

## Chapter 21

### The Inner Picture

Projection makes perception. The world you see is what you gave it, nothing more than that. But though it is no more than that, it is not less. Therefore, to you it is important. It is the witness to your state of mind, the outside picture of an inward condition. As a man thinketh, so does he perceive. Therefore, seek not to change the world, but will to change your mind ABOUT the world. Perception is a RESULT, not a cause. And that is why order of difficulty in miracles is meaningless. Everything looked upon with vision is healed and holy. Nothing perceived without it means anything. And where there is no meaning, there is chaos.

Damnation is your judgment on yourself, and this you WILL project upon the world. See it as damned, and all you see is what you did to hurt the Son of God. If you behold disaster and catastrophe, you tried to crucify him. If you see holiness and hope, you joined the will of God to set him free. There is no choice that lies between these two decisions. And you WILL see the witness to the choice you made, and learn from this to RECOGNIZE which one you chose.

### The Imagined World

Never forget the world the sightless “see” must be imagined, for what it really looks like is unknown to them. They must infer what could be seen from evidence forever indirect, and reconstruct their inferences as they stumble and fall because of what they did not recognize, or walk unharmed through open doorways which they thought were closed. And so it is with you. You do not see. Your cues for inference are wrong, and so you stumble and fall down upon the stones you did not recognize, but fail to be aware you CAN go through the doors you thought were closed, but which stand open before unseeing eyes, waiting to welcome you.

How foolish it is to attempt to judge what could be seen instead. It is not necessary to imagine what the world must look like. It must be seen, before you recognize it for what it is. You can be shown which doors are open, and you can see where safety lies; and which way leads to darkness, which to light. Judgment will ALWAYS give you false directions, but vision SHOWS you where to go. Why should you guess?

There is no need to learn through pain. And gentle lessons are acquired joyously, and are remembered gladly. What gives you happiness you WANT to learn and not forget. It is not this you would deny. YOUR question is whether the means by which this course is learned will BRING to you the joy it promises. If you believed it would, the learning of it would be no problem. You are not happy learners yet because you still remain uncertain that vision gives you MORE than judgment does, and you have learned that BOTH you cannot have.

The blind become accustomed to their world by their adjustments to it. They think they know their way about in it. They learned it, not through joyous lessons, but through the stern necessity of limits they believed they could not overcome. And still believing this, they hold those lessons dear, and cling to them BECAUSE they cannot see. They do not understand the lessons KEEP them blind. This they do not believe. And so they keep the world they learned to “see” in their imagination, believing that their choice is that or nothing. They hate the world

they learned through pain. And everything they think is in it serves to remind them that they are incomplete and bitterly deprived.

Thus they DEFINE their life and where they live, adjusting to it as they think they must, afraid to lose the little that they have. And so it is with all who see the body as all they have and all their brothers have. They try to reach each other, and they fail, and fail again. And they adjust to loneliness, believing that to keep the body is to save the little that they have. Listen, and try to think if you remember what we will speak of now.

Listen - perhaps you catch a hint of an ancient state not quite forgotten - dim, perhaps, and yet not altogether unfamiliar, like a song whose name is long forgotten, and the circumstances in which you heard completely unremembered. Not the whole song has stayed with you, but just a little wisp of melody, attached not to a person or a place or anything particular. But you remember, from just this little part, how lovely was the song, how wonderful the setting where you heard it, and how you loved those who were there and listened with you.

The notes are nothing. Yet you have kept them with you, not for themselves, but as a soft reminder of what would make you weep if you remembered how dear it was to you. You could remember, yet you are afraid, believing you would lose the world you learned since then. And yet you know that nothing in the world you learned is half so dear as this. Listen, and see if you remember an ancient song you knew so long ago, and held more dear than any melody you taught yourself to cherish since.

## The Responsibility for Slight

We have repeated how little is asked of you to learn this course. It is the same small willingness you need to have your whole relationship transformed to joy, the little gift you offer to the Holy Spirit for which he gives you everything, the very little on which salvation rests, the tiny change of mind by which the crucifixion is changed to resurrection. And being true it is so simple that it cannot fail to be completely understood. Rejected yes, but NOT ambiguous. And if you choose against it now, it will not be because it is obscure, but rather that this little cost seemed, in your judgment, to be too much to pay for peace.

Beyond the body, beyond the sun and stars, past everything you see and yet somehow familiar, is an arc of golden light that stretches as you look into a great and shining circle. And all the circle fills with light before your eyes. The edges of the circle disappear, and what is in it is no longer contained at all. The light expands and covers everything, extending to infinity forever shining, and with no break or limit anywhere. Within it everything is joined in perfect continuity. Nor is it possible to imagine that anything could be outside, for there is nowhere that this light is not.

