**Special Relationships:
The Home of Guilt**

Excerpts from the Workshop held at the
*Foundation for A Course in Miracles*
Temecula CA

*Kenneth Wapnick, Ph.D.*

**Part I
Introduction**

I have a cute story about the title of this workshop, "Special Relationships: The Home of Guilt." For many years I would always refer to the Course as saying the special relationship is the home of guilt. Several years ago I got a call from a friend of ours who was going to give a workshop with that title, and she asked me where in the Course it was found. Well, I could not find it. Now this was before we had a concordance and an electronic search program. I went through every special relationship section and could not find it. I went through the versions that I had edited with Helen and I could not find it. I finally realized that it was not Jesus who said it; I was the one who said it. Regardless of who said it, it is a good phrase; and that is what we will be talking about today.

Let me start by reading a brief passage that is the inspiration for the kind of presentation I will be giving. It makes very clear how the special relationship is a defense. It is from Chapter 17 in the text, the section called "The Two Pictures":

**(T-17.IV.3:1-2) You have made very real relationships even in this world. Yet you do not recognize them because you have raised their substitutes to such predominance that, when truth calls to you, as it does constantly, you answer with a substitute.**

What Jesus is talking about here is the special relationship, which is the substitute for the real relationship or the holy relationship.

**(T-17.IV.3:3–4:3) Every special relationship you have made has, as its fundamental purpose, the aim of occupying your mind so completely that you will not hear the call of truth.**

**In a sense, the special relationship was the ego's answer to the creation of the Holy Spirit, Who was God's Answer to the separation. For although the ego did not understand what had been created, it was aware of threat. The whole defense system the ego evolved to protect the separation from the Holy Spirit was in response to the gift with which God blessed it, and by His blessing enabled it to be healed.**

The [**chart**](https://facim.org/online-learning-aids/excerpt-series/special-relationships/special-relationships-part-i/javascript%3Avoid%280%29) depicts how the special relationship is the ego's answer to the Holy Spirit, as these passages explain. That encapsulates very succinctly the whole defense process, but what I would like to do is flesh it out. We as a decision maker (represented on the [**chart**](https://facim.org/online-learning-aids/excerpt-series/special-relationships/special-relationships-part-i/javascript%3Avoid%280%29) by the black dot at the top center of the split mind) chose the ego instead of the Holy Spirit. We made that choice because we liked the idea of being on our own, being free with an individual identity that is separate and distinct from the Identity as God's one Son. We chose the ego instead of the Holy Spirit's Atonement principle because that Atonement principle would mean that the separation never happened, which would mean that this individual self that we cherish and worship is an illusion.

Once we made that choice, the ego became aware of threat. And as this passage briefly explains, the ego does not understand the Holy Spirit, love, or anything else that in any way, shape, or form has to do with God or truth. It does understand threat, however, the threat to its own existence. Yet, the threat to its existence is not the Holy Spirit. The threat is the Son of God choosing the ego, realizing he made a mistake, correcting that mistake, and choosing the Holy Spirit. Again, it is not the Holy Spirit that is a threat to the ego; it is our choosing the Holy Spirit. That is the key to unlocking all the secrets of *A Course in Miracles*. It is all about reminding us that we have a choice. The ego's fear is of the power of our mind to choose, because it is that power to which the ego owes its own existence; and it is that power (our belief in the ego) that could snuff it out.

So at this point the ego needs a defense against the mind. Again, it is really not so much a defense against the Holy Spirit, which the ego does not understand or recognize. It is a defense against our making a choice that withdraws our belief in the ego, because once we withdraw our belief in the ego it automatically means that we put our belief in the Holy Spirit. That is how the split mind works. It is one or the other. The ego does not understand what we will choose, but it does understand that we can choose against it; and when we choose against the ego, the ego must disappear, because it is upheld only by our belief in it. It has no reality or substance outside of our belief in it. When that belief is withdrawn, the ego disappears.

The defensive system the ego now needs and is about to develop is geared toward ensuring that we never change our minds. It is the mind, or more specifically, the decision-making part of our mind that is the enemy. Therefore, the first step in its defense is described in the workbook as a double shield of oblivion (W-pI.136.3-5). The first shield is guilt—part of the sin, guilt, and fear triad in the center of the box on the [**chart**](https://facim.org/online-learning-aids/excerpt-series/special-relationships/special-relationships-part-i/javascript%3Avoid%280%29)—because guilt says that the separation has happened, that it is a fact. But it is so terrible a fact, and so overwhelming an experience of self-hatred because of the sin against God and the destruction of His Love and Heaven that the ego says we deserve to be punished for this. That punishment will come in our mind because that is where we are, and it will be inflicted by no less an agent than God Himself, Who will somehow rise from the grave in which we put Him and come after us and destroy us. That is the origin of all of our fear.

It is because of this fear born out of our guilt that the second shield of defense occurs. On this tier the ego tells us that the only way we can be safe is to leave our mind, which psychologically is known as *projection*. We project the thought system that is within the mind, the separated self that is now a guilty and separated self. We project that from the mind and make up a world and a body in which we can hide.

These are the two shields or levels of defense that the ego uses to keep from us the awareness that we have a mind that can choose. That is always the bottom line in the ego's system. The first level is guilt, because guilt says that we have sinned, that we have indeed separated, which by its very presence in our mind as a thought says that the thought of the Atonement must be a lie. The thought of the Atonement says there is no sin, therefore there is no guilt, because there was no separation—nothing happened. Thus, the thought of guilt becomes the first defense against the thought of the Atonement because they both cannot be true; they are mutually exclusive. Now they both can coexist in our minds through the dynamic of *dissociation*, which is that we can keep two separate thoughts split off, but one is not aware of the other.

The thought of the Atonement still remains in our mind, but it is now buried by this veil of guilt. Guilt says the separation has happened, which means the Atonement principle—the separation did not happen—cannot be true. That is the first step in the ego's two-step defensive process. The next step, once again, is that the ego drives us from our mind. Literally and figuratively we become insane. The guilt is no longer experienced in our mind; it is now experienced in the world or in our body. Of course what we then do, because this is inherent in the second level of defense, is say the guilt is not in me; it is in someone else. It is at that moment that the special relationship is born. The first part of this class will be about how guilt accomplishes that.

Now, the guilt is no longer in me; it is in this other person. That is why the world of specifics was made. If I am going to get rid of my guilt, there has to be someone to whom I could give it, someone onto whom I could project it. Thus, I must make up a world in which there are a multitude of separate bodies, seemingly outside me onto whom I can put this guilt. That is the nature and the purpose of the special relationship. When we speak of the special relationship as "the home of guilt," it is because that is where guilt finds its final resting place. That is where it is secure. When we feel at home, whether it is an actual place that we call our home, a relationship, a concept, wherever it is, we are expressing the idea that we are comfortable there, that we feel secure. Well, guilt is very secure and comfortable in the special relationship; it is very well taken care of there.

The special relationship, actually, is the ego's home away from home, because the true home of guilt is in our minds. Moreover, one of the nasty things about projection is that ultimately it does not work, because the purpose of all projection is to take the guilt that we have made real in our mind, as a defense against the Love of God, and then put it outside us in the magical hope that by giving it away putting it in others and attacking them for it, we will be free of it. That is the whole purpose: that I believe I can get rid of guilt and be at peace by finding the bad guy outside me.

We will see later how this basically comes in two forms, what the Course refers to as the special hate and the special love relationship. Now, the special love relationship is clearly a misnomer because there is no love there at all. The special love relationship is a thin veil over what it really is, which is special hate, but they appear to be different. In our world there appear to be people we judge to be our friends, and people we judge to be our enemies. Governments do this because people do it. Yet in truth, every relationship in this world is forged out of hate, because its purpose is to be this home for the guilt that we do not want to accept within ourselves.

The sad fact is that projection does not work, because the guilt that I think I am getting rid of simply stays put in my mind. It does not go anywhere. And being in my mind, it continually regenerates, and continually forces me to project. What makes it even stronger is that the more I project my guilt onto you, the guiltier I become, because on some level I am aware that I am attacking you on false pretenses. On some level I am aware that you are not the one who is responsible for my lack of peace, for my not being happy. And so the more that I project my guilt onto you, which is what attack is, the guiltier I feel; and then this sets into motion the whole guilt-attack cycle. This is what makes this world go around; it is certainly not love. The more guilty I feel, the more I need to get rid of the guilt through attack. The more that I attack, the more guilty I feel, and we just go around and around and around. The special relationship thus is the home away from home. The true home of guilt is in our mind, but then we seek to displace it onto a body, a relationship. That, then, becomes our home away from home.

The picture I have just given you of this two-tier defense can be summarized in a statement that is also not in the Course. I made this one up, too, but it is clear where it comes from: that guilt is blind and it is also blinding. It is blind because it does not know about the Holy Spirit or love. It is also blinding because guilt sees to it that we will not know about love. That is the first part of the blinding aspect of guilt. The second part is what makes it such a powerful and insidious defense and such a successful one: guilt blinds us to itself. Guilt not only blinds us to the Atonement principle in our mind, but it also blinds us to its presence in our mind. What guilt does is drive us outside our mind into the arms of the special relationship, and once we are in the arms of specialness, we do not have a clue, a memory, or anything that would even faintly hint to us that the guilt is really our own. It is not our own, so we think, because of this personal self in this body, psyche, or personality. Guilt is blind, once again, because it has no awareness of love or the Holy Spirit. It is also blinding because it keeps that love as well as guilt itself from our awareness in our mind.

