

**CLASS: TEN WEEK – DECODING AND LIVING ACIM
WEEK SIX - GENERAL HANDOUT WEEK # 6 HANDOUT # 1**

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Opening prayer: from ACIM T.2.5.18

“ I am here only to be truly helpful. I am here to represent Him Who sent me. I do not have to worry about what to say or what to do, because He Who sent me will direct me. I am content to be wherever He wishes, knowing He goes there with me. I will be healed as I let Him teach me to heal. And so it is.

Review of terms: Ego and Holy Spirit's thought systems – the authority problem

Review & discuss Lesson # 21-25 & Summary Lesson # 55

See Week # 5 Handout # 5

Like other common words utilized by the ACIM, ACIM defines “sin,” “guilt,” “fear,” “the world” and “the body” differently from how the general public defines them. Sin, guilt and fear are the cornerstones of the ego's thought system. Both the world and the body are symbolic tools that bar false witness for the egoic thought system. Both are weapons used to attack the truth of Oneness. Our imagined world of perception symbolizes our separation from our Source. The body symbolically demonstrates that the Sonship has been fragmented into individualized, unequal, separate autonomous parts. To the ego, both the world and the body prove that the separation is real.

What is SIN?

SIN is defined by Webster as the commitment of an offense or fault of any kind. Sin usually is associated with the breaking of some religious or moral principle. As such, it is something that is worthy of punishment.

ACIM defines **SIN** as lack of love. **Sin** is an example of the “belief in scarcity” that arose due to our acceptance of the belief that we could be separate from God. **(T-1.IV.3)**

Sin is insanity. Sin utilizes illusions to take the place of truth. Sin is the home of the world of perception. It is this imagined world of provisional reality that is utilized by the ego to bear false witness to the truth of what you really are, which is a Oneness with God.

Sin is the erroneous idea that we could and did attack the Will of God. This belief that we have attacked God leads us to feel **guilty** for our actions. This in turn leads us to fear the retribution of God. Our guilt is the proof that we are “sinners.” **Fear** is the emotion, which follows from our belief in sin and guilt. This “unholy trinity” of sin, guilt and fear, ultimately leads to our desire to make an illusionary world of provisional reality where we can “hide” from the “wrath of God.” It is in this world of perception that we can project and, thus, get rid of our sin, guilt and fear. With the tool of projection, we attempt to redirect or transfer this guilt onto another person or thing. Sin, guilt and fear always arrive as a threesome. According to ACIM, there are only two emotions, love and fear. This is why the Course refers to sin as being the lack of love. Sin gave the “ body eyes,” so that perception could replace knowledge, and thus the dream of the separation could be maintained.

Since ACIM defines “**SIN**” as insanity, it is considered an error and not something that is punishable. Like all the dreams of the split-mind, the belief of sin as being an alleged attack on God is an illusion. It is not real. Sin is only thought to be “real” in the mind of the dreamer. In the mind of God, the Sonship remains perfect, whole and complete. God always loves His Son unconditionally, as a Oneness.

This lack of any wrong doing by ourselves within the Mind of God differs radically from our traditional Webster’s approach to sin as a punishable offense. It is this knowing that nothing can change God’s creation, the Sonship, which makes “sin” impossible. If “sin” is not found in the Mind of God, sin only “exists” in our dream world of provisional reality. Because love is all there is, sin in the sight of the Holy Spirit does not exist and is only a mistake that needs to be corrected. Within the Holy Spirit’s thought system, error only requires correction, not punishment. The thought system of the Holy Spirit calls for us to gently reawaken from our nightmarish dream of separation. The “dream world of sin” is like the example of a person who dreams he killed someone. Once he awakens from his dream, no judge or jury would convict him since no crime was committed in the “real world.”

From ACIM Workbook Part II # 4- What is Sin? 1 A madman's dreams are frightening, and sin appears indeed to terrify. 2 And yet what sin perceives is but a childish game. 3 The Son of God may play he has become a body, prey to evil and to guilt, with but a little life that ends in death. 4 But all the while his Father shines on him, and loves him with an everlasting Love, which his pretenses cannot change at all.

What is the WORLD?

ACIM defines the **world** as false perception. The **world** is an illusionary place in which the Son of God can pretend to not know the truth about Himself. The world was born out of the erroneous belief that the separation was real. It was our belief in sin, which led the son into the dream world of perception. In this world of illusion, a “sinner” attempts to transfer his sin, guilt and fear upon another by the use of projection. As such, the world of perception was made as an attack on God. The world is a symbol for fear. Since ideas never leave their source, the projection of our sin and guilt is reflected back upon us. Sin, guilt and fear now become our imagined world of provisional reality. Fear is the absence of love. Since God is Love, our dream world of provisional reality was meant to be a place where God could not enter. We, not God, made this world to keep God’s Love out. This world we made is based on individual perception, not knowledge. In this world, the ego utilizes the tool of projection to make false witnesses, which “proves” that we have a separate existence apart from the Mind of God.