This is the vision of the Son of God, whom you know well. Here is the sight of him who knows his Father. Here is the memory of what you are, a part of this with all of it within, and joined to all as surely as all is joined in you. Accept the vision which can show you THIS, and not the body. You know the ancient song, and know it well. Nothing will ever be as dear to you as is this ancient hymn the Son of God sings to his father still.

And now the blind can see, for that same song they sing in honor of their Creator gives praise to them as well. The blindness which they made will not withstand the memory of this song. And they will look upon the vision of the Son of God, remembering who he is they sing of. What is a miracle but this remembering? And who is there in whom this memory lies not? The light in one awakens it in all. And when you see it in each other, you ARE remembering for everyone.

This is the only thing that you need do for vision, happiness, release from pain and the complete escape from sin, all to be given you. Say only this, but mean it with no reservations, for here the power of salvation lies:

*I AM responsible for what I see.*

*I chose the feelings I experience, and I decided on the goal I would achieve.*

*And everything that seems to happen to me*

*I asked for, and received as I had asked.*

Deceive yourself no longer that you are helpless in the face of what is done to you. Acknowledge but that you have been MISTAKEN, and all effects of your mistakes will disappear.

It is impossible the Son of God be merely driven by events outside of him. It is impossible that the happenings that come to him were not his choice. His power of decision is the determiner of every situation in which he seems to find himself by chance or accident. No accident nor chance is possible within the universe as God created it, outside of which is nothing. Suffer, and you decided sin was your goal. Be happy, and you gave the power of decision to him who must decide for God for you. This is the little gift you offer to the Holy Spirit, and even this he gave to you to give yourself. For by this gift is given you the power to release your savior, that he may give salvation unto you.

Begrudge not then this little offering. Withhold it, and you keep the world as now you see it. Give it away, and everything you see goes with it. Never was so much given for so little. In the holy instant is this exchange effected and maintained. Here is the world you do not want brought to the one you do. And here the one you do is given you BECAUSE you want it. Yet for this, the power of your wanting must first be recognized. You must accept its STRENGTH, and not its weakness. You must perceive that what is strong enough to make a world can let it go, and can accept correction if it is willing to see that it was wrong.

The world you see is but the idle witness that you were right. This witness is insane. You trained it in its testimony, and as it gave it back to you, you listened and convinced yourself that what it saw was true. You did this to YOURSELF. See only this, and you will also see how circular the reasoning on which your "seeing" rests. This was not given you. This was your gift to you and to your brother. Be willing, then, to have it taken from him and be replaced with truth. And as you look upon the change in him, it will be given you to see it in yourself.

Perhaps you do not see the need for you to give this little offering. Look closer, then, at what it IS. And, very simply, see in it the whole exchange of separation for salvation. All that the ego is, is an idea that it is possible that things should happen to the Son of God WITHOUT his will, and thus without the will of his Creator, whose will cannot BE separate from his own.

This is the Son of God's REPLACEMENT for his will, a mad revolt against what must forever be. This is the statement that he has the power to make God powerless, and so to take it for himself, and leave himself without what God has willed for him. This is the mad idea you have enshrined upon your altars, and which you worship. And anything which threatens this seems to attack your faith, for here is it invested. Think not that you are faithless, for your belief and trust in this is strong indeed.

The Holy Spirit can give you faith in holiness and vision to see it easily enough. But you have not left open and unoccupied the altar where the gifts belong. Where THEY should be, you have set up your idols to something else. This other will, which seems to tell you what must happen, you gave reality. And what would show you otherwise must therefore seem unreal. All that is asked of you is to make room for truth. You are not asked to make or do what lies beyond your understanding. All you are asked to do is LET IT IN, only to stop your interference with what will happen of itself, simply to recognize again the presence of what you thought you gave away.

Be willing, for an instant, to leave your altars free of what you placed upon them, and what is really there you CANNOT fail to see. The holy instant is not an instant of creation, but of recognition. For recognition comes of vision and suspended judgment. Then only it is possible to look within and see what MUST be there, plainly in sight, and wholly independent of inference and judgment. Undoing is not your task, but it IS up to you to welcome it or not. Faith and desire go hand in hand, for everyone believes in what he wants.

We have already said that wishful thinking is how the ego deals with what it wants, to make it so. There is no better demonstration of the power of wanting, and therefore of faith, to make its goals seem real and possible. Faith in the unreal leads to adjustments of reality to make it fit the goal of madness. The goal of sin induces the perception of a fearful world to justify its purpose. What you desire you WILL see. And if its reality is false, you will uphold it by not realizing all the adjustments you have introduced, to make it so.

When vision is denied, confusion of cause and effect becomes inevitable. The purpose now becomes to keep obscure the cause of the effect, and

make effect appear to be a CAUSE. This seeming independence of effect enables it to be regarded as standing by itself, and capable of serving as a cause of the events and feelings its maker thinks it causes. Long ago, we spoke of your desire to create your own creator, and be father and not son to him. This is the same desire. The son is the effect, whose cause he would deny. And so he seems to BE the cause, producing real effects. Nothing can have effects without a cause, and to confuse the two is merely to fail to understand them both.

