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[Previous Section](#)

[Next Section](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

[Search the Course](#)

[We invite you to comment on this section.](#)

[The Little Garden Home](#)

VII. Creating versus the Self-Image

T-3.VII.1. Every system of thought must have a starting point. 2 It begins with either a making or a creating, a difference we have already discussed. 3 Their resemblance lies in their power as foundations. 4 Their difference lies in what rests upon them. 5 Both are cornerstones for systems of belief by which one lives. 6 It is a mistake to believe that a thought system based on lies is weak. 7 Nothing made by a child of God is without power. 8 It is essential to realize this, because otherwise you will be unable to escape from the prison you have made.

T-3.VII.2. You cannot resolve the authority problem by depreciating the power of your mind. 2 To do so is to deceive yourself, and this will hurt you because you really understand the strength of the mind. 3 You also realize that you cannot weaken it, any

more than you can weaken God. 4 The "devil" is a frightening concept because he seems to be extremely powerful and extremely active. 5 He is perceived as a force in combat with God, battling Him for possession of His creations. 6 The devil deceives by lies, and builds kingdoms in which everything is in direct opposition to God. 9 7 Yet he attracts men rather than repels them, and they are willing to "sell" him their souls in return for gifts of no real worth. 8 This makes absolutely no sense.

T-3.VII.3. We have discussed the fall or separation before, but its meaning must be clearly understood. 2 The separation is a system of thought real enough in time, though not in eternity. 3 All beliefs are real to the believer. 4 The fruit of only one tree was "forbidden" in the symbolic garden. 5 But God could not have forbidden it, or it could not have *been* eaten. 6 If God knows His children, and I assure you that He does, would He have put them in a position where their own destruction was possible? 7 The "forbidden tree" was named the "tree of knowledge." 8 Yet God created knowledge and gave it freely to His creations. 9 The symbolism here has been given many interpretations, but you may be sure that any interpretation that sees either God or His creations as capable of destroying Their Own purpose is in error.

T-3.VII.4. Eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge is a symbolic expression for usurping the ability for self-creating. 2 This is the only sense in which God and His creations are not co-creators. 3 The belief that they are is implicit in the "self-concept," or the tendency of the self to make an image of itself. 4 Images are perceived, not known. 5 Knowledge cannot deceive, but perception can. 6 You can perceive yourself as self-creating, but you cannot do more than believe it. 7 You cannot make it true. 8 And, as I said before, when you finally perceive correctly you can only be glad that you cannot. 9 Until then, however, the belief that you can is the foundation stone in your thought system, and all your defenses are used to attack ideas that might bring it to light. 10 You still believe you are an image of your own making. 11 Your mind is split with the Holy Spirit on this point, and there is no resolution while you believe the one thing that is literally inconceivable. 12 That is why you cannot create and are filled with fear about what you make.

T-3.VII.5. The mind can make the belief in separation very real and very fearful, and this belief *is* the "devil." 2 It is powerful, active, destructive and clearly in opposition to God, because it literally denies His Fatherhood. 3 Look at your life and see what the devil has made. 4 But realize that this making will surely dissolve in the light of truth, because its foundation is a lie. 5 Your creation by God is the only Foundation that cannot be shaken, because the light is in it. 0 6 Your starting point is truth, and you must return to your Beginning. 7 Much has been seen since then, but nothing has really happened. 8 Your Self is still in peace, even though your mind is in conflict. 9 You have not yet gone back far enough, and that is why you become so fearful. 10 As you approach the Beginning, you feel the fear of the destruction of your thought system upon you as if it were the fear of death. 11 There is no death, but there *is* a belief in death.

T-3.VII.6. The branch that bears no fruit will be cut off and will wither away. 2 Be glad! 3 The light will shine from the true Foundation of life, and your own thought system will stand corrected. 4 It cannot stand otherwise. 5 You who fear salvation are choosing death.

6 Life and death, light and darkness, knowledge and perception, are irreconcilable. 7 To believe that they can be reconciled is to believe that God and His Son can *not*. 8 Only the oneness of knowledge is free of conflict. 9 Your Kingdom is not of this world because it was given you from beyond this world. 10 Only in this world is the idea of an authority problem meaningful. 11 The world is not left by death but by truth, and truth can be known by all those for whom the Kingdom was created, and for whom it waits. 1

[Previous Section](#)

[Next Section](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

[Search the Course](#)

[We invite you to comment on this section.](#)

[The Little Garden Home](#)

>