**Part II
Introduction (cont.)**

One of the clearest statements in the Course about how guilt keeps love as well as itself from our awareness appears in the section "The Two Worlds" near the end of Chapter 18. This is a difficult passage to understand because of the use of pronouns, so where the word it appears, I will supply the noun referred to, which almost always is guilt.

**(T-18.IX.4:1) The circle of fear lies just below the level the body sees …**

The circle of fear is in the mind. It is ultimately the fear of what God will do to us out of vengeance for what we believe we did to Him. Of course it is very important to keep in mind that guilt is totally made up. There is no guilt—it is totally made up as part of the ego's strategy. It is a defensive ploy to have us become afraid of the mind so that we will eventually leave the mind through projection. The decision-making part of our mind is thoroughly unknown to us. If we are not aware that we have a mind, there is no way we can exercise the dynamic of choosing, because it is only the mind that can choose. Any choice that we seem to make here is simply the shadow of a decision that the mind makes. These next paragraphs will discuss that.

The whole purpose of the ego's strategy, once again, is to have us exist in a state of mindlessness. That is what it means to be in the world and in the body. We seem to be governed by our brains, our genetic inheritance, the influence of other bodies upon us, etc. All of that is simply a subterfuge, a defense against the real fact, the real truth, that everything we do comes from a decision made in our mind. But we are not aware that we have a mind, and therefore we have no way of exercising a meaningful choice or changing anything. It is only by going back to the mind—which is what the miracle does, and why this is called A Course in Miracles—that there is any hope of effecting meaningful change. What helps us choose a miracle, ultimately, is understanding why it is even necessary. That is why Jesus spends so much time in the Course talking about the dynamics of the ego. He has to lay out for us the dynamics of the thought system of the ego—specifically that of guilt, projection, and the special relationship—as a way of helping us understand why our personal world is such a mess, let alone the world at large. This helps us understand why people do the unconscionably cruel and vicious things they do, both in the international as well as personal arena.

**(T-18.IX.4:1) The circle of fear** [the mind] **lies just below the level the body sees, and seems to be the whole foundation on which the world is based.**

Jesus uses the word "seems" here because the world is an illusion. Thus, the world does not really exist, because "the circle of fear" is the foundation for the world.

**(T-18.IX.4:2) Here** [in the circle of fear, which is the mind's sin, guilt, and fear cycle, the "unholy trinity"] **are all the illusions, all the twisted thoughts, all the insane attacks, the fury, the vengeance and betrayal that were made to keep the guilt in place, so that the world could rise from it** [guilt] **and keep it** [guilt] **hidden.**

The sin-guilt-fear constellation is all made up by the ego. It is the ego's first level of defense. That is where all the illusions, all the "twisted thoughts" of separation, sin, and all the ideas of God seeking vengeance on us because of our betrayal of Him are found. From that the world arises. The world arises from the guilt to keep the guilt hidden. On the **chart** there is a solid black line just above the box of the world; that line is labeled "the veil of forgetfulness or denial." Once the projection occurs—and projection occurs unconsciously—we have no awareness that we have done it. All that we are aware of is what we have projected to: namely, the world and the body, with no memory of what we have projected from. That is how the split mind works.

Just as the law of gravity works—you hold something, drop it, and it will fall—these same laws are as immutable within the world of illusion, the world we have made. That guilt is unconscious and repressed, because it is such an abominable, unacceptable, intolerable thought. We therefore project it out, with no awareness that we have done so; and in a sense, we open our eyes and find ourselves in this "brave new world" with absolutely no memory of how we got here (the "veil of forgetfulness" on the **chart**). Then one can understand the idea that the purpose of the world is to keep the guilt hidden.

**(T-18.IX.4:3) Its** [guilt's] **shadow rises to the surface, enough to hold its** [guilt's] **most external manifestations, in darkness …**

For the purposes of this workshop, we can think of those "external manifestations" as the special relationship. That concept can be broadened to include anything and everything in this world that we relate to, whether it is an object, a substance, or another person. It is all some aspect of specialness, some aspect of seeing salvation outside us, either through what we think of as love, in the sense that this person will give us what we need, or as a substance, thing, possession, or object that will give us what we need. We can also see it as salvation in the sense that I finally found who the enemy is: you! And when I can prove that you are guilty, I must be guiltless. Since it is one or the other, if you are guilty, then I am guiltless, because within the ego's system we cannot be the same. If I am guilty then it means you are guiltless. Therefore, if I can prove that you are guilty, I am off the hook.

The real germ of all special love relationships—and germ is the right word to use—is the secret wish, the secret plot that this special love object, this person that we revere, worship, love, and cherish will step over the "line in the sand" that we have drawn. George Bush, Sr., was not the first president or the first person to draw a line in the sand. We all do this. Right from the beginning we have drawn lines in the sand, not daring the other person to cross over, but pleading with the other person to cross over. We are just waiting, because once that person crosses over, the love quickly turns to what it always was, which is hate.

Thus, all special love is simply a carefully laid trap. And the ego is very, very patient. I do not care if I have to wait ten minutes, ten hours, ten days, ten years, or ten decades, I will wait because I know at some point you will betray me. You will forget my birthday or you will not give me that warm loving "Good morning" that I always like. Or you will burn my toast or something else. It does not matter whether it is trivial or something of magnitude; you will cross over the line and now I've got you. That is really what the "external manifestations" refer to.

**(T-18.IX.4:3) Its** [guilt's] **shadow rises to the surface, enough to hold its** [guilt's] **most external manifestations in darkness, and to bring despair and loneliness to it** [which is our experience in the world] **and keep it** [the world] **joyless.** [And even more to the point, keep our special relationships joyless]

This is the reason nothing in this world gives us permanent joy. Certainly, things give us temporary joy—that is when specialness works. In an earlier section, that is what Jesus refers to as "the triumph" (T-16.V.5:5; 10:1) I get what I want. I get what I needed from you. I have seduced you, manipulated you, contrived to get you to give me the love, affection, attention, praise, money, possessions—whatever I wanted from you. When I get it, there is that momentary thrill of exultation, exhilaration, of triumph. But obviously it is short-lived, because on some level I know within my own mind that what I have gotten from you I have stolen. Therefore you are going to do back to me exactly what I believe I did to you. I might have what I need from you today, but who knows if I will get it from you tomorrow? So I have to keep doing this same thing over and over again.

**Part III
Introduction (cont.)**

**(T-18.IX.4:4) Yet its** [guilt's] **intensity is veiled by its** [guilt's] **heavy coverings** [the body, and then the special relationships between bodies], **and** [guilt is] **kept apart from** [the body] **what was made to keep it**[the guilt] **hidden.**

This means that the guilt in our mind is forever kept separate from the body, in which the guilt is now expressed. Let me read that again because this is a very important sentence. "Yet its [guilt's] intensity…": guilt is a pretty intense thought. The bottom line of guilt is that I destroyed God; I usurped God's role; I stole God's power; I crucified His Son; I shattered the love and the unity of Heaven. I did that. Well, that is a pretty horrendous thought. All of the trivial things we feel guilty about in our everyday life are simply thin shadowy fragments of this overwhelming sense of self-hatred that is guilt. That is the "intensity" Jesus is talking about, but no one is in touch with that. We are in touch with all of the little things we feel guilty about. Guilt's "intensity is veiled by its heavy coverings," the "heavy coverings" being all the trappings of the world, everything of the body. The guilt is "kept apart" because guilt is in the mind, kept apart and separate from the body that "was made to keep [the guilt] hidden."

What we are also seeing here is the dynamic purpose given to the world and the body, and even more specifically to the special relationship. There is a reason for it. There is a reason the world was made—it was not an accident. It was made to conceal the guilt in our mind, and of course the bottom line in all of this is that the guilt in our mind is nonexistent. That is why this whole thing ends up being very, very silly. As I have said many other times, the world is a maladaptive solution to a nonexistent problem, or in keeping with today's theme, we can say the special relationship is a maladaptive solution to the nonexistent problem of our guilt. It is not evil; it is not wicked; and it is not sinful. It is silly. We go to all this trouble to solve a problem, and we solve it very badly. Special relationships are terrible. They have their good moments, but they always end up badly. We did this very poorly anyway, but we did it to solve a problem that does not exist. That is not very smart. The plan works because we no longer have the means at our disposal to look at the fact that guilt is nonexistent. The guilt that we have made real—that is really not real—and then tried to solve by building this whole world is buried. It is buried in the mind that we are no longer aware even exists.

Whenever people speak about the mind these days, with very few exceptions they are really speaking about the brain. People speak about the brain as basically the external physical organ that we can study and see, and the mind somehow is the activity of the brain that cannot be studied as such and cannot be seen. All of this falls very nicely into the ego's strategy. We are still studying the body, without any awareness of where the body and the brain come from. One of the key themes in the Course, as most of you know, is purpose. We are always asked in this course to ask of everything, what is it for? It is understanding the purpose of something that will help us understand its meaning. Thus, the purpose of there being a world, a body, a brain, an individual life that we all think we have is nothing more or less than to conceal the guilt in our mind and keep us mindless.

What drives all this, what continually keeps this world going, is the fear of the guilt that is in our mind. And it is only through the miracle that we can get back to our mind and then finally look with the Holy Spirit or Jesus next to us (in our mind) and see that there is nothing there. But the resistance to doing this is enormous because our whole physical and psychological existence is predicated on the thought: Don't go within! That is why it is not enough for religious or spiritual teachings to tell us to meditate and go within. However well meaning we all are, there is that thought that says: Don't go there! It is not that meditation does not work in principle, but the reason it usually does not work, in terms of undoing this, is that there is that solid wall of resistance.