It is as needful that you recognize you made the world you see as that you recognize that you did not create yourself. THEY ARE THE SAME MISTAKE. Nothing created not by your Creator has any influence over you. And if you think what you have made can tell you what you see and feel, and place your faith in its ability to do so, you are denying your Creator, and believing that you made yourself. For if you think the world you made has power to make you what it wills, you ARE confusing Son and Father - effect and source.

The Son's creations are like his Father's. Yet in creating them, the Son does not delude himself that he is independent of his source. His union with it is the source of his creating. APART from this he has no power to create, and what he makes is meaningless. It changes nothing in creation, depends entirely upon the madness of its maker, and cannot serve to justify the madness. Your brother thinks he made the world with you. Thus he denies Creation. With you he thinks the world he made made him. Thus he DENIES he made it.

Yet the truth is you were both created by a loving Father, who created you together and as one. See what "proves" otherwise, and you deny your whole reality. But grant that everything which seems to stand between you, keeping you from each other and separate from your Father, you made in secret, and the instant of release has come to you. All its effects are gone because its source has been uncovered. It is its seeming independence of its source that kept you prisoner. This is the same delusion that you are independent of the source by which you were created, and have never left.

## Faith, Belief, and Vision

All special relationships have sin as their goal. For they are bargains with reality, toward which the seeming union is adjusted. Forget not this, to bargain is to set a limit, and any brother with whom you have a limited relationship YOU HATE. You may attempt to keep the bargain in the name of "fairness," sometimes demanding payment of yourself, perhaps more often of the other. Thus in the "fairness" you attempt to ease the guilt that comes from the accepted purpose of the relationship. And that is why the Holy Spirit must change its purpose to make it useful to HIM and harmless unto YOU.

If you accept this change, you have accepted the idea of making room for truth. The SOURCE of sin is gone. You may imagine that you still experience its effects, but it is not your purpose, and you no longer WANT it. No-one allows a purpose to be replaced while he desires it, for nothing is so cherished and protected as is a goal the mind accepts. This it will follow, grimly or happily, but always with faith and with the persistence that faith inevitably brings. The power of faith is NEVER recognized if it is placed in sin. But it is ALWAYS recognized if it is placed in love.

Why is it strange to you that faith can move mountains? This is indeed a little feat for such a power. For faith can keep the Son of God in chains as long as he believes he IS in chains. And when he is released from them, it will be simply because he no longer believes in them, withdrawing faith that they can hold him, and placing it in his freedom instead. It is impossible to place equal faith in opposite directions. What faith you give to sin you TAKE AWAY from holiness. And what you offer holiness has been REMOVED from sin.

Faith and belief and vision are the means by which the goal of holiness is reached. Through them the Holy Spirit leads you to the real world, and away from all illusions where your faith was laid. This is his direction, the only one he ever sees. And when you wander, he reminds you there IS but one. His faith and his belief and vision are all for you. And when you have accepted them completely instead of yours, you will have need of them no longer. For faith and vision and belief are meaningful only BEFORE the state of certainty is reached. In Heaven they are unknown. Yet Heaven is reached through them.

It is impossible that the Son of God lack faith, but he can choose where he would have it BE. Faithlessness is not a LACK of faith, but faith in NOTHING. Faith given to illusions does not lack power, for by it does the Son of God believe that he is powerless. Thus is he faithless to himself, but strong in faith in his illusions ABOUT himself. For faith, perception and belief YOU made as means for losing certainty and finding sin. This mad direction was your choice, and by your faith in what you chose, you made what you desired.

The Holy Spirit has a use for all the means for sin by which you sought to find it. But as he uses them, they lead AWAY from sin, because his purpose lies in the opposite direction. He sees the MEANS you use, but not the PURPOSE for which you made them. He would not take them from you, for he sees their value as a means for what HE wills for you. You made perception that you might choose among your brothers, and seek for sin with them. The Holy Spirit sees perception as a means to teach you that the vision of a holy relationship is all you WANT to see. Then will you give your faith to holiness, desiring and believing in it BECAUSE of your desire.

Faith and belief become attached to vision, as all the means that once served sin are redirected now toward holiness. For what you think is sin is LIMITATION, and whom you try to limit to the body you hate because you fear. In your refusal to forgive him, you would condemn him to the body because the means for sin are dear to you. And so the body has your faith and your belief. But holiness would set your brother free, removing hatred by removing fear, not as a symptom, but at its source.

Those who would free their brothers from the body can HAVE no fear. They have renounced the means for sin by choosing to let all limitations be removed. Desiring to look upon their brothers in holiness, the power of belief and faith goes far beyond the body, SUPPORTING vision, not obstructing it. But first they chose to recognize how much their faith had limited their understanding of the world, desiring to place its power elsewhere should another point of view be given them. The miracles which follow this decision are also born of faith. For all who choose to look away from sin are given vision, and are led to holiness.

