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[Previous lesson](#)

[Next Lesson](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

[Search the Course](#)

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[The Little Garden Home](#)

PART I

LESSON 135.

If I defend myself I am attacked.

W-135.1. Who would defend himself unless he thought he were attacked, that the attack were real, and that his own defense could save himself? 2 And herein lies the folly of defense; it gives illusions full reality, and then attempts to handle them as real. 3 It adds illusions to illusions, thus making correction doubly difficult. 4 And it is this you do when you attempt to plan the future, activate the past, or organize the present as you wish.

W-135.2. You operate from the belief you must protect yourself from what is happening

because it must contain what threatens you. 2 A sense of threat is an acknowledgment of an inherent weakness; a belief that there is danger which has power to call on you to make appropriate defense. 3 The world is based on this insane belief. 4 And all its structures, all its thoughts and doubts, its penalties and heavy armaments, its legal definitions and its codes, its ethics and its leaders and its gods, all serve but to preserve its sense of threat. 5 For no one walks the world in armature but must have terror striking at his heart.

W-135.3. Defense is frightening. 2 It stems from fear, increasing fear as each defense is made. 3 You think it offers safety. 4 Yet it speaks of fear made real and terror justified. 5 Is it not strange you do not pause to ask, as you elaborate your plans and make your armor thicker and your locks more tight, what you defend, and how, and against what?

W-135.4. Let us consider first what you defend. 2 It must be something that is very weak and easily assaulted. 3 It must be something made easy prey, unable to protect itself and needing your defense. 4 What but the body has such frailty that constant care and watchful, deep concern are needful to protect its little life? 5 What but the body falters and must fail to serve the Son of God as worthy host?

W-135.5. Yet it is not the body that can fear, nor be a thing of fear. 2 It has no needs but those which you assign to it. 3 It needs no complicated structures of defense, no health-inducing medicine, no care and no concern at all. 4 Defend its life, or give it gifts to make it beautiful or walls to make it safe, and you but say your home is open to the thief of time, corruptible and crumbling, so unsafe it must be guarded with your very life.

W-135.6. Is not this picture fearful? 2 Can you be at peace with such a concept of your home? 3 Yet what endowed the body with the right to serve you thus except your own belief? 4 It is your mind which gave the body all the functions that you see in it, and set its value far beyond a little pile of dust and water. 5 Who would make defense of something that he recognized as this?

W-135.7. The body is in need of no defense. 2 This cannot be too often emphasized. 3 It will be strong and healthy if the mind does not abuse it by assigning it to roles it cannot fill, to purposes beyond its scope, and to exalted aims which it cannot accomplish. 4 Such attempts, ridiculous yet deeply cherished, are the sources for the many mad attacks you make upon it. 5 For it seems to fail your hopes, your needs, your values and your dreams.

W-135.8. The "self" that needs protection is not real. 2 The body, valueless and hardly worth the least defense, need merely be perceived as quite apart from you, and it becomes a healthy, serviceable instrument through which the mind can operate until its usefulness is over. 3 Who would want to keep it when its usefulness is done?

W-135.9. Defend the body and you have attacked your mind. 2 For you have seen in it the faults, the weaknesses, the limits and the lacks from which you think the body must be saved. 3 You will not see the mind as separate from bodily conditions. 4 And you will impose upon the body all the pain that comes from the conception of the mind as limited and fragile, and apart from other minds and separate from its Source.

W-135.10. These are the thoughts in need of healing, and the body will respond with health when they have been corrected and replaced with truth. 2 This is the body's only real defense. 3 Yet is this where you look for its defense? 4 You offer it protection of a kind from which it gains no benefit at all, but merely adds to your distress of mind. 5 You do not heal, but merely take away the hope of healing, for you fail to see where hope must lie if it be meaningful.

W-135.11. A healed mind does not plan. 2 It carries out the plans that it receives through listening to wisdom that is not its own. 3 It waits until it has been taught what should be done, and then proceeds to do it. 4 It does not depend upon itself for anything except its adequacy to fulfill the plans assigned to it. 5 It is secure in certainty that obstacles can not impede its progress to accomplishment of any goal that serves the greater plan established for the good of everyone.

W-135.12. A healed mind is relieved of the belief that it must plan, although it cannot know the outcome which is best, the means by which it is achieved, nor how to recognize the problem that the plan is made to solve. 2 It must misuse the body in its plans until it recognizes this is so. 3 But when it has accepted this as true, then is it healed, and lets the body go.

W-135.13. Enslavement of the body to the plans the unhealed mind sets up to save itself must make the body sick. 2 It is not free to be the means of helping in a plan which far exceeds its own protection, and which needs its service for a little while. 3 In this capacity is health assured. 4 For everything the mind employs for this will function flawlessly, and with the strength that has been given it and cannot fail.