If we are not even aware that there is a solid wall of resistance, we will think that we are meditating, having these wonderful experiences of God's Love, Jesus' love, or the Buddha's love, or this one or that one. And that does not stop us from judging, attacking, killing, justifying murder, thievery, dishonesty, etc., because the guilt is still firmly in place. That is why we need something like this, a spiritual path like A Course in Miraclesthat comes with the psychological sophistication that helps us understand resistance, that helps us understand what guilt is, and above all, helps us understand how projection works. That is why I have been saying for a long, long time that without Freud we would not have A Course in Miracles. He was the one who first gave the world these concepts and the means of understanding them and how they work.

The next sentence:

**(T-18.IX.4:5) The body cannot see this,** [guilt] **for the body arose from this** [guilt] **for its** [guilt's] **protection, which depends on keeping it** [the guilt] **not seen.**

This is just another way of saying the very same thing. These are very pregnant sentences, filled with very important meaning. The body cannot see guilt. Why? Because guilt is in the mind. On the **chart**, below "the veil of forgetfulness" is "mindlessness." The world of mindlessness is the world of the body; "mindlessness" is in the left-hand column under "effect." The body was specifically made with sensory organs that only go out. They report to you only about the body, whether they go outside the body and report about other bodies and other forms in the world, or they go within your body. We also have a sensory apparatus that tells us what goes on in our body. That is what biofeedback is about. That is what pain receptors are about. Yet, whether we go without or within, we are still going without, because everything is outside the mind. That is why the body was made the way it was. It was craftily and purposefully constructed, not by God, but by the thought system of the ego that sought to protect itself by denying us the power of our mind.

The body cannot see guilt because it cannot see the mind. The body arose from guilt for the protection of guilt. What protects guilt is ensuring that we never choose against it. We will see later one of the enormous practical implications of these principles. The first step is understanding what the principle means, and then after that seeing how we live this out over and over again in our daily lives, as governments and nations, as well as individuals. The body arose from guilt through projection for the protection of guilt. If my body ensures that I remain forever in a state of mindlessness, I can never go back to a mind that I do not know exists in order to choose against the guilt, which means the original choice for the guilt remains intact.

As we are taught in the Course, linear time is an illusion. Therefore, this did not happen long ago; it is happening right now, over and over again. We are continually choosing guilt without being aware that we are choosing it. That is why early in the text Jesus says the ego thought system is "fool-proof" (T-5.VI.10:6). Within the system itself, which includes the world, there is no way out. He then says it is not "God-proof," because the way out is finally to gain access to that thought of the Atonement that is in our mind. We will get to that later on.

Again:

**(T-18.IX.4:5) The body cannot see this** [guilt], **for the body arose from this** [guilt] **for its protection** [the protection of guilt], **which depends on keeping it** [guilt] **not seen.**

Guilt is protected by its not being seen. As long as I cannot see guilt; as long as I am not aware of guilt, the protection of guilt is ensured. Again, this is a brilliantly contrived system, and you must end up realizing how this brilliance is manifested and effected in your everyday life. We are all part of this system.

**(T-18.IX.4:6-7) The body's eyes will never look on it** [guilt]. **Yet they will see what it** [guilt] **dictates.**

The body's eyes, ears, brain—everything of the body, which means the psyche too, will never look on guilt. Yet we will always look upon what guilt tells us we should look on. Guilt says always, "Look on me; always look on guilt. But do not see it in the mind; see it all around you." In the next chapter under the first obstacle to peace is a perfectly horrendous section called "The Attraction of Guilt" in which Jesus speaks about the messengers of fear (T-19.IV-A.12-13). That is the circle of fear just below the level the body sees. The messengers of fear are kept starved and ravenously hungry, like hungry dogs of fear, sent out to pounce upon any aspect of guilt or sin—there is that wonderful phrase, "their savage search for sin" (T-19.IV-A.12:7)—to find sin and guilt in everyone else, and then come back with gorges filled with the flesh and bone of their prey. It is a very powerful and graphically described section to depict the nastiness and the viciousness that we all partake in, seeking to find guilt in everyone and everything except ourselves.

Even when we may admit to guilt in ourselves in this body, there is still the accusing voice that says to whomever it is, usually our parents: "You made me this way. Yes, I may be a monster, but I was not born this way. You made me this way. And, indeed, if I were born this way, it was the genes you gave me." So it does not matter whether you are deprecating of yourself or of another person, guilt will always be what you want to see. That is what guilt dictates. Guilt says to us, look upon a world of separation, look upon a world of guilt and innocence, and see the guilt all around you, which means you retain your innocence. That is the world that we made.

**(T-18.IX.5:1) The body will remain guilt's messenger, and will act as it** [guilt] **directs as long as you believe that guilt is real.**

As long as we believe that guilt is real, we must fall in line with the ego's laws. These are sacrosanct laws. Once we make the decision for the ego, we are bound by the ego's laws. Once we make a decision to be a body, we are bound by the body's laws. And the only way that can be changed is to change our identification from the ego to the Holy Spirit. But once we believe guilt is real, we will deny it and repress it because of our fear of it; and then we will project it out and see the world that guilt dictates, in which there is evil, wickedness, sin and guilt, but not in ourselves. Once again, if we do find those aspects in ourselves, we will say someone made us that way, that it was not our fault, which means we are still innocent.

**(T-18.IX.5:2) For the reality of guilt is the illusion that seems to make it heavy and opaque** [which means, seems to make it real], **impenetrable, and a real foundation for the ego's thought system.**

In a sense, one could really say that guilt is the foundation stone or the cornerstone of the ego. It is real, and there is no getting around it. All we can do is magically hope that we can get rid of it. That is the source of all of our anger, arrogance, and judgments—the need to continually project the guilt to get it away from us, magically hoping it will rest in everyone else.

**(T-18.IX.5:3-4) Its thinness and transparency are not apparent until you see the light behind it. And then you see it as a fragile veil before the light.**

That only happens when we finally recognize that there is something very wrong with this picture that we have made of ourselves and of this world, and there must be another way. Then through the process of continually looking within, truly within, and realizing that what we are seeing outside is a projection or an outside picture of the inward condition of our guilt, which means that we have chosen the guilt—only then can we meaningfully begin the process of making another choice. We begin to understand that guilt is not a real entity, a real devil within us, or a real substance "heavy and opaque" that cannot be penetrated. Elsewhere Jesus speaks about sin as being the solid wall of granite (T-22.III.5:6). It is only when we begin looking at it that we begin to see that it does not have the power to blind us from the light of the Atonement that is shining in our mind. And what enables us to finally recognize that this is a "fragile veil" and not a solid piece of granite is looking at it.

**Part IV
Introduction (concluded)**

What keeps the guilt in place, what keeps the ego going and going, is our not looking at it. This is because right at the beginning the ego told us not to look because, to quote another line in the text, if you look within "your eyes will light on sin, and God will strike you blind" (T-21.IV.2:3), which is a euphemistic way of saying God will destroy you. The ego says not to look within, and so we do not. Remember, at this point in our story we have already banished the Holy Spirit, so we are not hearing His Voice. The only voice we hear is the ego, and since it is the only voice, we think it is God. It is the only authoritative voice; in fact it is the only voice that we hear—just as little children tend to believe everything their parents tell them because they are their parents and do not know anything else; and just as when we grow up, we are still little children in big boy and big girl bodies believing everything our president tells us. Recent history should show us that is not the case.

The need to believe in the authority is the same need we have to listen to the ego: The ego will keep me safe; the ego will help me keep my identity. That is why we chose the ego in the first place. We all want our security and our identity, whether it is identity as Jews, Christians, Muslims; as white or black; as Americans, Pakistanis, Afghans—it does not matter. We all want our identity to be kept intact. Of course, the external group that we identify with is just an expression, a projection, of this inner identity, and so we want the authority to tell us the truth; and even if we know the authority lies to us, we believe it anyway.

All this has its basis in what happened right at the beginning. But at the beginning there were no other voices, which is not quite true. There was another Voice, but we chose not to listen to that Voice, because that Voice of the Holy Spirit would rob us of our identity. It is so hard for many Americans to hear a voice critical of the United States because our nationalistic identity is nothing more than an expression in a larger form of our individual identity. I do not want to know that I am just part of one Son, the one Son of God. I want to know that I am an American, and that I am on the good side, or any other side—it does not matter. But since we are Americans, I use that as an example. That is where that nationalistic fervor comes from. It is the need to protect one's identity.

That is why right at the beginning we did not choose to hear the Voice of sanity, the Voice that said, "You do not have an individual identity; you are all one with God." That was not enough for us, so we banished that Voice, and from that moment on chose not to hear It. The only voice left was the voice that spoke of the reality of guilt. We never ever questioned it. That voice said guilt is real, but it will destroy you, so get out fast. And so we did. Remember, time is an illusion. There is that wonderful line in "The Little Hindrance" section that says, "Each day, and every minute in each day, and every instant that each minute holds, you but relive the single instant when the time of terror took the place of love" (T-26.V.13:1).