Those who believe in sin MUST think the Holy Spirit asks for sacrifice, for this is how they think THEIR purpose is accomplished. Brothers, the Holy Spirit knows that sacrifice brings NOTHING. He makes no bargains. And if you seek to limit him, you will hate him because you are afraid. The gift that he has given you is more than anything that stands this side of Heaven. The instant for its recognition is at hand. Join your awareness to what has been ALREADY joined. The faith you give each other can accomplish this. For he who loves the world is seeing it for you, without one spot of sin upon it, and in the innocence which makes the sight of it as beautiful as Heaven.

Your faith in sacrifice has given it great power in your sight, except you do not realize you cannot see BECAUSE of it. For sacrifice must be exacted of a body, and by another body. The mind could neither ask it nor receive it of itself. And no more could the body. The intention is in the mind, which tries to use the body to carry out the means for sin in which the MIND believes. Thus is the joining of mind and body an inescapable belief of those who value sin. And so is sacrifice invariably a means for limitation, and thus for hate.

Think you the Holy Spirit is concerned with THIS? He gives not what it is his purpose to lead you FROM. You think he would deprive you for your good. But “good” and “deprivation” are opposites, and cannot meaningfully join in any way. It is like saying that the moon and sun are one because they come with night and day, and so they MUST be joined. Yet sight of one is but the sign the other has disappeared from sight. Nor is it possible that what gives light be one with what depends on darkness to be seen. Neither demands the sacrifice of the other. Yet on the ABSENCE of the other does each depend.

The body was made to be a sacrifice to sin, and in the darkness so it still is seen. Yet in the light of vision it is looked upon quite differently. You CAN have faith in it to serve the Holy Spirit’s goal, and give it power to serve as means to help the blind to see. But in their seeing they look PAST it, as do you. The faith and the belief you gave it BELONGS beyond. You gave perception and belief and faith from mind to body. Let them now be given back to what produced them, and can use them still to save itself from what it made.

## The Fear to Look Within

The Holy Spirit will NEVER teach you that you are sinful. Errors he will correct, but this makes no-one fearful. You are indeed afraid to look within, and see the sin you think is there. This you would not be fearful to admit. Fear in association with sin the ego deems quite appropriate, and smiles approvingly. It has no fear to let you feel ashamed. It doubts not your belief and faith in sin. Its temples do not shake because of this. Your faith that sin is there but witnesses to your desire that it BE there to see. This merely seems to be the source of fear.

Remember that the ego is not alone. Its rule IS tempered, and its unknown “enemy,” whom it cannot even see, it fears. Loudly the ego tells you not to look inward, for if you do your eyes will light on sin, and God will strike you blind. This you believe, and so you do not look. Yet this is not the ego’s hidden fear, nor yours who serve it. Loudly indeed the ego claims it is, TOO loudly and TOO often. For underneath this constant shout and frantic proclamation, the ego is not certain it is so. Beneath your fear to look within because of sin is yet another fear, and one which makes the ego tremble.

What if you looked within and saw NO sin? This “fearful” question is one the ego NEVER asks. And you who ask it now are threatening the ego’s whole defensive system too seriously for it to bother to pretend it is your friend. Those who have joined their brothers HAVE detached themselves from their belief that their identity lies in the ego. A holy relationship is one in which you join with what is part of you in TRUTH. And your belief in sin has been ALREADY shaken, nor are you now entirely unwilling to look within and see it not.

Your liberation still is only partial, still limited and incomplete, yet born within you. Not wholly mad, you have been willing to look on much of your insanity, and recognize its madness. Your faith is moving inward, past insanity and on to reason. And what your reason tells you now, the ego would not hear. The Holy Spirit’s purpose was accepted by the part of your mind the ego knows not of. No more did YOU. And yet this part, with which you now identify, is not afraid to look upon itself. It KNOWS no sin. How, otherwise, could it have been willing to see the Holy Spirit’s purpose as its own?

This part has seen your brother, and recognized him perfectly since time began. And it desired nothing but to join with him and to be free again, as once it was. It has been waiting for the birth of freedom; the acceptance of release to come to you. And now you recognize that it was not the ego that joined the Holy Spirit’s purpose, and so there MUST be something else. Think not that THIS is madness. For this your REASON tells you, and it follows perfectly from what you have already learned.

There is no inconsistency in what the Holy Spirit teaches. This is the reasoning of the SANE. You have perceived the ego’s madness, and not been made afraid because you did not choose to share in it. At times it still deceives you. Yet in your saner moments, its ranting strikes no terror in your hearts. For you have realized that all the gifts it would withdraw from you, in rage at your “presumptuous” wish to look within, you do not WANT. A few remaining trinkets still seem to shine and catch your eye. Yet you would not “sell” Heaven to have them.