Although this dream world does not exist in the Mind of God, the Holy Spirit is aware of our dreams. By requesting the guidance of the Holy Spirit, this world of perception can be utilized as a learning device to reawaken us from this dream. Forgiveness is the tool, which will lead us back to the truth of what we are. With the return of truth this dream world will disappear and we will reclaim our rightful place within the Mind of God.

What is the BODY?

The **body**, like the world, is an illusion. The **body** was designed by the ego to bear false witness to the belief that the separation is real and that we are indeed an individual and not a Oneness with God, Our Creator. To the ego, the body is a symbol for fear and separation.

According to the ego's belief system, we are the body. To the ego, we are not spirit or mind. Our belief that we are a body aids in our descent into mindlessness. When we see ourselves as a body, we become victims of "an outside world" and lose our ability to remember that we are the source or the cause of all that we perceive. Rather than the mind, the body now appears to be largely independent and self motivated. We have forgotten that our mind is the power source that controls the body. The body merely responds to the mind's commands. If the mind uses the body as an instrument for attack, the body will physically reflect this "sickness" of the mind in its world of provisional reality. Only bodies can attack and be attacked. If the mind accepts the guidance of the Holy Spirit's thought system, the body can become a tool of communication with others. The body can be used as an instrument to teach forgiveness to the split-minded Sonship. As is everything in the world of perception, the body can be utilized by the Holy Spirit to reawaken the sleeping mind to the truth. The body acts as a neutral communication device for that purpose. What our mind desires to experience determines whether the body will be used as a communication device that helps heal the Sonship. If the thought system of the ego is followed, the body will be used as an instrument of attack that helps the ego "prove" the separation is real. The goal of the Holy Spirit is to reawaken our mind's latent ability to act as the decision-maker. Only when we recover the ability to act as the decision-maker, can the mind choose again. By choosing for the truth that we are a Oneness with God, we will return to knowledge. When we choose exclusively for the truth, the body and the rest of our imagined world will disappear into the nothingness from which it arose.

From ACIM Workbook Part II # 5 – What Is the Body? 1 The body is a fence the Son of God imagines he has built, to separate parts of his Self from other parts. 2 It is within this fence he thinks he lives, to die as it decays and crumbles. 3 For within this fence he thinks that he is safe from love. 4 Identifying with his safety, he regards himself as what his safety is. 5 How else could he be certain he remains within the body, keeping love outside?

For students of ACIM, it is critical for us to realize that we are the source or cause of all the above five items. Sin, guilt, fear, the world and your body are all the result or effect of your belief in separation. The egoic tool of projection is used to "prove" that our beliefs of sin, guilt and fear are real. Projection makes our perception. Our perceptions are colored by these beliefs and our physical senses are designed to confirm our beliefs. Separation is based on our desire to be special and to be an individual. Specialness demands inequality and separate ego autonomy. The price we pay for our "need" to be special is our happiness. We have chosen to prefer to pretend we are right rather than to be happy. We have "gained" the belief that we are a limited ego-body at the price of our happiness. Happiness was, is and always will be our divine birthright. We cannot reclaim our divine inheritance by following the egoic thought system that birthed and now rests upon fear. Forgiveness is the path to escape from the fear-based thought system of the ego. Only by asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit will we be able to reclaim our ability to choose again. Forgiveness is the tool that reawakens the Christ Vision in each of us. With this Vision, we remember what we really are. We are a shared Oneness in the Mind of God.

ACIM **Workbook Lesson # 184** talks about separation, naming of parts, space, time, and the making of our dream world. This lesson should be studied in depth.

Homework: Review handouts.

Complete the next five Lessons # 26-30 & the Summary Lesson # 55 Study & review Week # 6 Handout # 4

Complete the exercise on the belief system utilizing both the ego's and the Holy Spirit's thought system. We will discuss this exercise next week.

Group meditation: Oneness and Happiness or Ending prayer:

Father, I believed I had lost my divine birthright. Now, I realize I was only "living" in my own self-created nightmare of illusion. I reawaken now to reclaim my divine birthright. Thank you for preserving what I feared I had lost. I forgive my brother and myself and remember all that you have given me. Your unconditional Love is all there is. I love myself unconditionally. Your Will is only that Your Child be happy. I now freely embrace Your Will as my own will. I come home to You, Father. Your prodigal son has return to his source. I join in the Oneness that is You. And so it is.

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