with you still. 3 And by cutting yourself off from its expression, you have denied yourself its benefit. 4 You reinforce this every time you attack your brother, for the attack must blind you to yourself. 5 And it is impossible to deny yourself, and to recognize what has been given and received by you.

T-17.V.14. You and your brother stand together in the holy presence of truth itself. 2 Here is the goal, together with you. 3 Think you not the goal itself will gladly arrange the means for its accomplishment? 4 It is just this same discrepancy between the purpose that has been accepted and the means as they stand now which seems to make you suffer, but which makes Heaven glad. 5 If Heaven were outside you, you could not share in its gladness. 6 Yet because it is within, the gladness, too, is yours. 7 You *are* joined in purpose, but remain still separate and divided on the means. 8 Yet the goal is fixed, firm and unalterable, and the means will surely fall in place because the goal is sure. 9 And you will share the gladness of the Sonship that it is so.

T-17.V.15. As you begin to recognize and accept the gifts you have so freely given to your brother, you will also accept the effects of the holy instant and use them to correct all your mistakes and free you from their results. 2 And learning this, you will have also learned how to release all the Sonship, and offer it in gladness and thanksgiving to Him Who gave you your release, and Who would extend it through you.

VI. Setting the Goal

T-17.VI.1. The practical application of the Holy Spirit's purpose is extremely simple, but it is unequivocal. 2 In fact, in order to be simple it *must* be unequivocal. 3 The simple is merely what is easily understood, and for this it is apparent that it must be clear. 4 The setting of the Holy Spirit's goal is general. 5 Now He will work with you to make it specific, for application *is* specific. 6 There are certain very specific guidelines He provides for any situation, but remember that you do not yet realize their universal application. 7 Therefore, it is essential at this point to use them in each situation separately, until you can more safely look beyond each situation, in an understanding far broader than you now possess.

T-17.VI.2. In any situation in which you are uncertain, the first thing to consider, very simply, is "What do I want to come of this? 2 What is it *for*?" 3 The clarification of the goal belongs at the beginning, for it is this which will determine the outcome. 4 In the ego's procedure this is reversed. 5 The situation becomes the determiner of the outcome, which can be anything. 6 The reason for this disorganized approach is evident. 7 The ego does not know what it wants to come of the situation. 8 It is aware of what it does not want, but only that. 9 It has no positive goal at all.

T-17.VI.3. Without a clear-cut, positive goal, set at the outset, the situation just seems to happen, and makes no sense until it has already happened. 2 Then you look back at it, and try to piece together what it must have meant. 3 And you will be wrong. 4 Not only is your judgment in the past, but you have no idea what should happen. 5 No goal was set with which to bring the means in line. 6 And now the only judgment left to make is whether or not the ego likes it; is it acceptable, or does it call for vengeance? 7 The absence of a criterion for outcome, set in advance, makes understanding doubtful and evaluation impossible.

T-17.VI.4. The value of deciding in advance what you want to happen is simply that you will perceive the situation as a means to *make* it happen. 2 You will therefore make every effort to overlook what interferes with the accomplishment of your objective, and concentrate on everything that helps you meet it. 3 It is quite noticeable that this approach has brought you closer to the Holy Spirit's sorting out of truth and falsity. 4 The true becomes what can be used to meet the goal. 5 The false becomes the useless from this point of view. 6 The situation now has meaning, but only because the goal has made it meaningful.

T-17.VI.5. The goal of truth has further practical advantages. 2 If the situation is used for truth and sanity, its outcome must be peace. 3 And this is quite apart from what the outcome *is*. 4 If peace is the condition of truth and sanity, and cannot be without them, where peace is they must be. 5 Truth comes of itself. 6 If you experience peace, it is because the truth has come to you and you will see the outcome truly, for deception cannot prevail against you. 7 You will recognize the outcome *because* you are at peace. 8 Here again you see the opposite of the ego's way of looking, for the ego believes the situation brings the experience. 9 The Holy Spirit knows that the situation is as the goal determines it, and is experienced according to the goal.

T-17.VI.6. The goal of truth requires faith. 2 Faith is implicit in the acceptance of the Holy Spirit's purpose, and this faith is all-inclusive. 3 Where the goal of truth is set, there faith must be. 4 The Holy Spirit sees the situation as a whole. 5 The goal establishes the fact that everyone involved in it will play his part in its accomplishment. 6 This is inevitable. 7 No one will fail in anything. 8 This seems to ask for faith beyond you, and beyond what you can give. 9 Yet this is so only from the viewpoint of the ego, for the ego believes in "solving" conflict through fragmentation, and does not perceive the situation as a whole. 10 Therefore, it seeks to split off segments of the situation and deal with them separately, for it has faith in separation and not in wholeness.