And now the ego IS afraid. Yet what it hears in terror, the other part hears as the sweetest music, the song it longed to hear since first the ego came into your minds. The ego’s weakness is its strength. The song of freedom, which sings the praises of another world, brings to it hope of peace. For it REMEMBERS Heaven, and now it sees that Heaven has come to earth at last, from which the ego’s rule has kept it out so long. Heaven has come because it found a home in your relationship on earth. And earth can hold no longer what has been given Heaven as its own.

Look gently on each other, and remember the ego’s weakness is revealed in both your sight. What it would keep apart has met and joined, and looks upon the ego unafraid. Little children, innocent of sin, follow in gladness the way to certainty. Be not held back by fear’s insane insistence that sureness lies in doubt. This has no meaning. What matters it to you how loudly it is proclaimed? The senseless is not made meaningful by repetition and by clamor. The quiet way is open. Follow it happily, and question not what must be so.

## Reason and Perception

Perception selects, and makes the world you see. It literally picks it out as the mind directs. The laws of size and shape and brightness would hold, perhaps, if other things were equal. They are NOT equal. For what you look for you are far more likely to discover than what you would prefer to overlook. The still small voice for God is not drowned out by all the ego's raucous screams and senseless ravings to those who WANT to hear it. Perception is a CHOICE, and not a fact. But on this choice depends far more than you may realize as yet. For on the voice you choose to hear, and on the sights you choose to see, depends entirely your whole belief in what you ARE. Perception is a witness but to this, and NEVER to reality. Yet it can show you the conditions in which awareness of reality is possible, or those where it could never be.

Reality needs no cooperation from you to be itself. But your awareness of it needs your help because it is your choice. Listen to what the ego says and see what it directs you see, and it is sure that you will see yourself as tiny, vulnerable and afraid. You will experience depression, a sense of worthlessness, and feelings of impermanence and unreality. You will believe that you are helpless prey to forces far beyond your own control, and far more powerful than you. And you will think the world you made directs your destiny. For this will be your FAITH. But never believe because it is your faith it makes reality.

There is another vision and another voice in which your freedom lies, awaiting but your choice. And if you place your faith in them, you will perceive another self in you. This other self sees miracles as natural. They are as simple and natural to it as breathing to the body. They are the obvious response to calls for help, the only one it makes. Miracles seem unnatural to the ego because it does not understand how separate minds can influence each other. Nor COULD they do so. But minds cannot BE separate. This other self is perfectly aware of this. And thus it recognizes that miracles do not affect another's mind, only its own. There IS no other.

You do not realize the whole extent to which the idea of separation has interfered with reason. Reason lies in the other self you have cut off from your awareness. And nothing you have allowed to stay in it is capable of reason. How

can the segment of the mind devoid of reason understand what reason is, or grasp the information it would give? All sorts of questions may arise in it, but if the basic question stems from reason, it will not ask it. Like all that stems from reason, the basic question is obvious, simple, and remains unasked. But think not reason could not answer it.

God's plan for your salvation could not have been established without your will and your consent. It must have been accepted by the Son of God, for what God wills for him he MUST receive. For God wills not apart from him, nor does the will of God wait upon time to be accomplished. Therefore, what joined the will of God must be in you NOW, being eternal. You must have set aside a place in which the Holy Spirit can abide, and where he IS. He must have been there since the need for him arose, and was fulfilled in the same instant. Such would your reason tell you, if you listened. Yet such is clearly not the ego's "reasoning." Its alien nature to the ego is proof you will not find the answer there. Yet if it must be so, it must exist. And if it exists for you, and has your freedom as the purpose given it, you must be free to FIND it.

God's plan is simple, never circular and never self-defeating. He has no thoughts except the self-EXTENDING, and in this your will must be included. Thus, there must be a part of you that knows his will and shares it. It is not meaningful to ask if what must be is so. But it IS meaningful to ask why you are UNAWARE of what is so, for this must have an answer if the plan of God for your salvation is complete. And it must BE complete because its source knows not of incompleteness. Where would the answer be but in the source? And where are YOU but there, where this same answer is? Your identity, as much a true effect of this same source as is the answer, must therefore be together and the same.

Oh yes, you know this, and more than this alone. Yet any part of knowledge threatens dissociation as much as all of it. And all of it WILL come with any part. Here is the part you can accept. What reason points to you can see because the witnesses on its behalf are clear. Only the totally insane can disregard them, and you have gone past this. Reason is a means which serves the Holy Spirit's purpose in its own right. It is

not reinterpreted and re-directed from the goal of sin, as are the others. For reason is beyond the ego's range of means.

