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## PART I

### LESSON 153.

In my defenselessness my safety lies.

W-153.1. You who feel threatened by this changing world, its twists of fortune and its bitter jests, its brief relationships and all the "gifts" it merely lends to take away again; attend this lesson well. 2 The world provides no safety. 3 It is rooted in attack, and all its "gifts" of seeming safety are illusory deceptions. 4 It attacks, and then attacks again. 5 No peace of mind is possible where danger threatens thus.

W-153.2. The world gives rise but to defensiveness. 2 For threat brings anger, anger makes attack seem reasonable, honestly provoked, and righteous in the name of self-

defense. 3 Yet is defensiveness a double threat. 4 For it attests to weakness, and sets up a system of defense that cannot work. 5 Now are the weak still further undermined, for there is treachery without and still a greater treachery within. 6 The mind is now confused, and knows not where to turn to find escape from its imaginings.

W-153.3. It is as if a circle held it fast, wherein another circle bound it and another one in that, until escape no longer can be hoped for nor obtained. 2 Attack, defense; defense, attack, become the circles of the hours and the days that bind the mind in heavy bands of steel with iron overlaid, returning but to start again. 3 There seems to be no break nor ending in the ever-tightening grip of the imprisonment upon the mind.

W-153.4. Defenses are the costliest of all the prices which the ego would exact. 2 In them lies madness in a form so grim that hope of sanity seems but to be an idle dream, beyond the possible. 3 The sense of threat the world encourages is so much deeper, and so far beyond the frenzy and intensity of which you can conceive, that you have no idea of all the devastation it has wrought.

W-153.5. You are its slave. 2 You know not what you do, in fear of it. 3 You do not understand how much you have been made to sacrifice, who feel its iron grip upon your heart. 4 You do not realize what you have done to sabotage the holy peace of God by your defensiveness. 5 For you behold the Son of God as but a victim to attack by fantasies, by dreams, and by illusions he has made; yet helpless in their presence, needful only of defense by still more fantasies, and dreams by which illusions of his safety comfort him.

W-153.6. Defenselessness is strength. 2 It testifies to recognition of the Christ in you. 3 Perhaps you will recall the text maintains that choice is always made between Christ's strength and your own weakness, seen apart from Him. 4 Defenselessness can never be attacked, because it recognizes strength so great attack is folly, or a silly game a tired child might play, when he becomes too sleepy to remember what he wants.

W-153.7. Defensiveness is weakness. 2 It proclaims you have denied the Christ and come to fear His Father's anger. 3 What can save you now from your delusion of an angry god, whose fearful image you believe you see at work in all the evils of the world? 4 What but illusions could defend you now, when it is but illusions that you fight?

W-153.8. We will not play such childish games today. 2 For our true purpose is to save the world, and we would not exchange for foolishness the endless joy our function offers us. 3 We would not let our happiness slip by because a fragment of a senseless dream happened to cross our minds, and we mistook the figures in it for the Son of God; its tiny instant for eternity.

W-153.9. We look past dreams today, and recognize that we need no defense because we are created unassailable, without all thought or wish or dream in which attack has any meaning. 2 Now we cannot fear, for we have left all fearful thoughts behind. 3 And in defenselessness we stand secure, serenely certain of our safety now, sure of salvation; sure we will fulfill our chosen purpose, as our ministry extends its holy blessing through

the world.

W-153.10. Be still a moment, and in silence think how holy is your purpose, how secure you rest, untouchable within its light. 2 God's ministers have chosen that the truth be with them. 3 Who is holier than they? 4 Who could be surer that his happiness is fully guaranteed? 5 And who could be more mightily protected? 6 What defense could possibly be needed by the ones who are among the chosen ones of God, by His election and their own as well?