T-17.VI.7. Confronted with any aspect of the situation that seems to be difficult, the ego will attempt to take this aspect elsewhere, and resolve it there. 2 And it will seem to be successful, except that this attempt conflicts with unity, and must obscure the goal of truth. 3 And peace will not be

experienced except in fantasy. 4 Truth has not come because faith has been denied, being withheld from where it rightfully belonged. 5 Thus do you lose the understanding of the situation the goal of truth would bring. 6 For fantasy solutions bring but the illusion of experience, and the illusion of peace is not the condition in which truth can enter.

VII. The Call for Faith

T-17.VII.1. The substitutes for aspects of the situation are the witnesses to your lack of faith. 2 They demonstrate that you did not believe the situation and the problem were in the same place. 3 The problem *was* the lack of faith, and it is this you demonstrate when you remove it from its source and place it elsewhere. 4 As a result, you do not see the problem. 5 Had you not lacked faith that it could be solved, the problem would be gone. 6 And the situation would have been meaningful to you, because the interference in the way of understanding would have been removed. 7 To remove the problem elsewhere is to keep it, for you remove yourself from it and make it unsolvable.

T-17.VII.2. There is no problem in any situation that faith will not solve. 2 There is no shift in any aspect of the problem but will make solution impossible. 3 For if you shift part of the problem elsewhere the meaning of the problem must be lost, and the solution to the problem is inherent in its meaning. 4 Is it not possible that all your problems have been solved, but you have removed yourself from the solution? 5 Yet faith must be where something has been done, and where you see it done.

T-17.VII.3. A situation is a relationship, being the joining of thoughts. 2 If problems are perceived, it is because the thoughts are judged to be in conflict. 3 But if the goal is truth, this is impossible. 4 Some idea of bodies must have entered, for minds cannot attack. 5 The thought of bodies is the sign of faithlessness, for bodies cannot solve anything. 6 It is their intrusion on the relationship, an error in your thoughts about the situation, which then becomes the justification for your lack of faith. 7 You will make this error, but be not at all concerned with that. 8 The error does not matter. 9 Faithlessness brought to faith will never interfere with truth. 10 But faithlessness used *against* truth will always destroy faith. 11 If you lack faith, ask that it be restored where it was lost, and seek not to have it made up to you elsewhere, as if you had been unjustly deprived of it.

T-17.VII.4. Only what *you* have not given can be lacking in any situation. 2 But remember this; the goal of holiness was set for your relationship, and not by you. 3 You did not set it because holiness cannot be seen except through faith, and your relationship was not holy because your faith in your brother was so limited and little. 4 Your faith must grow to meet the goal that has been set. 5 The goal's reality will call this forth, for you will see that peace and faith will not come separately. 6 What situation can you be in without faith, and remain faithful to your brother?

T-17.VII.5. Every situation in which you find yourself is but a means to meet the purpose set for your relationship. 2 See it as something else and you are faithless. 3 Use not your faithlessness. 4 Let it enter and look upon it calmly, but do not use it. 5 Faithlessness is the servant of illusion, and wholly faithful to its master. 6 Use it, and it will carry you straight to illusions. 7 Be tempted not by what it offers you. 8 It interferes, not with the goal, but with the value of the goal to you. 9 Accept not the illusion of peace it offers, but look upon its offering and recognize it *is* illusion.

T-17.VII.6. The goal of illusion is as closely tied to faithlessness as faith to truth. 2 If you lack faith in anyone to fulfill, and perfectly, his part in any situation dedicated in advance to truth, your dedication is divided. 3 And so you have been faithless to your brother, and used your faithlessness against him. 4 No relationship is holy unless its holiness goes with it everywhere. 5 As holiness and faith go hand in hand, so must its faith go everywhere with it. 6 The goal's reality will call forth and accomplish every miracle needed for its fulfillment. 7 Nothing too small or too enormous, too weak or too compelling, but will be gently turned to its use and purpose. 8 The universe will serve it

gladly, as it serves the universe. 9 But do not interfere.

T-17.VII.7. The power set in you in whom the Holy Spirit's goal has been established is so far beyond your little conception of the infinite that you have no idea how great the strength that goes with you. 2 And you can use *this* in perfect safety. 3 Yet for all its might, so great it reaches past the stars and to the universe that lies beyond them, your little faithlessness can make it useless, if you would use the faithlessness instead.

