

## ACIM chapter 17

### Chapter 17.

#### FORGIVENESS AND THE HOLY RELATIONSHIP

##### I. Bringing Fantasy to Truth

###### Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM

**T-17.I.1.** The betrayal of the Son of God lies only in illusions, and all his "sins" are but his own imagining. 2 His reality is forever sinless. 3 He need not be forgiven but awakened. 4 In his dreams he has betrayed himself, his brothers and his God. 5 Yet what is done in dreams has not been really done. 6 It is impossible to convince the dreamer that this is so, for dreams are what they are <because> of their illusion of reality. 7 Only in waking is the full release from them, for only then does it become perfectly apparent that they had no effect upon reality at all, and did not change it. 8 Fantasies change reality. 9 That is their purpose. 10 They cannot do so in reality, but they <can> do so in the mind that would have reality be different.

###### Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights

**T-17.I.1.** The betrayal of the Son of God lies only in illusions, and all his "sins" are but **the Son of God's** own imagining. 2 **The Son of God's** reality is forever sinless. 3 **God's Son** need not be forgiven but awakened. 4 In **the Son of God's** dreams **the Son of God** has betrayed himself, his brothers and his God. 5 Yet what is done in dreams has not been really done. 6 It is impossible to convince the dreamer that **what is done in dreams has not been really done in reality**, for dreams are what **dreams** are <because> of **the dream's** illusion of reality. 7 Only in **the dreamer's** waking is the full release from **dreams**, for only then does it become perfectly apparent **to the dreamer** that **dreams** had no effect upon reality at all, and **the dreamer's dreams** did not change **reality**. 8 Fantasies change reality **temporarily within the sleeping mind of the dreamer**. 9 That is **the** purpose **of fantasy**. 10 **Fantasy** cannot do so in reality, but **fantasy** <can> do so in the **sleeping** mind that would have reality be different

###### Commentary on above ACIM paragraph

**Note #1:** Dreams have no effect on the reality of truth. Yet, to the dreamer during the sleeping state, the dream appears to be true. As long as the dreamer believes that the dream is his current experience, it will appear real to him. Within the dream itself, illusions are as strong in their affect on the dreamer's mind as what would normally be viewed as the truth. Once fully awakened, the dreamer realizes that the dream was a fantasy and, therefore, had no affect on the truth. Yet, while he was dreaming, the dream did appear to be his reality. During this dreaming state, the dream becomes the dreamer's provisional reality. All that appears within the dreamer's mind is not real to anyone else. We all agree when wide awake that any imagined "action" which took place during a dream should not be punished or rewarded since it has no impact or affect on the truth of reality.

### Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM

**T-17.I.2.** It is, then, only your wish to change reality that is fearful, because by your wish you think you have accomplished what you wish. 2 This strange position, in a sense, acknowledges your power. 3 Yet by distorting it and devoting it to "evil," it also makes it unreal. 4 You cannot be faithful to two masters who ask conflicting things of you. 5 What you use in fantasy you deny to truth. 6 Yet what you give to truth to use for you is safe from fantasy.

### Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights

**T-17.I.2.** It is, then, only your wish to change reality that is fearful, because by your wish you think you have accomplished what you wish, **which was to change your reality**. 2 This strange position, **which is to change the appearance of reality within your own mind**, in a sense, acknowledges your power **to be the cause and source of your own experience**. 3 Yet by distorting **your power to be the cause and source of your own experience** and devoting **this power to be the cause and source of your experience** to "evil," it also makes **your perceived experience** unreal. 4 You cannot be faithful to two masters who ask conflicting things of you. **These two "master" are the thought system of the ego and the Holy Spirit's**. 5 What you use in fantasy you deny to truth. 6 Yet what you give to truth to use for you is safe from fantasy. **The ego is the protector of fantasy and the Holy Spirit's thought system is the defender of truth**

### Commentary on above ACIM paragraph

**Note # 2:** God's Will is only that His Son should be happy. What causes us to be fearful is our belief that we have changed God's Will. Therefore, by our past actions, we believe that we have or will lose our happiness because we have tampered with God's reality. We have gotten caught up in the belief that we could oppose God's Will. We believe that our action actually changes the Mind of God. This is impossible since God's Will is changeless. The "problem" with the dream of separation was not our wanting to watch or play in the dream game of separation. Rather the problem occurred when we forgot that we were making up the dream. When we forgot we were the dreamer, we started to believe that our dream was true. We forgot to laugh and took the dream seriously. Fear was birthed within the dreamer's mind.