W-135.14. It is, perhaps, not easy to perceive that self-initiated plans are but defenses, with the purpose all of them were made to realize. 2 They are the means by which a frightened mind would undertake its own protection, at the cost of truth. 3 This is not difficult to realize in some forms which these self-deceptions take, where the denial of reality is very obvious. 4 Yet planning is not often recognized as a defense.

W-135.15. The mind engaged in planning for itself is occupied in setting up control of future happenings. 2 It does not think that it will be provided for, unless it makes its own provisions. 3 Time becomes a future emphasis, to be controlled by learning and experience obtained from past events and previous beliefs. 4 It overlooks the present, for it rests on the idea the past has taught enough to let the mind direct its future course.

W-135.16. The mind that plans is thus refusing to allow for change. 2 What it has learned before becomes the basis for its future goals. 3 Its past experience directs its choice of what will happen. 4 And it does not see that here and now is everything it needs to guarantee a future quite unlike the past, without a continuity of any old ideas and sick beliefs. 5 Anticipation plays no part at all, for present confidence directs the way.

W-135.17. Defenses are the plans you undertake to make against the truth. 2 Their aim is to select what you approve, and disregard what you consider incompatible with your beliefs of your reality. 3 Yet what remains is meaningless indeed. 4 For it is your reality

that is the "threat" which your defenses would attack, obscure, and take apart and crucify.

W-135.18. What could you not accept, if you but knew that everything that happens, all events, past, present and to come, are gently planned by One Whose only purpose is your good? 2 Perhaps you have misunderstood His plan, for He would never offer pain to you. 3 But your defenses did not let you see His loving blessing shine in every step you ever took. 4 While you made plans for death, He led you gently to eternal life.

W-135.19. Your present trust in Him is the defense that promises a future undisturbed, without a trace of sorrow, and with joy that constantly increases, as this life becomes a holy instant, set in time, but heeding only immortality. 2 Let no defenses but your present trust direct the future, and this life becomes a meaningful encounter with the truth that only your defenses would conceal.

W-135.20. Without defenses, you become a light which Heaven gratefully acknowledges to be its own. 2 And it will lead you on in ways appointed for your happiness according to the ancient plan, begun when time was born. 3 Your followers will join their light with yours, and it will be increased until the world is lighted up with joy. 4 And gladly will our brothers lay aside their cumbersome defenses, which availed them nothing and could only terrify.

W-135.21. We will anticipate that time today with present confidence, for this is part of what was planned for us. 2 We will be sure that everything we need is given us for our accomplishment of this today. 3 We make no plans for how it will be done, but realize that our defenselessness is all that is required for the truth to dawn upon our minds with certainty.

W-135.22. For fifteen minutes twice today we rest from senseless planning, and from every thought that blocks the truth from entering our minds. 2 Today we will receive instead of plan, that we may give instead of organize. 3 And we are given truly, as we say:

4 If I defend myself I am attacked. 5 But in defenselessness I will be strong, and I will learn what my defenses hide.

W-135.23. Nothing but that. 2 If there are plans to make, you will be told of them. 3 They may not be the plans you thought were needed, nor indeed the answers to the problems which you thought confronted you. 4 But they are answers to another kind of question, which remains unanswered yet in need of answering until the Answer comes to you at last.

W-135.24. All your defenses have been aimed at not receiving what you will receive today. 2 And in the light and joy of simple trust, you will but wonder why you ever thought that you must be defended from release. 3 Heaven asks nothing. 4 It is hell that makes extravagant demands for sacrifice. 5 You give up nothing in these times today when, undefended, you present yourself to your Creator as you really are.

W-135.25. He has remembered you. 2 Today we will remember Him. 3 For this is

Easter time in your salvation. 4 And you rise again from what was seeming death and hopelessness. 5 Now is the light of hope reborn in you, for now you come without defense, to learn the part for you within the plan of God. 6 What little plans or magical beliefs can still have value, when you have received your function from the Voice for God Himself?

W-135.26. Try not to shape this day as you believe would benefit you most. 2 For you can not conceive of all the happiness that comes to you without your planning. 3 Learn today. 4 And all the world will take this giant stride, and celebrate your Easter time with you. 5 Throughout the day, as foolish little things appear to raise defensiveness in you and tempt you to engage in weaving plans, remind yourself this is a special day for learning, and acknowledge it with this:

6 This is my Easter time. 7 And I would keep it holy. 8 I will not defend myself, because the Son of God needs no defense against the truth of his reality.

[Previous lesson](#)

[Next Lesson](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

[Search the Course](#)

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[The Little Garden Home](#)