Faith and perception and belief can be misplaced, and serve the great deceiver's needs as well as truth. But reason has no place at all in madness, nor can it be adjusted to fit its end. Faith and belief are strong in madness, guiding perception toward what the mind has valued. But reason enters not at all in this. For the perception would fall away at once, if reason were applied. There is no reason in insanity, for it depends entirely on reason's absence. The ego never uses it because it does not realize that it exists. The partially insane have access to it, and only they have need of it. Knowledge does not depend on it, and madness keeps it out.

The part of mind where reason lies was dedicated, by your will in union with your Father's,

to the undoing of insanity. Here was the Holy Spirit's purpose accepted and accomplished, both at once. Reason is alien to insanity, and those who use it have gained a means which CAN-NOT be applied to sin. Knowledge is far beyond attainment of any kind. But reason can serve to open doors you closed against it.

You have come very close to this. Faith and belief have shifted, and you have asked the question which the ego will NEVER ask. Does not your reason tell you now the question must have come from something that you do not know, but must belong to you? Faith and belief, upheld by reason, cannot fail to lead to changed perception. And in this change is room made way for vision. Vision extends beyond itself, as does the purpose which it serves and all the means for its accomplishment.

## Reason and Correction

Reason cannot see sin but CAN see errors, and leads to their correction. It does not value them, but their correction. Reason will also tell you when you think you sin, you call for help. Yet if you will not accept the help you call for, you will not believe that it is yours to give. And so you will not give it, thus MAINTAINING the belief. For uncorrected error of any kind deceives you about the power that is in you to MAKE correction. If it can correct, and you allow it not to do so, you deny it to yourself and to your brother. And if he shares this same belief, you both will think that you are damned. This you could spare him and YOURSELF. For reason would not make way for correction in you alone.

Correction cannot be accepted or refused by you WITHOUT your brother. Sin would maintain it can. Yet reason tells you that you cannot see your brother or yourself as sinful, and still perceive the other innocent. Who looks upon himself as guilty and sees a sinless world? And who can see a sinful world and look upon himself apart from it? Sin would maintain you must be separate. But reason tells you that this must be wrong. If you are joined, how could it be that you have private thoughts? And how could thoughts that enter into what but seems like yours alone have no effect at all on what is yours? If minds are joined, this is impossible.

No-one can think but for himself, as God thinks not without his son. Only were both in bodies could this be. Nor could one mind think only for itself unless the body WERE the mind. For only bodies can be separate, and therefore unreal. The home of madness cannot be the home of reason. Yet it is easy to leave the home of madness if you see reason. You do not leave insanity by going somewhere else. You leave it simply by accepting reason where madness was. Madness and reason see the same things, but it is certain that they look upon them differently.

Madness is an attack on reason that drives it out of mind, and takes its place. Reason does not attack, but takes the place of madness quietly, replacing madness if it be the will of the insane to listen to it. But the insane know not their will. For they believe they see the body, and let their madness tell them it is real. Reason would be incapable of this. And if you would defend the body against your reason, you will not understand the body or yourself.

The body does not separate you from your brother, and if you think it does, you are insane. But madness has a purpose, and believes it also has the means to make its purpose real. To see the body as a barrier between what reason tells you MUST be joined must be insane. Nor could

you see it, if you heard the voice of reason. What can there be that stands between what is continuous? And if there is nothing in between, how can what enters part be kept away from other parts? Reason would tell you this. But think what you must recognize, if it be so.

If you choose sin instead of healing, you would condemn the Son of God to what can never be corrected. You tell him, by your choice, that he is damned, separate from you and from his Father forever, and without a hope of safe return. You teach him this, and you will learn of him EXACTLY what you taught. For you can teach him only that he is as you would have him, and what you choose he be is but your choice for YOU. Yet think not this is fearful. That you are joined to him is but a fact, not an interpretation. How can a fact be fearful unless it disagrees with what you hold more dear than truth? Reason will tell you that this fact is your RELEASE. Neither your brother nor yourself can be attacked alone. But neither can accept a miracle instead WITHOUT the other being blessed by it, and healed of pain.

Reason, like love, would reassure you, and seeks not to frighten you. The power to heal the Son of God is given you because he MUST be one with you. You ARE responsible for how he sees himself. And reason tells you it is given you to change his whole mind, which is one with you, in just an instant. And any instant serves to bring complete correction of his errors, and make him whole. The instant that you choose to let YOUR-SELF be healed, in that same instant is his whole salvation seen as complete with yours. Reason is given you to understand that this is so. For reason, kind as is the purpose for which it is the means, leads steadily away from madness toward the goal of truth. And here you will lay down the burden of denying truth. THIS is the burden that is terrible, and not the truth.

That you are joined is your salvation, the gift of Heaven, not the gift of fear. Does Heaven seem to be a burden to you? In madness, yes. And yet what madness sees must be dispelled by reason. Reason assures you Heaven is what you WANT, and ALL you want. Listen to him who speaks with reason, and brings your reason into line with his. Be willing to let reason be the means by which he would direct you how to

leave insanity behind. Hide not behind insanity, in order to escape from reason. What madness would conceal, the Holy Spirit still holds out for everyone to look upon with gladness.