ACIM states that our mind has the power to create or project its own internal movies. These movies appear to be real within the dreamer's mind. The world of perception, time and space act as the movie screen for our mind's thoughts and desires. Yet, when we realize that our thoughts are projected into an illusionary world, we realize that the dream can have no impact on the reality of our real world called Heaven. These dreams or movies do affect the dreamer or moviegoer. By watching the movie, the observer is either entertained, taught some lesson, or both. When this paragraph references "evil," evil is the false belief that the Sonship, which is an Effect of God, could somehow change God's Will. An effect has no power to change its cause. The ego is the protector and "movie projector" of false images and the belief in fantasy. The Holy Spirit's thought system is

the defender of truth

**Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM**

**T-17.I.3.** When you maintain that there must be an order of difficulty in miracles, all you mean is that there are some things you would withhold from truth. 2 You believe truth cannot deal with them only because you would keep them from truth. 3 Very simply, your lack of faith in the power that heals all pain arises from your wish to retain some aspects of reality for fantasy. 4 If you but realized what this must do to your appreciation of the whole! 5 What you reserve for yourself, you take away from Him Who would release you. 6 Unless you give it back, it is inevitable that your perspective on reality be warped and uncorrected.

**Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights**

**T-17.I.3.** When you maintain that there must be an order of difficulty in miracles, all you mean is that there are some things you would withhold from truth. 2 You believe truth cannot deal with **some things that you wish to withhold from truth** only because you would keep **some things** from truth. 3 Very simply, your lack of faith in the power that heals all pain (**the power of truth**) arises from your wish to retain some aspects of reality for fantasy. 4 If you but realized what this **desire to withhold some parts from truth** must do to your appreciation of the whole! 5 What you reserve for yourself **are your fantasies that are under the guidance of the ego's thought system. What you reserve for yourself**, you take away from **the Holy Spirit**, Who would release you **from these fantasies**. 6 Unless you give **all your fantasies** back **to the Holy Spirit**, it is inevitable that your perspective on reality **will** be warped and uncorrected

**Commentary on above ACIM paragraph**

**Note # 3:** Since only the Holy Spirit is aware of both the truth and your perceived dream, only the Holy Spirit has the knowledge to show you that the dream is not true. The Holy Spirit can only do this if you ask for His guidance. The Holy Spirit does not force you to listen to the truth against your free will. However, if you choose to give up only selective parts of your dream to the Holy Spirit for His reinterpretation, you will still remain trapped within the dream itself. You cannot pick and choose which part in the illusion you will keep and expect to awaken from your insanity. If you wish to awaken from the dream, all illusion must be given to the Holy Spirit. Until you give up all illusion, you will maintain the false idea that you could be something other than what you truly are. It is the things that we value that we refuse to give over to the Holy Spirit. People are willing to give up the illusion of pain and suffering but wish to maintain the illusion of pleasure and specialness. You cannot be “totally committed” some of the time. Truth is not a “sometimes thing”.

**Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM**

**T-17.I.4.** As long as you would have it so, so long will the illusion of an order of

difficulty in miracles remain with you. 2 For you have established this order in reality by giving some of it to one teacher, and some to another. 3 And so you learn to deal with part of the truth in one way, and in another way the other part. 4 To fragment truth is to destroy it by rendering it meaningless. 5 Orders of reality is a perspective without understanding; a frame of reference for reality to which it cannot really be compared at all.

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#### Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights

**T-17.I.4.** As long as you would have **some parts of fantasy withheld from truth**, so long will the illusion of an order of difficulty in miracles remain with you. 2 For you have established this order **of difficulty into your** reality by giving some of **your fantasies** to one teacher, **the ego**, and some **of your fantasies** to another **teacher, the Holy Spirit**. 3 And so you learn to deal with part of the truth in one way, and in another way the other part. 4 To fragment truth is to destroy **truth** by rendering **truth** meaningless. 5 Orders of reality is a perspective without understanding. **Orders of reality are** a frame of reference for reality to which **reality** cannot really be compared at all

#### Commentary on above ACIM paragraph

**Note # 4:** By trying to seek guidance from two different teachers, the ego and the Holy Spirit, we receive two different sets of answers to each question that we ask. Both responses are based on the teacher's own viewpoint of reality. The ego's response represents the false, while the Holy Spirit's represents the truth. By attempting to listen to two totally different teachers with opposite belief systems, our world becomes very unstable. Now, instead of just true and false, we have introduced the concept of conditional truth or the "sometimes". Sometimes something is true; sometimes it is false. Now, we have varying degrees of truth, which claim to represent reality. Rather than absolute truth, each person has his or her own version of the truth. This varies from person to person and, therefore, each individual develops their own viewpoint and perception, which in turn becomes their own provisional reality. Because we have changed truth from an absolute to a maybe, we have introduced the concept that reality is a "sometimes". Sometimes creates degrees of difficulty. Prior to the existence of "sometimes" there was only the true and the false. Now, change has an endless array of possibilities. Our dream world has now become very complex with the introduction of partial or half-truths. With orders of reality, the absoluteness of true or false also loses its reality in the shifting sands of "sometimes" and "maybes".

#### Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM

**T-17.I.5.** Think you that you can bring truth to fantasy, and learn what truth means from the perspective of illusions? 2 Truth *<has>* no meaning in illusion. 3 The frame of reference for its meaning must be itself. 4 When you try to bring truth to illusions, you are trying to make illusions real, and keep them by justifying your belief in them. p351 5 But to give illusions to truth is to enable truth to teach that the illusions are unreal, and

thus enable you to escape from them. 6 Reserve not one idea aside from truth, or you establish orders of reality that must imprison you. 7 There is no order in reality, because everything there is true.

#### Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights

**T-17.I.5.** Think you that you can bring truth to fantasy, and learn what truth means from the perspective of illusions? 2 Truth <has> no meaning in illusion. 3 The frame of reference for **truth's** meaning must be **truth**, itself. 4 When you try to bring truth to illusions, you are trying to make illusions real, and keep **illusions** by justifying your belief in **the illusions**. p351 5 But to give illusions to truth is to enable truth to teach that the illusions are unreal, and thus enable you to escape from **the illusions**. 6 Reserve not one idea aside from truth, or you establish orders of reality that must imprison you. 7 There is no order in reality, because everything there is true

#### Commentary on above ACIM paragraph

**Note # 5:** Reality is always true. There is only one choice we are asked to make. This choice is always between the true and the false. Reality is always true and fantasy is always false. "Something" does not vacillate between true and false. It is always only one or the other. We either know the truth, which is the real world of Heaven, or we appear to live in an illusionary fantasy of perception, which becomes our provisional reality. There is no in between.

#### Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM

**T-17.I.6.** Be willing, then, to give all you have held outside the truth to Him Who knows the truth, and in Whom all is brought to truth. 2 Salvation from separation would be complete, or will not be at all. 3 Be not concerned with anything except your willingness to have this be accomplished. 4 He will accomplish it; not you. 5 But forget not this: When you become disturbed and lose your peace of mind because another is attempting to solve his problems through fantasy, you are refusing to forgive yourself for just this same attempt. 6 And you are holding both of you away from truth and from salvation. 7 As you forgive him, you restore to truth what was denied by both of you. 8 And you will see forgiveness where you have given it.

#### Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights

**T-17.I.6.** Be willing, then, to give all you have held outside the truth to Him, **the Holy Spirit**, Who knows the truth, and in Whom all **fantasy** is brought to truth. 2 Salvation from separation would be complete, or **salvation from separation** will not be at all. 3 Be not concerned with anything except your willingness to have **salvation from separation** be accomplished. 4 **The Holy Spirit** will accomplish **salvation from separation**; not you. 5 But forget not this: When you become disturbed and lose your peace of mind because another is attempting to solve his problems through fantasy, you are refusing to forgive yourself for just this same attempt **to solve your problems**

through fantasy. 6 And you are holding both you **and your brother** away from truth and from salvation. 7 As you forgive **your brother**, you restore to truth what was denied by both you **and your brother**. 8 And you will see forgiveness where you have given **forgiveness**.

#### **Commentary on above ACIM paragraph**

**Note # 6:** When you become disturbed and lose your peace of mind because your brother is attempting to solve his problems through fantasy, you are judging another and are falling into the same egoic belief system in which he is suffering. Both of you are now seeing yourselves as separate and with some power and will outside the Will of God. Rather than judge your brother, you need to turn the moment over to the Holy Spirit. Only by giving this moment over to the Holy Spirit can you avoid the pitfalls of the ego's thought system. When we judge, we are saying that something is unacceptable to us and that we are separate from our brother. If we wish to change our brother, we are also saying that our egoic self has the power to change our brother. By myself (the ego, or little "s" self), I can do nothing. Yet, through me, God can do everything. We need to turn our egoic judgments over to the Holy Spirit and get out of God's way.

Again, under the laws of God, "To give is to receive." When we grant forgiveness to a brother, we grant forgiveness to ourselves.

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