T-17.VII.8. Yet think on this, and learn the cause of faithlessness: You think you hold against your brother what he has done to you. 2 But what you really blame him for is what *you* did to *him*. 3 It is not his past but yours you hold against him. 4 And you lack faith in him because of what you were. 5 Yet you are as innocent of what you were as he is. 6 What never was is causeless, and is not there to interfere with truth. 7 There is no cause for faithlessness, but there *is* Cause for faith. 8 That Cause has entered any situation that shares Its purpose. 9 The light of truth shines from the center of the situation, and touches everyone to whom the situation's purpose calls. 10 It calls to everyone. 11 There is no situation that does not involve your whole relationship, in every aspect and complete in every part. 12 You can leave nothing of yourself outside it and keep the situation holy. 13 For it shares the purpose of your whole relationship, and derives its meaning from it.

T-17.VII.9. Enter each situation with the faith you give your brother, or you are faithless to your own relationship. 2 Your faith will call the others to share your purpose, as the same purpose called forth the faith in you. 3 And you will see the means you once employed to lead you to illusions transformed to means for truth. 4 Truth calls for faith, and faith makes room for truth. 5 When the Holy Spirit changed the purpose of your relationship by exchanging yours for His, the goal He placed there was extended to every situation in which you enter, or will ever enter. 6 And every situation was thus made free of the past, which would have made it purposeless.

T-17.VII.10. You call for faith because of Him Who walks with you in every situation. 2 You are no longer wholly insane, nor no longer alone. 3 For loneliness in God must be a dream. 4 You whose relationship shares the Holy Spirit's goal are set apart from loneliness because the truth has come. 5 Its call for faith is strong. 6 Use not your faithlessness against it, for it calls you to salvation and to peace.

VIII. The Conditions of Peace

T-17.VIII.1. The holy instant is nothing more than a special case, or an extreme example, of what every situation is meant to be. 2 The meaning that the Holy Spirit's purpose has given it is also given to every situation. 3 It calls forth just the same suspension of faithlessness, withheld and left unused, that faith might answer to the call of truth. 4 The holy instant is the shining example, the clear and unequivocal demonstration of the meaning of every relationship and every situation, seen as a whole. 5 Faith has accepted every aspect of the situation, and faithlessness has not forced any exclusion on it. 6 It is a situation of perfect peace, simply because you have let it be what it is.

T-17.VIII.2. This simple courtesy is all the Holy Spirit asks of you. 2 Let truth be what it is. 3 Do not intrude upon it, do not attack it, do not interrupt its coming. 4 Let it encompass every situation and bring you peace. 5 Not even faith is asked of you, for truth asks nothing. 6 Let it enter, and it will call forth and secure for you the faith you need for peace. 7 But rise you not against it, for against your opposition it cannot come.

T-17.VIII.3. Would you not want to make a holy instant of every situation? 2 For such is the gift of faith, freely given wherever faithlessness is laid aside, unused. 3 And then the power of the Holy Spirit's purpose is free to use instead. 4 This power instantly transforms all situations into one sure and continuous means for establishing His purpose, and demonstrating its reality. 5 What has been

demonstrated has called for faith, and has been given it. 6 Now it becomes a fact, from which faith can no longer be withheld. 7 The strain of refusing faith to truth is enormous, and far greater than you realize. 8 But to answer truth with faith entails no strain at all.

T-17.VIII.4. To you who have acknowledged the Call of your Redeemer, the strain of not responding to His Call seems to be greater than before. 2 This is not so. 3 Before, the strain was there, but you attributed it to something else, believing that the "something else" produced it. 4 This was never true. 5 For what the "something else" produced was sorrow and depression, sickness and pain, darkness and dim imaginings of terror, cold fantasies of fear and fiery dreams of hell. 6 And it was nothing but the intolerable strain of refusing to give faith to truth, and see its evident reality.

T-17.VIII.5. Such was the crucifixion of the Son of God. 2 His faithlessness did this to him. 3 Think carefully before you let yourself use faithlessness against him. 4 For he is risen, and you have accepted the Cause of his awakening as yours. 5 You have assumed your part in his redemption, and you are now fully responsible to him. 6 Fail him not now, for it has been given you to realize what your lack of faith in him must mean to you. 7 His salvation is your only purpose. 8 See only this in every situation, and it will be a means for bringing only this.

T-17.VIII.6. When you accepted truth as the goal for your relationship, you became a giver of peace as surely as your Father gave peace to you. 2 For the goal of peace cannot be accepted apart from its conditions, and you had faith in it for no one accepts what he does not believe is real. 3 Your purpose has not changed, and will not change, for you accepted what can never change. 4 And nothing that it needs to be forever changeless can you now withhold from it. 5 Your release is certain. 6 Give as you have received. 7 And demonstrate that you have risen far beyond any situation that could hold you back, and keep you separate from Him Whose Call you answered.

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