Every moment of our waking life we are simply re-enacting, choosing again, but it is always the same choice: the choice to make the ego real and true, and the Holy Spirit illusory and untrue. Once we make that choice, we are bound by it. Until we change our mind we are bound by it, which means we make guilt real, heavy, opaque, solid, and fearful. Then we have to run away from it and make up a world and hide in it. From that moment on, we do not have the opportunity of saying, "maybe there is something wrong with this," because there is no mind in our awareness. Nothing will ever change on the personal or the collective level until we go back and look within and say, "You know, there is a mind, and that mind made a mistake. It did not commit a sin; it made a mistake. And all the awful, awful things that bodies have done ever since then, were nothing more than fragmentary shadows of that original mistake. But it is a mistake, thank God, that I could change, now that I know I made it. And there is a mind, an instrument, within me that can effect meaningful change." Of course, that is the only purpose and the only role that Jesus or the Holy Spirit have for us—not as external figures, not as bodies, but as a living Thought and Presence of Love in our mind that says: "You can make another choice. There is a mind; that is where I exist; that is where you exist; and that is where the mistake was made. Therefore that is where the mistake can be undone." Then we begin to see that guilt is not God's gift to us. Guilt is not anything. Guilt is something we made up, and the Course helps us understand why we made it up.

Then we begin to look at our everyday life and realize that we are really addicted to guilt, and because of that we are addicted to hate, judgment, specialness, and one or the other. We begin to see how these abstract principles play out very specifically in our lives. We look around us—in the newspapers or at the news, and say, "My God, everyone does the same thing. We are all addicted to guilt. We are all addicted to that awful phenomenon of needing to be right rather than happy, and being right means guilt is alive and well and is not in me." That is what we are all dedicated to: proving that guilt is real and it is in "them." That is why there always has to be a "them." We live in a "we-they" world. There always has to be someone outside us who is the repository of this guilt. Thus, the home away from the home of guilt is in the special relationship—that person or group we choose to make the evil one. The sin is not in me, it is in them.

**"Guiltlessness and Invulnerability"**

Let us turn now to Chapter 13 in the text, and for the rest of this class we will be looking at this chapter. Chapter 13 is the first major place in A Course in Miracles where you find the discussion of guilt. There is a very important section in Chapter 5 called "The Ego's Use of Guilt" (T-5.V), which is helpful, but it is really in this chapter that we get the first detailed presentation of guilt. Also, it is the longest chapter in the text. We are going to start with Section I, "Guiltlessness and Invulnerability."

**(T-13.I.1:1) Earlier, I said that the Holy Spirit shares the goal of all good teachers, whose ultimate aim is to make themselves unnecessary by teaching their pupils all they know.**

This is a point that Jesus makes earlier of himself as well as the Holy Spirit, that the purpose of any teacher is not to have himself or herself be glorified and exalted and "gurufied," but to basically teach whatever he or she has to teach, and then no longer to be needed as the external teacher. The whole purpose of this course is to have all the students get in touch with their inner teacher. Any external teacher should be temporary, someone who simply points you in the direction of the Holy Spirit within, and may or may not help you overcome the various obstacles and interferences that are within you that would prevent you from beginning to get in touch with the Holy Spirit or with Jesus. That is the idea of a teacher.

**(T-13.I.1:2) The Holy Spirit wants only this, for sharing the Father's Love for His Son, He seeks to remove all guilt from his mind that he may remember his Father in peace.**

That is the purpose of any teacher. And so at times there may be external figures who then represent that function of the Holy Spirit. One specific form would be that of the psychotherapist, which is why there is a specific pamphlet that was dictated to Helen for psychotherapists. Obviously, this has nothing to do with profession or with form. This means that as we learn this course; as we begin to embrace the Atonement more than guilt, as we begin to embrace Jesus as our teacher rather than the ego, the very process by which we do this ensures that that presence of love will come through us. It is that presence of love coming through us that teaches there is a thought system in our mind beyond guilt.

**(T-13.I.1:3) Peace and guilt are antithetical …**

It is one or the other. You cannot have light and darkness coexist unless, as I mentioned earlier, you employ the dynamic of dissociation, which is what we all have done—this is what the split mind is. The split mind not only represents splitting off from Heaven, it also means splitting within itself. Just as God's Love simply loves and loves, constantly extending Itself, so does the separated or split mind do what it is. Its essence is not love; it is separation; so it just keeps separating and separating and separating, splitting and splitting and splitting. Its first split after it seems to have split from God is to split within itself. There is the wrong mind and the right mind. Now what enables both parts of the split mind to coexist is that we dissociate them. We split off the ego from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit then gets buried but is still present, although we are not aware of Him.

What happens is that we continually have to expend what Freud referred to as "psychic energy." We continually have to expend energy to keep the Holy Spirit down. To keep the Holy Spirit down, we first make guilt, and then we make the world, so it is like two tons. It is not one ton of steel to keep the Holy Spirit buried; there are now two tons: guilt and the world of guilt. But it requires tremendous energy. The Course says at different times that you have no idea how much energy and time you are wasting doing this (e.g., T-9.I.11). This is why you are always tired. That is in one sense why bodies have to sleep. We are always tired not because of what the body does—bodies do not get tired; bodies are nothing. Nothing does not get tired. The reason the body seems to get tired and we experience fatigue is that all the energy we are expending in our mind to keep God away requires a tremendous amount of work—it takes a lot of work to tell a lie.

To tell the truth is very easy: you just tell the truth. Once you tell a lie, as every president knows, you have to expend tremendous energy to cover it up. If you simply tell the truth right at the beginning, everything is over, it is finished, and nothing terrible happens. Terrible things happen because of the cover-up, as Nixon found, as Clinton found, as everyone finds. But that is why our whole life is a cover-up. It is all an attempt to maintain the lie. That requires tremendous ingenuity and effort. Again, just imagine what we have to do in our everyday lives if we are going to keep a lie going. Look what public figures have to do. It is incredible. Everyone has to do this. The bottom line is what we all did at the beginning. We had to invent the lie, and then cover it up with the world.

The big lie that we all have to work so hard at, and we unfortunately are all experts at, is pointing the accusing finger at people and saying, "You are the guilty one. You are the evildoer. You are the one who has to be brought to justice and punished." The reason it requires so much effort is that somewhere inside we know we are lying. Deep down we know we are the evildoer, the guilty party, the wicked sinner. This is because we are the ones who chose, and still choose, to deny God and destroy His Love. That is the guilt. We have to expend enormous effort to project it out and justify the projection. That is why we love war. We love justified wars. And of course every war is justified—it does not matter which side you are on. War makes it so easy to point a finger at an Adolf Hitler—he is the bad guy. That eases the burden of denying the lie and the cover-up. When you find an evil person, and everyone agrees this is the evil person, then your ego rests much easier. The whole world is like this.

Again, what we are doing is expending all this effort to maintain the dissociation, splitting off what we do not want, which is the Love of God, because in the Love of God this self does not exist anymore, and then maintaining the defense that the ego's thought system is the true one. As we have seen, to ensure that that thought system never gets changed, we make up a world. That is one of the concepts in the Course that is so, so difficult. There are people who fight against it intellectually, and would try standing the Course on its head, trying to prove that the Course does not say the world is an illusion.

As if the intellectual acceptance of this is not hard enough to accept, the experience of that illusion is much more difficult, because we could split off the intellect and say, "Sure, the world is an illusion; it was made as an attack on God; we are not even here," and then we could go about our business because we split it off. It is much more difficult to take that intellectual understanding and integrate it, because what that integration means is we could walk through our everyday world and not be affected by anything—not because we are good at denying, which is what most people do to get through something, but because we really know that this is not happening. And this is not just because a book tells us, but because we really know within ourselves that the peace and the Love of God that we feel within cannot be changed by anything that seems to happen outside. That is what Jesus means at the beginning of Lesson 155 when he says that when you do this right, you look like everyone else, but you smile more frequently and your forehead is serene—there is a peace and a gentleness about you because you know that nothing in this world has the power to take away the Love of God. But that takes a lot of hard work, especially with recent events, as well as all the events that happen in our everyday life.

**Part V
"Guiltlessness and Invulnerability"**

**(T-13.I.1:3) Peace and guilt are antithetical, and the Father can be remembered only in peace.**

Herein of course lies the problem. I do not want to remember the Father, because if I remember the Father I will remember His Son. And I will remember that His Son is totally at one with his Father, which means the separation never happened, which means I never happened. I do not like that. And if peace is the only way that I can remember God—as the later section says, "The memory of God comes to the quiet mind" (T-23.I.1:1)—then I sure as hell will not be peaceful and will not be quiet. That is what the Course refers to as the raucous shrieking of the ego (W-pI.49.4:3). I would much rather be in a perpetual state of conflict. That is why the word "battleground" is in the ego box on the [**chart**](https://facim.org/online-learning-aids/excerpt-series/special-relationships/special-relationships-part-v/javascript%3Avoid%280%29), as well as in the world box. We always live in a state of war. Why?—because we believe we are always at war within ourselves. We are always warring against this Atonement principle. Then as a defense against that war, we believe we are at war with God, because He "believes" He is at war with us. We project the whole thing out, and now we are born into this world and are at war with our own bodies because they always fail us. We always have to plan so that our body's needs will be taken care of. As helpless infants we cannot do this by ourselves, so we very quickly learn how to manipulate our parents or parental surrogates who will take care of us. These are the seeds of specialness that are obviously born in the mind originally.