W-153.11. It is the function of God's ministers to help their brothers choose as they have done. 2 God has elected all, but few have come to realize His Will is but their own. 3 And while you fail to teach what you have learned, salvation waits and darkness holds the world in grim imprisonment. 4 Nor will you learn that light has come to you, and your escape has been accomplished. 5 For you will not see the light, until you offer it to all your brothers. 6 As they take it from your hands, so will you recognize it as your own.

W-153.12. Salvation can be thought of as a game that happy children play. 2 It was designed by One Who loves His children, and Who would replace their fearful toys with joyous games, which teach them that the game of fear is gone. 3 His game instructs in happiness because there is no loser. 4 Everyone who plays must win, and in his winning is the gain to everyone ensured. 5 The game of fear is gladly laid aside, when children come to see the benefits salvation brings.

W-153.13. You who have played that you are lost to hope, abandoned by your Father, left alone in terror in a fearful world made mad by sin and guilt; be happy now. 2 That game is over. 3 Now a quiet time has come, in which we put away the toys of guilt, and lock our quaint and childish thoughts of sin forever from the pure and holy minds of Heaven's children and the Son of God.

W-153.14. We pause but for a moment more, to play our final, happy game upon this earth. 2 And then we go to take our rightful place where truth abides and games are meaningless. 3 So is the story ended. 4 Let this day bring the last chapter closer to the world, that everyone may learn the tale he reads of terrifying destiny, defeat of all his hopes, his pitiful defense against a vengeance he can not escape, is but his own deluded fantasy. 5 God's ministers have come to waken him from the dark dreams this story has evoked in his confused, bewildered memory of this distorted tale. 6 God's Son can smile at last, on learning that it is not true.

W-153.15. Today we practice in a form we will maintain for quite a while. 2 We will begin each day by giving our attention to the daily thought as long as possible. 3 Five minutes now becomes the least we give to preparation for a day in which salvation is the only goal we have. 4 Ten would be better; fifteen better still. 5 And as distraction ceases to arise to turn us from our purpose, we will find that half an hour is too short a time to spend with God. 6 Nor will we willingly give less at night, in gratitude and joy.

W-153.16. Each hour adds to our increasing peace, as we remember to be faithful to the Will we share with God. 2 At times, perhaps, a minute, even less, will be the most that we can offer as the hour strikes. 3 Sometimes we will forget. 4 At other times the

business of the world will close on us, and we will be unable to withdraw a little while, and turn our thoughts to God.

W-153.17. Yet when we can, we will observe our trust as ministers of God, in hourly remembrance of our mission and His Love. 2 And we will quietly sit by and wait on Him and listen to His Voice, and learn what He would have us do the hour that is yet to come; while thanking Him for all the gifts He gave us in the one gone by.

W-153.18. In time, with practice, you will never cease to think of Him, and hear His loving Voice guiding your footsteps into quiet ways, where you will walk in true defenselessness. 2 For you will know that Heaven goes with you. 3 Nor would you keep your mind away from Him a moment, even though your time is spent in offering salvation to the world. 4 Think you He will not make this possible, for you who chose to carry out His plan for the salvation of the world and yours?

W-153.19. Today our theme is our defenselessness. 2 We clothe ourselves in it, as we prepare to meet the day. 3 We rise up strong in Christ, and let our weakness disappear, as we remember that His strength abides in us. 4 We will remind ourselves that He remains beside us through the day, and never leaves our weakness unsupported by His strength. 5 We call upon His strength each time we feel the threat of our defenses undermine our certainty of purpose. 6 We will pause a moment, as He tells us, "I am here."

W-153.20. Your practicing will now begin to take the earnestness of love, to help you keep your mind from wandering from its intent. 2 Be not afraid nor timid. 3 There can be no doubt that you will reach your final goal. 4 The ministers of God can never fail, because the love and strength and peace that shine from them to all their brothers come from Him. 5 These are His gifts to you. 6 Defenselessness is all you need to give Him in return. 7 You lay aside but what was never real, to look on Christ and see His sinlessness.

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