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## PART I

### LESSON 170.

There is no cruelty in God and none in me.

W-170.1. No one attacks without intent to hurt. 2 This can have no exception. 3 When you think that you attack in self-defense, you mean that to be cruel is protection; you are safe because of cruelty. 4 You mean that you believe to hurt another brings you freedom. 5 And you mean that to attack is to exchange the state in which you are for something better, safer, more secure from dangerous invasion and from fear.

W-170.2. How thoroughly insane is the idea that to defend from fear is to attack! 2 For here is fear begot and fed with blood, to make it grow and swell and rage. 3 And thus is

fear protected, not escaped. 4 Today we learn a lesson which can save you more delay and needless misery than you can possibly imagine. 5 It is this:

*6 You make what you defend against, and by your own defense against it is it real and inescapable. 7 Lay down your arms, and only then do you perceive it false.*

W-170.3. It seems to be the enemy without that you attack. 2 Yet your defense sets up an enemy within; an alien thought at war with you, depriving you of peace, splitting your mind into two camps which seem wholly irreconcilable. 3 For love now has an "enemy," an opposite; and fear, the alien, now needs your defense against the threat of what you really are.

W-170.4. If you consider carefully the means by which your fancied self-defense proceeds on its imagined way, you will perceive the premises on which the idea stands. 2 First, it is obvious ideas must leave their source, for it is you who make attack, and must have first conceived of it. 3 Yet you attack outside yourself, and separate your mind from him who is to be attacked, with perfect faith the split you made is real.

W-170.5. Next, are the attributes of love bestowed upon its "enemy." 2 For fear becomes your safety and protector of your peace, to which you turn for solace and escape from doubts about your strength, and hope of rest in dreamless quiet. 3 And as love is shorn of what belongs to it and it alone, love is endowed with attributes of fear. 4 For love would ask you lay down all defense as merely foolish. 5 And your arms indeed would crumble into dust. 6 For such they are.

W-170.6. With love as enemy, must cruelty become a god. 2 And gods demand that those who worship them obey their dictates, and refuse to question them. 3 Harsh punishment is meted out relentlessly to those who ask if the demands are sensible or even sane. 4 It is their enemies who are unreasonable and insane, while they are always merciful and just.

W-170.7. Today we look upon this cruel god dispassionately. 2 And we note that though his lips are smeared with blood, and fire seems to flame from him, he is but made of stone. 3 He can do nothing. 4 We need not defy his power. 5 He has none. 6 And those who see in him their safety have no guardian, no strength to call upon in danger, and no mighty warrior to fight for them.

W-170.8. This moment can be terrible. 2 But it can also be the time of your release from abject slavery. 3 You make a choice, standing before this idol, seeing him exactly as he is. 4 Will you restore to love what you have sought to wrest from it and lay before this mindless piece of stone? 5 Or will you make another idol to replace it? 6 For the god of cruelty takes many forms. 7 Another can be found.

W-170.9. Yet do not think that fear is the escape from fear. 2 Let us remember what the text has stressed about the obstacles to peace. 3 The final one, the hardest to believe is nothing, and a seeming obstacle with the appearance of a solid block, impenetrable, fearful and beyond surmounting, is the fear of God Himself. 4 Here is the basic premise which enthrones the thought of fear as god. 5 For fear is loved by those who worship it,

and love appears to be invested now with cruelty.

W-170.10. Where does the totally insane belief in gods of vengeance come from? 2 Love has not confused its attributes with those of fear. 3 Yet must the worshippers of fear perceive their own confusion in fear's "enemy"; its cruelty as now a part of love. 4 And what becomes more fearful than the Heart of Love Itself? 5 The blood appears to be upon His Lips; the fire comes from Him. 6 And He is terrible above all else, cruel beyond conception, striking down all who acknowledge Him to be their God.

W-170.11. The choice you make today is certain. 2 For you look for the last time upon this bit of carven stone you made, and call it god no longer. 3 You have reached this place before, but you have chosen that this cruel god remain with you in still another form. 4 And so the fear of God returned with you. 5 This time you leave it there. 6 And you return to a new world, unburdened by its weight; beheld not in its sightless eyes, but in the vision that your choice restored to you.

W-170.12. Now do your eyes belong to Christ, and He looks through them. 2 Now your voice belongs to God and echoes His. 3 And now your heart remains at peace forever. 4 You have chosen Him in place of idols, and your attributes, given by your Creator, are restored to you at last. 5 The Call for God is heard and answered. 6 Now has fear made way for love, as God Himself replaces cruelty.

W-170.13. *Father, we are like You. 2 No cruelty abides in us, for there is none in You. 3 Your peace is ours. 4 And we bless the world with what we have received from You alone. 5 We choose again, and make our choice for all our brothers, knowing they are one with us. 6 We bring them Your salvation as we have received it now. 7 And we give thanks for them who render us complete. 8 In them we see Your glory, and in them we find our peace. 9 Holy are we because Your Holiness has set us free. 10 And we give thanks. 11 Amen.*

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