Thus, we are always waging war, and the war is "how can I preserve this self?" Just as in an international war a country is trying to preserve its own identity and ideals as it sees them, we are always at war trying to preserve this bodily and psychological self. Then, as we begin to grow, we become conscious of why we were born. We were born so we could clearly win the war against all our enemies outside. What enables us to win the war? Not necessarily vanquishing the foe, but by being victimized. We win the war by being unfairly treated, because that will ensure that God will find the sinner, not in ourselves, but in all these terrible people who abused, abandoned, or rejected us; those who did not love us, who were insensitive to us, who were not there when we needed them, who invaded our space, who did this and that and the other thing. We relish, cherish, and adore our abuse. That is how we win the war. It is insane, very maladaptive, and most painful, but it works. Within the insanity of our perverse minds, it works. We actually believe God is watching all of this, even if we are atheists—it does not matter. We believe God is watching and that He will see our suffering and draw the conclusion we want Him to draw: How could this poor, poor suffering schlep be the sinner? This is not the one who destroyed Heaven—it is all these abusers, all these victimizers, etc. That is how we win the war. That is the purpose of all special relationships. We make the guilt real, preserve it in our mind, and then get rid of it by putting it onto someone else.

**(T-13.I.1:4) Love and guilt cannot coexist, and to accept one is to deny the other.**

It is one or the other, so that if I choose the Love of God, if I choose to say I am still a part of Him and the separation never happened, then this individual self will disappear. Obviously, then there is no guilt. Guilt comes from separation, but if I choose guilt, then I have to deny the love. That is the real secret, the secret guilt—that I am always denying the Love of God. I am always pushing the love of Jesus away. I am always pushing his message away. Why?—because if I accept it and I accept him, then I cannot accept this self.

**(T-13.I.1:5) Guilt hides Christ from your sight …**

What we are going to see here, and in everything else we will be discussing in this class, is some expression of the principle that guilt is blind and is blinding. Guilt does not know about the Love of God, and it does not know about Christ. It will also ensure that we will never know about it. And to ensure that we will never know about the Love of Christ, the ego sees to it that we will never know about guilt, because we cannot get from our experience in this world back to our real Self without going through the guilt. You do not go back to the light without retracing the steps through the darkness.

**(T-13.I.1:5) Guilt hides Christ from your sight, for it is the denial of the blamelessness of God's Son.**

"Blamelessness" is just another word for "sinlessness," which is another word for "guiltlessness." I do not want God's Son to be blameless; I want him to be a sinner. If he is sinless and guiltless and blameless, the separation never happened. So we always come back to the same idea, because it is always the same idea: the separation never happened; I never happened.

That is why we always cling to nationalism, and to our identification with certain groups—racial, political, social, religious, ethnic; it does not matter. We always cling to them because these become a symbol of who we are. It is very difficult to imagine a world without boundaries, without specific identities. The European Union is such a difficult concept because eventually people will understand that what the various nation states in Europe are going to have to do is give up their identity. First they have to give up their currency. That is very difficult. And eventually the idea would be to have all the borders go away. I do not think we will live to see that. The danger from the ego's point of view is that if I lose my cultural and my national identity, I will lose this self. This self is tied up with who I am as an American, as a white, as a black, as an Indian, as a Frenchman, as a Jew, as a Christian, as a Moslem, as a Catholic, as a Protestant. That is who we are. That is why we all cling to these, and why everyone is willing to go to war to protect it. Our going to war to protect our national sovereignty, racial purity, or religious identity, is nothing more—literally nothing more—than a fragmentary shadow of our original choice to go with war with God to protect this individual self. Remember once again, there is no linear time. In every moment we are simply re-enacting and choosing to re-experience that original moment when we chose terror instead of love, when we chose war instead of peace. Our decision to go to war with God and the Holy Spirit to maintain our individual purity and identity is the germ, the seed, from which all the wars come, both on the international scale and the personal scale. We are always striving to protect this self and the symbols of this self. Thus, we say to a neighbor, "Your tree is growing in my yard. Your roots are under my fence." Why does it arouse such emotion in us? Because our individual identity is being threatened by the symbols we have made to express that individual identity. That is why nothing will ever be solved, whether we are talking about a neighborly squabble or a world war. Nothing will ever be solved unless people go back to the original thought that gave rise to this. Remember, this world arose to keep the guilt hidden and protected. And it is the guilt that says I have sinned against God, I have made war against Him, but I do not want to be seen as the guilty one. I want someone else to pay the price.

**(T-13.I.2:1-3) In the strange world that you have made the Son of God has sinned. How could you see him, then? By making him invisible, the world of retribution rose in the black cloud of guilt that you accepted, and you hold it dear.**

Making the Son of God invisible is what we did when we chose the ego over the Holy Spirit right at the beginning, because the Holy Spirit is that memory of Who we are as God's true Son, as Christ and as spirit. "By making him invisible"—that is what sin and guilt do. "The world of retribution rose in the black cloud of guilt that you accepted, and you hold it dear." That is exactly what we saw at the end of Chapter 18 that we read at the beginning of this class [Part II in this series]. This is exactly the same idea, and this is five chapters earlier. The "world of retribution" is the world of punishment, the world of vengeance. Why do I have to make a world of retribution and punishment? Because the bad ones, the evildoers, have to be punished so that I am off the hook. It is always one or the other. There is love and there is guilt. Both cannot coexist. It is one or the other. If the guilt is in you then the innocence is in me, and then I will want you punished, which means I will take God's punishment into my own hands. I will become the symbol of God's wrath. That is what Christians have done for two thousand years. They become the agents of God's wrath and they punish people in His Name. We hold, we accept, and we cherish that black cloud of guilt.

**(T-13.I.2:4-5) For the blamelessness of Christ is the proof that the ego never was, and can never be. Without guilt the ego has no life, and God's Son is without guilt.**

Since many of you have read these lines very, very often, what do you think about when you read them? What Jesus is telling you is that you do not exist. That is what he is telling you. Your not wanting to hear it is the reason you do not realize that is what he is telling you. This entire world rose because of guilt. Well, we are all an integral part of this world. We are born into this world as bodies, an intrinsic part of what this world is. If there were no guilt there would be no world. This is a world of guilt.

The second paragraph in the Introduction to this chapter, which I did not read, is all about that. It is a very powerful statement. That is where Jesus says, "The world you see is a delusional system of those made mad by guilt. Look carefully at this world, and you will realize that this is so" (T-13.in.2:2-3). Without guilt there would not be a world, which means without guilt there would be no me. Well, Jesus is just telling me there is no guilt, which means there is no me as I identify myself—this psychological, physical self that has a name, a history, etc. That is why there is so much resistance to what this course says. That is why there is such a strong need to change what this course is saying.

We all want to bring the light of the Atonement into the dream of darkness, rather than bring the dream of darkness to the light of the Atonement, at which point the dream would disappear. We all want love and guilt to coexist side by side, and in the ego's world it does. But it is not God's Love; it is special love. That is why we make such incredible ideals about love—romantic love, parental love, national love, all kinds of love. We do it because this is all special love, and this is love that is the home of guilt. In this sense, love and guilt exist very happily side-by-side until, as Jesus explains in another passage, the hate breaks through the barricades and then we suddenly realize that the love was not what we thought—it was really hate all along (T-16.IV.4:10).

**Part VI
"Guiltlessness and Invulnerability" (cont.)**

Let us stay in Section I of Chapter 13, and move to paragraph 8. This paragraph is a nice succinct summary of what guilt accomplishes and why it is so important for the ego, and therefore why it is so important to us.

**(T-13.I.8:1) You are invulnerable because you are guiltless.**

This means that when you make guilt real and feel guilty you will feel vulnerable. Guilt says you have done something terrible in the past for which you have to be punished in the future. Then you will be afraid of the punishment that your guilt says is inevitable, and therefore you will feel vulnerable. That means you will expect punishment, and whether it is forthcoming or not, your ego will demand that you be punished. And so you will see punishment and retribution even when it is not there. That does not mean it may not be there, but you will see it even if it is not there, because your guilt will tell you that you deserve to be punished. If someone says something that is critical of you, for example, you will immediately take that as punishment. Even if the person—a parent, friend, boss, or anyone else—may be objectively correct, you will take that as punishment, whether it was meant like that or not, because your guilt demands that you be punished.

One thing about the ego thought system is that it is all of a piece, just as the Holy Spirit's thought system is all of a piece. If you believe one aspect of what is in that wrong-minded box of the ego (on the [**chart**](https://facim.org/online-learning-aids/excerpt-series/special-relationships/special-relationships-part-vi/javascript%3Avoid%280%29)), you must believe all of it, because it all hangs together. There is a logic that interconnects all of the pieces, and if you believe one aspect of that system, you must buy the whole package. So any thought that you have of the ego, any thought of separation, any thought of specialness, any thought of one or the other, automatically means that you feel guilty and deserve punishment.

On the other hand, if there is no guilt, it means that you are rejecting the whole of that thought system, which then means in that moment when you have chosen guiltlessness over guilt, there is no sin, no guilt, and no fear of punishment. That is why you will experience invulnerability, regardless of what may or may not happen to your body. This means the origin of all fear has nothing to do with the external. It has to do with that inner sense: I have been bad, and I deserve to be punished for it.

**(T-13.I.8:2-3) You can hold on to the past only through guilt. For guilt establishes that you will be punished for what you have done, and thus depends on one-dimensional time, proceeding from past to future.**

"One-dimensional time" is what we call linear time. It goes one way: there is a past, a present, and a future. Our whole world rests on that. The solidity or seeming solidity of our existence rests on the belief that there is linear time. The world was made to demonstrate that. We all have a past; we all have memories; we all have experiences of what we think of as the present; and we all have anticipations of the future based upon what has preceded it in the past. Our existence and this world would be unthinkable without linear or one-dimensional time. And what the Course helps us recognize is that one-dimensional time—past, present, and future—is nothing more or less than the projection of the thoughts in the mind of sin, guilt, and fear. Thus, taking the thought in the mind that we have sinned in the past, we experience the guilt right now over the horror of what we believe we have done, and we are afraid of the anticipated punishment in the future. When that whole constellation gets projected out into a world of form, making up a world of time and space, the sin becomes the past, the guilt becomes the present, and the fear becomes the future. That is what Jesus is speaking of now, and he is making a very clear parallel between feelings of guilt and sin and the fear of the future that are concomitants of that within the world of time.