You ARE your brother's savior. He is YOURS. Reason speaks happily indeed of this. This gracious plan was given love by love. And what love plans is like itself in this: Being united, it would have you learn what YOU must be. And being one with it, it must be given you to give what it has given, and gives still. Spend but an instant in the glad acceptance of what is given you to give your brother, and learn with him what has been given BOTH of you. To give is no more blessed than to receive. But neither is it less.

The Son of God is ALWAYS blessed as one. And as his gratitude goes out to you who blessed him, reason will tell you that it cannot be you stand apart from blessing. The gratitude he offers you reminds you of the thanks your Father gives you for completing him. And here alone does reason tell you that you can understand what you must be. Your Father is as close to you as is your brother. Yet what is there that could be nearer you than is your self?

The power that you have over the Son of God is not a threat to his reality. It but ATTESTS to it. Where could his freedom lie but in himself, if he be free already? And who could bind him but himself, if he deny his freedom? God is not mocked, no more his son can be imprisoned save by his own desire. And it is by his own desire that he is freed. Such is his strength, and not his weakness. He IS at his own mercy. And where he chooses to be merciful, there is he free. But where he chooses to condemn instead, there is he held a prisoner, waiting in chains his pardon on himself to set him free.

## Perception and Wishes

Do you not see that all your misery comes from the strange belief that you are powerless? Being helpless is the COST of sin. Helplessness is sin's condition, the one requirement that it demands to be believed. Only the helpless COULD believe in it. Enormity has no appeal save to the little. And only those who first believe that they ARE little could see attraction there. Treachery to the Son of God is the defense of those who do not identify with him. And you are for him or against him, either you love him or attack him, protect his unity or see him shattered and slain by your attack.

No-one believes the Son of God is powerless. And those who see themselves as helpless MUST believe that they are not the Son of God. What can they be EXCEPT his enemy? And what can they do but envy him his power, and by their envy make themselves afraid of it? These are the dark ones, silent and afraid, alone and not communicating, fearful the power of the Son of God will strike them dead, and raising up their helplessness against him. They join the army of the powerless, to wage their war of vengeance, bitterness and spite on him, to make him one with them. Because they do not know that they ARE one with him, they know not whom they hate. They are indeed a sorry army, each one as likely to attack his brother or turn upon himself as to remember they thought they had a common cause.

Frantic and loud and strong the dark ones seem to be. Yet they know not their enemy, except they HATE him. In hatred they have come together, but have not joined each other. For had they done so, hatred would be impossible. The army of the powerless must be disbanded in the presence of strength. Those who are strong are NEVER treacherous, because they have no need to dream of power and to act out their dream. How would an army act in dreams? Any way at all. It could be seen attacking anyone with anything. Dreams have no reason in them. A flower turns into a poisoned spear, a child becomes a giant and a mouse roars like a lion. And love is turned to hate as easily. This is no army, but a madhouse. What seems to be a planned attack is bedlam.

The army of the powerless is weak indeed. It has no weapons and it has no enemy. Yes, it can

overrun the world and SEEK an enemy. But it can never find what is not there. Yes, it can DREAM it found an enemy, but this will shift even as it attacks, so that it runs at once to find another, and never comes to rest in victory. And as it runs, it turns against itself, thinking it caught a glimpse of the great enemy which always eludes its murderous attack by turning into something else. How treacherous does this enemy appear, who changes so it is impossible even to recognize him!

Yet hate must have a target. There can be no faith in sin without an enemy. Who that believes in sin would DARE believe he has no enemy? Could he admit that no-one made him powerless? Reason would surely bid him seek no longer what is not there to find. Yet first he must be willing to perceive a world where it is not. It is not necessary that he understand HOW he can see it. Nor should he try. For if he focuses on what he cannot understand, he will but emphasize his helplessness, and let sin tell him that his enemy must be HIMSELF. But let him only ask himself these questions, which he must decide to have it done for him:

*Do I DESIRE a world I rule instead of one which rules me?*

*Do I DESIRE a world where I am powerful instead of helpless?*

*Do I DESIRE a world in which I have no enemies and cannot sin?*

*And do I want to see what I denied BECAUSE it is the truth?*

You have already answered the first three questions, but not yet the last. For this one still seems fearful, and unlike the others. Yet reason would assure you they are all the same. We said this year would emphasize the sameness of things that ARE the same. This final question, which is indeed the last you need decide, still seems to hold a threat the rest have lost for you. And this imagined difference attests to your belief that truth may be the enemy you yet may find. Here, then, would seem to be the last remaining hope of finding sin, and not accepting power.