Again, a major metaphysical premise of A Course in Miracles is that time is not only illusory, but it all seemed to have happened in one instant. In the "Little Hindrance" section that I quoted from earlier, Jesus speaks of the "tiny tick of time" (T-26.V.3:5), explaining that all of time, the whole world of time and space, occurred within that "tiny tick of time." He also explains that the whole world of the Correction, the Atonement, also occurred in that "tiny tick of time." It is as if in the instant the world seemed to have happened and rolled out like a long carpet—an image Jesus uses once in the Course (T-13.I.3:5)—in that same instant it was rolled back and undone. So everything has already happened, and in truth of course, nothing happened.

What keeps this whole masquerade and charade going is guilt, because the ego tells us that we are guilty because of what happened in the past, and we will be punished for it in the future. That is our world. That is the world of sin, guilt, and fear in our mind, now taking shape and form in a temporal world of past, present, and future.

**(T-13.I.8.4-6) No one who believes this can understand what "always" means, and therefore guilt must deprive you of the appreciation of eternity. You are immortal because you are eternal, and "always" must be now. Guilt, then, is a way of holding past and future in your mind to ensure the ego's continuity.**

This is another way of saying guilt is what ensures that the ego will continue and continue and continue. And we have seen exactly how that works. Guilt says you must leave your mind instantaneously, and we do, making up a world of time, making up a world of past, present, and future. All of this ensures that we will forever remain in a state of mindlessness, which means that we cannot change our mind and withdraw our belief in the ego.

**(T-13.I.8:7) For if what has been will be punished, the ego's continuity is guaranteed.**

That is why the book of the Western world, the Bible, begins with the story of Adam and Eve. Death comes into the world as punishment for Adam and Eve's sin. This is a myth, but as with all myths, it represents in form what is in the unconscious mind, what Jung referred to as the collective unconscious. We all have this thought of sin, guilt, and fear. Thus, we are punished in this world through death is because of our sin. Death is a reality. Everything of the body, whether animate or inanimate, will eventually deteriorate, decompose, and die. In human life it could be fifty, sixty, a hundred, or a hundred and ten years. In the "life" of a rock it may take millions of years. Everything on the level of form will change, decompose, and cease to exist. In the ego thought system that is the ultimate punishment for our sin—except what the ego then does is invent the idea of an afterlife. We need an afterlife since we all die, but the sinless people will go to an afterlife of heaven and the sinful people will go to an afterlife of hell. That is why there are the doctrines of heaven and hell.

As Jesus explains in the opening to Chapter 27, whenever we choose to suffer, we are pointing an accusing finger at someone saying, "Behold me, brother, at your hand I die" (T-27.I.4:6). But we say that not so much that you will feel guilty, although that we obviously like, but we say it so that God will hear it. In that same section, Jesus speaks about how our brother's sins then "are writ in Heaven" (T-27.I.3:2). God knows that you have sinned, and He knows because of what you have done to me. Now it becomes that you have sinned against me in the past, sin is real, I am suffering in the present, but you are going to get yours in the future. I may die, but God will take me back with Him to Heaven. You are going to go with Him to the other place. What ensures that that will happen is the projection of my guilt onto you. My suffering proves that you are the guilty one, and you are the one who will be punished. That is how we hope to cheat God.

The answer implied here in terms of the idea of "always" is the holy instant, which does not really appear until Chapter 15, the first place in A Course in Miracles where the holy instant is talked about at some length. The holy instant is simply that point that the miracle leads us to when we choose the miracle instead of the grievance, as the workbook says (W-pI.78), when we choose the Holy Spirit as our teacher instead of the ego. And in that holy instant we have chosen against the ego thought system, which is all of a piece, as we just saw. So when we choose the Holy Spirit, the ego's thought system disappears in that instant, which means the world of sin, guilt, and fear disappears. If there is no separation, if there is no guilt, then there is no fear, no fear of punishment, no experience of vulnerability. All there is is that remembrance of the Love of God. That is what "always" means here. That is why we could say that the holy instant in a sense is a reflection of eternity. It is not eternity, because we are still free to choose against the holy instant and go back and forth. But in that instant when we have chosen the Atonement as our principle instead of separation, we get a reflection of eternity, because it is the absence of the whole thought system of the ego.

Then, of course, that little voice whispers in our ear that if we keep this up, we will disappear. And that is the little voice that is always with us, just as the Holy Spirit's Voice is always with us. It is that voice that is a constant warning saying not to take this forgiveness stuff too seriously: "You can do a little bit if you want, but don't get carried away with it, because if you do you will be carried away into oblivion." We then go back, as the Course says, to our ancient "friends" of guilt, sin, fear, attack, death, and we are safe again (T-19.IV-D.6.2-3). What is safe is this individual self. But of course what we are safe for is the whole ego world: hate, judgment, guilt, including momentary pauses when everything is wonderful, when specialness works; and soon afterwards we are right back into the ego game again.

**Part VII
"The Guiltless Son of God" (T-13.II)**

Let us go now to the next section in Chapter 13, "The Guiltless Son of God," and we will look at the first five paragraphs. All of the passages that we look at will help us get a clearer understanding of the central idea that guilt is blind and it is also blinding. Guilt does not know about love, which means when we choose guilt we do not know about love. At the same time guilt is blinding: it not only blinds us to love, but it ends up blinding us to guilt itself through the projection of it onto the special relationship. That is how this begins.

**(T-13.II.1:1) The ultimate purpose of projection is always to get rid of guilt.**

I judge guilt as real. I judge it as totally unacceptable in myself, because right behind guilt is this wrathful, maniacal god who will destroy me, and so I have to get rid of it. That is what continually impels us each and every moment to project the world, project ourselves into the world, and then project this unconscious guilt onto everyone else.

**(T-13.II.1:2) Yet, characteristically, the ego attempts to get rid of guilt from its viewpoint only …**

The ego lies to us. It tells us that the way to be free of guilt is to get rid of it and put it onto someone else and hate that person, then find as many allies as you can to go along with you. If they will not go along with you, pay them. Governments do it; individuals do it. I will pay you in some form to be my friend. I will be with you all the time; I will call you; I will be nice to you; I will buy you gifts—but be my friend, which always means be my friend against the other people. Sometimes that is overt, sometimes subtle. We do it, and therefore our governments do it.

**(T-13.II.1:2-3) …for much as the ego wants to retain guilt you find it intolerable, since guilt stands in the way of your remembering God, Whose pull is so strong that you cannot resist it. On this issue, then, the deepest split of all occurs, for if you are to retain guilt, as the ego insists, you cannot be you.**

What this is a reference to is the happy fact that while we have made our whole world on guilt—our home away from home—nonetheless we do have a split mind, and there is yet a part of us that somewhere knows all this is made up. That is the part Jesus is referring to here. Even though we choose the ego and identify with it, there is still a part of us we continually try to keep buried that knows that this is all an illusion and a lie. That is the part that the Course is appealing to. That is the part that any spiritual teacher, any spiritual path is appealing to: the part of us that still retains even a slight degree of sanity. That is the part of the decision-making aspect of our mind that Jesus is always addressing, trying to reinforce the decision we made to study this course—just to use this as one example.

The Course teaches us that it is only one form among many thousands of other spiritualities (M-1.4:1-2). This is not the only spiritual path. But just staying within the context of this path, the part of us that chose this path and has been reasonably dedicated to it—as all of you have been—is the part that Jesus is addressing. That is the part that is saying there must be another way. Even though there is that ego part of us that likes our specialness, that somehow wants to bring the Course into it, there is still that part of us that wants to be who we really are and knows that when we play this game of guilt and specialness, we are not who we are. That, again, is what Jesus is appealing to.

**(T-13.II.1:4) Only by persuading you that it is you could the ego possibly induce you to project guilt, and thereby keep it in your mind.**

This is a very nice clear statement of what we have been speaking about—that the ego tells us that the way we get rid of guilt is to project it out and indulge all of our specialness needs and our special relationships. All that does, of course, is protect the guilt in our mind. The special relationship is only our home away from home. The real home of the ego, the real home of guilt is in our mind. The ego never wants us to become aware of that because then we would clearly recognize this was a very bad choice we made. We all bet on the wrong horse, and we are so insane that we do not even know that the horse we bet on is dead. We keep exercising denial over and over and over again, pretending this horse is alive and well and is going to win the race, without really understanding that this horse never lived in the first place. It dropped dead in the starting gate. We put all of our money, all of our investment, all of our time and effort into this horse that is totally dead. The tremendous effort we all put into denying this, which is what this whole world and all of our special relationships are about, is truly extraordinary.

At one point Helen was complaining to Jesus that this course is too difficult—there was no way she could learn it. As an answer Jesus said to her: How can you tell me you cannot learn this very simple course; look at what you have learned. Don't tell me your mind is so powerless that it cannot learn. Look at what you have taught yourself. This response to Helen actually comes at the end of the text at the beginning of Chapter 31 ("The Simplicity of Salvation"). It was meant at first for Helen, but obviously is for all of us.

We have taught ourselves that the impossible is true, that this horse is alive and well and is striving mightily toward the finish line, and that we are going to win. This is just as insane as any world or national leader believing that he will win a war. No one wins a war, because the very war itself is defeating and weakening, which is why no war ever ends anything—it just sows the seeds for the next war and the next war after that. The horse is dead; it is not going to go anywhere; it is not going to win any race. But, again, this gives you a respect for the enormity of your mind's power, that it could learn how something that is dead is really alive and valuable. That is what we have all done. The problem is that we do not want to believe it. Practically every line in this course says that in one way or another.

What the ego has to do, which is another way of making the same point, is convince us we are who we are not, and who we are not is who we are. That takes extraordinary teaching skill on the part of the ego and extraordinary learning skill on our part. Basically the ego is us, so we are both teachers and learners. What we have pulled off is incredible: we have made what is true about us a lie, and what is a lie about us true. Then we built an entire thought system and a world to demonstrate that the lie is true. What is so difficult about learning and accepting it is the resistance born of the fact that if that is true, then this whole thing is a lie, and we are a lie too.

Remember, that was the motivation right at the beginning—that we all as one Son made the collective choice to make the ego real, which means to make the truth a lie. Our lives and all the seeming problems in our lives are ontologically all made up, totally made up. But most of all, what we think upsets us is not what is really bothering us at all. It is just another witness to our ingenuity and skill. And of course we get lots of people, probably everyone in the world, to agree, especially our enemies or our partners, everyone who is involved with us. We all do the same dance, and the ultimate purpose that we all share on the level of the ego is to prove that the lie is true. That is why we always love a fight; we love to have a problem and argue or fight with people. That is the oxygen that keeps this whole insane thought system going. The idea that life is a battleground—that is part of the lie.

**(T-13.II.2:1-2) Yet consider how strange a solution the ego's arrangement is. You project guilt to get rid of it, but you are actually merely concealing it.**

Here Jesus is exposing the lie, and that is what he does all the way through this course. One of the reasons he spends so much time talking about the ego is that he is exposing the lie, uncovering the cover-up. He is saying, look at what is really going on here. That really explains why he spends so much time in this lofty spiritual path talking about the ego. It is the only spirituality that I know of that spends so much time talking about the illusion. And he does that because we do not want to talk about it, and we do not want to see it. So he has to explain it all to us very painstakingly in thirty-one chapters. We project guilt to get rid of it, but we are really concealing it.

He wants us to understand this first on the level that he is teaching it, but then to take that understanding and apply it very directly and specifically to our personal lives. That is why there is a workbook—that is what the workbook asks us to do: to see how we do this, which means to see how our special relationships do not work. Now that does not mean we throw away the relationship, as the Course in fact says twice (T-15.V.4,5; T-17.IV.2). The Holy Spirit does not take your special relationships away from you. He transforms them. It does not mean you stop having relationships. He is not saying to stop having a body. He is not saying to stop breathing, to stop eating, or to stop relating. He is not saying any of that. He is simply teaching us to change the purpose. Do not throw the baby out with the bath water. It is not the relationship on the level of behavior or form that is the problem. It is the purpose of guilt that it is serving. That is the problem.

Thus, Jesus is uncovering the ingenious, though nasty and vicious, set of dynamics that fuel our whole world. Only by seeing the dynamics for what they are, can we meaningfully say that this is insane, and we do not want to do this anymore. As you enter yet another relationship, watch what you do. Watch all the subtle games, all the ways that you use your body, as the Course says at one point, to bait another fish (T-24.VII.4:6). Just watch what you do. You do not necessarily have to stop doing it, but just watch what you do and understand why you are doing it. And it is finally understanding why you are doing it that will give you the motivation to shift the purpose of the relationship.

This course is not saying to stop living in a body just because the body is an illusion. We still believe the body is real, but Jesus does want us to understand the way we are living and to use the body in a different way, which means that we have to use a different teacher. Our new teacher, the Holy Spirit or Jesus, teaches us not by telling us to change our behavior, but by helping us realize we have a mind that has misused its power—that our mind has gotten us into a lot of trouble without our even knowing we are in a lot of trouble. Our new Teacher tells us, "Let Me help you see what you have done, so that you will be motivated to now make another choice."

**Part VIII
"The Guiltless Son of God" (T-13.II) (cont.)**

**(T-13.II.2:3-4) You do experience the guilt, but you have no idea why.** [We all experience self-hatred and guilt but we do not know where it is coming from, so Jesus is going to explain it.] **On the contrary, you associate it** [guilt] **with a weird assortment of "ego ideals," which the ego claims you have failed.**

The "ego ideals" are the "shoulds," such as I should get A's in school. This is an ideal the ego sets up so that we will fail. We always like to blame our parents for that, but it has nothing to do with our parents. Another ideal is when we say, for example, I have been A Course in Miracles student for five years, five minutes, five days, or five decades and I should know better by now. I should not be judging. I should not be involved in special relationships. I should not be going to a doctor when I am sick. These are the ego ideals Jesus is talking about. We set something up so we will fail, or so we will feel guilty. We think the reason we are guilty is that we did not live up to parental expectations, or Jesus' expectations, or this person's expectations, or the government's expectations, whatever it is. What Jesus is saying is that that is not what is going on.

**(T-13.II.2:5-6) Yet you have no idea that you are failing the Son of God by seeing him as guilty. Believing you are no longer you, you do not realize that you are failing yourself.**

That is where the guilt comes from. The ego is so clever—it takes us into the world (the lower box on the **chart**) and says here is why you are guilty: you failed here in the world; you are thirty-five or fifty-five, and you should have all this money and all the things the world says you should have; you do not, therefore you are a failure.

All of this simply becomes the way the ego tells us that the problem is in the world, and that this is why you are guilty. We do not have a clue that the reason we are guilty is that we have accused ourselves of betraying the Son of God by choosing the ego instead of the Holy Spirit. That is the problem. That is what Jesus means very early in the workbook when he says we are never upset for the reason we think (W-pI.5). He is teaching us that we are never guilty for the reason we think; we are never angry for the reason we think; we are never sad for the reason we think. The whole thing is very, very carefully orchestrated by the ego.

This is also what he means in Chapter 27 when he says that of all the many causes of our pain, never once did we think our guilt was among them (T-27.VII.7:4). The guilt he is talking about is the guilt in our mind. We are very good as individuals and as a society in identifying the sources of pain and suffering, whether we do it through medicine, psychology, economics, politics, religion, or whatever. We are very good at isolating the cause. We may all differ, but we all have theories about why we are so upset, why the world is in such a terrible state, why this has happened, why that has happened. We never think that guilt is the cause, because the ego is so clever. It made the world—as we saw at the beginning of our class—as a cover for the guilt, so that the body would never see the guilt but it would carry out the dictates of guilt. The dictates of guilt, once again, are to see the causes of pain and suffering, and the causes of joy and happiness as external to ourselves, as external to the mind.

That is the meaning of that all-important section "Seek Not Outside Yourself" (T-29.VII) near the end of the text. There is a point that is discussed all the way through. We see the cause of both our happiness and our unhappiness as outside. The body is also outside, because it is outside the mind. And ultimately, it is not even guilt that is the cause; it is the decision to make guilt real that is the cause. The ultimate cause of all of our problems lies in that dot at the head of the split mind box on the **chart**, because guilt is nothing. It is the beliefin guilt that is the problem. Even more to the point, it is the decision to be guilty instead of innocent that is the problem. When we make the decision to be guilty, we just as quickly deny all responsibility for that and project the blame onto everyone else. Again, that is why we had to make the world. That is what the workbook means when it says, "Thus were specifics made" (W-pI.161.3:1). Hate needs an object, something specific that it can land on when we project it out. That is why we are born into families. As I always like to remind people, if this is all a dream, all made up, as the Course tells us, and we are the dreamer of the dream, then we are responsible for it. As Freud explained over a hundred years ago, dreams are purposive and fulfill wishes, which the Course would also say, but for a different reason. Then why did we make the world the way we did? Why did we make the body the way we did? Why did we have to be born helpless into families? It did not have to be like that. We could have been born like Athena from the head of Zeus, fully grown. We did it this way so we would have objects to project onto.

And everyone knows, since we all have been children and we all have families, that the first object of our hatred is always our parents. They are the objects of our special love and our special hate. That is the real meaning of Freud's Oedipus complex. Our parents form special love and special hate relationships with us, and we with them, obviously. That is why we have families, so that we have somewhere to put the guilt that we do not want to keep within.

**(T-13.II.3:1-2) The darkest of your hidden cornerstones holds your belief in guilt from your awareness. For in that dark and secret place is the realization that you have betrayed God's Son by condemning him to death.**

That is why, when the world wrote the story of Jesus, it wrote it as the crucifixion of God's Son. No one really knows what happened in his lifetime, but we are told that the Son of God, totally innocent, was crucified. Our guilt was put on his shoulders and he was killed for it. That is what this is a reference to. That is why the words are that way, based on the famous statement that Jesus supposedly said to Judas, "... betrayest thou the son of man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:48). It is all a story about betrayal. Well, who is the real betrayer of the Son of God with the kiss of special love? We are. That is the secret. That is what we want to keep buried. It never happened, but the ego told us it happened. And once it told us it happened and we believed it, it made sure that we would never question that belief again. That is what the world is for. The world made us mindless so we could never question the source of the belief.

Then one of the things the ego did in its specialness, very clever and very brilliant, was make a theology that taught the very same thing, but it made the whole thing external. Thus we see the drama of the separation, the betrayal, and the crucifixion of God's Son laid out outside us. Then everyone gets blamed for it and punished. No one has a clue that the external drama is nothing more or less than the projection in form of the original thought that is also made up and is a myth, nothing more than a cosmic myth that appears in many other world religions. But that we betrayed the Son of God we all believe is true. We believe we killed his Father and crucified His Son. And on that slain corpse we erect this "glorious" self. The whole thing is made to conceal the fact that none of it happened. Remember, guilt blinds us to the reality of the Atonement principle that says the separation never happened. Then it blinds us to the seeming reality of guilt by making up a world. That is what this is all about.