Forget not that the choice of truth or sin, power or helplessness, is the choice of whether to attack or heal. For healing comes of power, and attack of helplessness. Whom you attack you CANNOT want to heal. And whom you would have healed must be the one you chose to be PROTECTED from attack. And what is this decision but the choice whether to see him through the body's eyes, or let him be revealed to you through vision? HOW this decision leads to its effects is not your problem. But what you WANT to see MUST be your choice. This is a course in CAUSE, and not effect.

Consider carefully your answer to the last question you have left unanswered still. And let your reason tell you that it must BE answered, and IS answered in the other three. And then it will be clear to you that, as you look on the effects of sin in any form, all you need do is simply ask yourself:

*Is this what I would see? Do I WANT this?*

This is your ONE decision; this the condition for what occurs. It is irrelevant to HOW it happens, but not to WHY. You HAVE control of this. And if you choose to see a world without an enemy, in which you are not helpless, the means to see it WILL be given you.

Why is the final question so important? Reason will tell you why. It is the same as are the other three except in TIME. The others are decisions which can be made and then unmade and made again. But truth is constant, and implies a state where vacillations are impossible. You can desire a world you rule which rules you not, and change your mind. You can desire to exchange your helplessness for power, and lose this same desire as a little glint of sin attracts you. And you can want to see a sinless world, and let an "enemy" tempt you to use the body's eyes and change what you desire.

In content all the questions ARE the same. For each one asks if you are willing to exchange the world of sin for what the Holy Spirit sees, since it is this the world of sin denies. And therefore those who look on sin are seeing the denial of the real world. Yet the last question adds the wish for CONSTANCY in your desire to see the real world, so the desire becomes the ONLY one you have. By answering the final question "yes," you add sincerity to the decisions you have already made to all the rest. For only then have you renounced the option to change your mind again. When it is this you do NOT want, the rest ARE wholly answered.

Why do you think you are unsure the others HAVE been answered? Could it be necessary they be asked so often, if they had? Until the last decision has been made, the answer is both "yes" and "no." For you have answered "yes" without perceiving that "yes" MUST mean "not no. No-one decides against his happiness, but he may do so if he does not see he does it. And if he sees his happiness as ever changing, now this, now that, and now an elusive shadow attached to nothing, he DOES decide against it.

Elusive happiness, or happiness in changing form that shifts with time and place, is an illusion which has no meaning. Happiness MUST be constant, because it is attained by giving up the wish for the INconstant. Joy cannot be perceived EXCEPT through constant vision. And constant vision can be given only those who WISH for constancy. The power of the Son of God's desire remains the proof that he is wrong who sees himself as helpless. Desire what you will, and you WILL look on it and think it real. No thought but has the power to release or kill. And none can leave the thinker's mind, or leave him unaffected.

## The Inner Shift

Are thoughts, then, dangerous? To bodies, YES! The thoughts that seem to kill are those which teach the thinker that he CAN be killed. And so he dies BECAUSE of what he learned. He goes from life to death, the final proof he valued the inconstant more than constancy. Surely he THOUGHT he wanted happiness. Yet he did not

desire it BECAUSE it was the truth, and therefore MUST be constant.

The constancy of joy is a condition quite alien to your understanding. Yet if you could even imagine what it must be, you would desire it, although you understand it not.

The constancy of happiness has no exceptions; no change of any kind. It is unshakable as is the love of God for his creation. Sure in its vision as its Creator is in what he knows, it looks on everything and sees it is the same. It sees not the ephemeral, for it desires that everything be like itself, and sees it so. Nothing has power to confound its constancy because its own desire cannot be shaken. It comes as surely unto those who see the final question is necessary to the rest, as peace must come to those who choose to heal and not to judge.

Reason will tell you that you CANNOT ask for happiness inconstantly. For if what you desire you receive, and happiness is constant, then you need ask for it but ONCE to have it ALWAYS. And if you do not have it always, being what it is, you did not ask for it. For no-one fails to ask for his desire of something he believes holds out some promise of the power of giving it. He may be wrong in what he asks, where, and of what. Yet he WILL ask because desire is a request, an asking for, and made by one whom God himself will never fail to answer. God has already given him all that he REALLY wants. Yet what he is uncertain of, God CANNOT give. For he does not desire it

while he remains uncertain, and God's giving must be incomplete unless it is received.

You who complete God's will and are his happiness, whose will is powerful as his, a power that is not lost in your illusions, think carefully why it should be you have not yet decided how you would answer the final question. Your answer to the others has made it possible to help you be but partially insane. And yet it is the final one that really asks if you are willing to be WHOLLY sane.

What is the holy instant but God's appeal to you to recognize what he has given you? Here is the great appeal to reason, the awareness of what is always there to see, the happiness that could be always yours. Here is the constant peace you could experience forever. Here is what denial has denied REVEALED to you. For here the final question is ALREADY answered, and what you ask for given. Here is the future NOW, for time is powerless because of your desire for what will never change. For you have asked that nothing stand between the holiness of your relationship and your AWARENESS of its holiness.