**(T-13.II.3:3-5) You do not even suspect this murderous but insane idea lies hidden there, for the ego's destructive urge is so intense that nothing short of the crucifixion of God's Son can ultimately satisfy it. It does not know who the Son of God is because it is blind.** [It does not know about love; it does not know about the Son of God.] **Yet let it perceive guiltlessness anywhere, and it will try to destroy it because it is afraid.**

Subsequent to this as we will see, this becomes a reference to Jesus—that he obviously was the epitome and the symbol of the innocence of God's Son, of the Love of God Himself, and so the ego had to destroy him. As it says later, "To the ego, the ego is God, and guiltlessness must be interpreted as the final guilt that fully justifies murder" (T-13.II.6:3). And as we will see in the next paragraph, "To the ego, the guiltless are guilty" (T-13.II.4:2). The ego needs guilt. Without guilt there is no ego. Thus, in the ego's strange religion, guiltlessness is sinful. That is why one cannot imagine the biblical religions without the doctrine of sin. In fact, the Bible basically begins with what is known as original sin. We need sin, and the worst thing that people can be told is that they are sinless. And even if we are sinful and want to become sinless, we have to pay for it, which of course makes sin real, and then makes the God Who demands payment just as insane as those who believe that they have sinned against Him. The whole thing is just one rotten mess. But once it is elevated to the word of God Himself, it can never be questioned, which is what the ego always wants—that we never question the ego itself, that we never question the seeming reality and validity of its thought system. And it all rests on the sacrosanct belief that sin and guilt are real. Without them you do not have an ego system. Without them you do not have an individual existence. Therefore the ego will defend to their death those who say sin is not an illusion, sin is real. The ego wants to make sin real, and only then can one achieve the state of sinlessness, but only by making sin real and paying for it.

That is why Christianity became such a dominant religious, political, and social force in the world—it gave truth to the ego thought system. That is why it is so powerful and attractive to this day. That is why Islam is growing the way it is growing and becoming the world's fastest growing religion—it, too, speaks of a God Who recognizes sin, and recognizes sacrifice as the price that must be paid to go home. It is all insane; all formal religions are insane. To say one is saner or better than any other is the typical arrogance of the ego. They all are born out of the same thought system, and the love that they espouse is special love because it is not all-inclusive. It is always based on there being good guys and bad guys, or guys who will be rewarded and guys who will be punished. There are the heathens, the pagans, and then there are the true believers.

Again, what paragraph 3 is saying is that we do not want to look at the true source of our guilt. This explains why we are so driven to project it out in such a blind way and never see it again—because this is such an awful, awful thought. It is not a thought that we all had once; this is a thought that we continually resurrect and make real, over and over again. We do it every time we hold a judgment, every time we have an idea of specialness. Every time we think that our individual identity is being threatened and has to be preserved. We all have become so damned civilized most of the time that no one knows what is underneath it. What we have gotten very good at is covering over the murderousness that lies within each of us, and that is what this is saying. "You do not even suspect this murderous but insane idea lies hidden there." Nothing short of the crucifixion of God's Son can satisfy the ego, and the way we crucify God's Son is by making him into something he is not. What he truly is, is pure spirit, totally at one with his Creator and Source, this resplendent being of light that has nothing to do with illumination in the physical sense. And we crucify that Self each and every time we glorify individuality, uniqueness, personal autonomy, personal freedom, or specialness. There is not a person in this world who does not do that, Jesus says, which is why this is not a very popular book.

As I have said many, many times, the reason A Course in Miracles seems to be so popular is that no one knows what it says. It is obvious. There are over one and a half million copies out and it has been translated in many, many languages, with more still to come, but most people do not have a clue as to what it says. If they did they would drop it, but they think it says something else. They think it says something nice. This is not nice. It uncovers how un-nice the world is. That is where the Course's "nice-ness" is found—that it uncovers the un-nice. Again, what Jesus does is take the veil away so that we can look inside the cesspool. Only when we look at it without judgment does the cesspool disappear.

Our whole world is built on this cesspool to keep the stench of our hatred and our murderousness hidden. That is why the ego invented perfume and deodorant and all the other things, which does not mean you should not use them. It just means that you should understand what really lies underneath all of this. We do not want to look and smell and see the stench of our self-hatred. But when we do finally uncover it, then we realize that there is nothing there. What keeps the world going is the belief there is something there and it is ugly, it is awful, and it has to be hidden. And what this course is all about is uncovering the cover and looking within. But we are terrified to do so.

That is why we need a relationship with the inner Teacher. That is why we need a Jesus or a Holy Spirit or any other name we will use for that Presence. We cannot do this by ourselves, which means we cannot do it with our ego. We need something outside our insane thought system that can very slowly and gently help us build up the strength and the faith to finally reach the point where we lift up the cover and look inside, and then see there was nothing. The fear is that what we are going to find there is this awful, awful dragon, this awful monster of our self-hatred, guilt, and sin. We must go in there. If we do not, then it stays there and our whole life is driven to never look. When we finally look, then we realize there was nothing there. That is what the line means that I quoted earlier, "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" (T-21.IV.2:3). What follows that is the statement, "What if you looked within and saw no sin?" (T-21.IV.3:1). That is the ego's real fear, that we uncover the cesspool and realize there is no cesspool; there is no evil stench; there are no rotted corpses. There is nothing. That is what we have to look at.

**Part IX
"The Guiltless Son of God" (T-13.II) (cont.)**

**(T-13.II.4:1-4) Much of the ego's strange behavior is directly attributable to its definition of guilt. To the ego, the guiltless are guilty.** [They are the ones who have to be punished**.**] **Those who do not attack are its "enemies" because, by not valuing its interpretation of salvation, they are in an excellent position to let it go.** [And if they let it go the whole thought system disappears, which means your individual self disappears—that is the fear.] **They have approached the darkest and deepest cornerstone in the ego's foundation, and while the ego can withstand your raising all else to question, it guards this one secret with its life, for its existence depends on keeping this secret.**

The next section, "The Fear of Redemption," teaches that the real secret is that there is nothing there. What the ego tells us is the secret that must be kept secret is the guilt over the belief that we have crucified God's Son. That is why there is that line in the next section that says our real fear is not of crucifixion but of redemption: "You are not really afraid of crucifixion. Your real terror is of redemption" (T-13.III.1:10-11). When we finally go within the mind and look, we see the light of the Atonement, not the cesspool of guilt or sin. That is the fear—that we will at some point make that choice.

Thus, the ego keeps telling us that we are wretched, awful people. Our individual existence tells us that, for how did we get here as separate entities? We must have gotten here by destroying God and crucifying Christ. That memory is there every time we take a breath, so we keep pushing it down; and when we push the guilt down, it pushes back up through projection and lands on someone else. That is why it is so difficult, almost impossible to give up judgment—because judgment is what keeps this whole miserable mess going. That is why everyone loves to jump on their bandwagon when the enemy is found. Once again we say ah, I am off the hook; sin is real, but it is not in me.

**(T-13.II.4:5) So it is this secret that we must look upon, for the ego cannot protect you against truth, and in its presence the ego is dispelled.**

That is our big fear: in the presence of truth the ego disappears. That is why we are so afraid of truth.

**(T-13.II.5:1-2) In the calm light of truth, let us recognize that you believe you have crucified God's Son. You have not admitted to this "terrible" secret** ["terrible" is in quotes because to us it is terrible, while in truth it is nothing] **because you would still wish to crucify him if you could find him.**

What will be talked about in paragraph 6, which we are not going to look at, is that when the world does find him—and Jesus is not the only ego-less person who has been here—then he always has to be crucified, because the real fear is the light of the truth.

**(T-13.II.5:3) Yet the wish has hidden him from you because it is very fearful, and so you are afraid to find him.**

We never want to find someone or something that represents the truth, because that is the end of our ego. We all have split minds, so there is a part of us that does want to find that person, thought system, or teaching that represents it, but we have to be aware we have a split mind. There is a part of us that wants this, that wants to have the little Child within us grow, the little Child that Lesson 182 speaks about. There is the other part of us, however, that is terrified. That is the ambivalence one always finds on the spiritual path. We are very naive if we think we are not going to be part of that ambivalence. Everyone has that.

We all want to awaken from the dream and go home because on some level we realize this is a nightmare, and it is terrible. On the other hand, there is a part of us, that little voice that whispers, "If you do this you will disappear." That is the ambivalence that is built into any true spiritual aspirant. There is a part of us that wants to go home, and a part that is terrified of going home. Part of us wants to take Jesus' hand, and the other part of us wants to kill him. Since we have a split mind, both thoughts coexist, but they are split off. Typically what we do is split off the hate, but if the hate is still there, then the true love that we feel for this figure—let us stay with Jesus—very quickly gets contaminated by the hate and turns into special love. Voila, we have the Bible and Christianity.

A person who represents only love then gets turned into someone who represents special love, and the reason that happens is that we did not take that genuine love and use it as the beacon of light that would accompany us to the ego's darkness and shine its light on the darkness. The reason we need someone like a Jesus—not a person or a body anymore, but a presence or symbol of love in our mind—is that we need some light-filled presence who would go into the darkness with us and shine it away. But we must look at the darkness. That is what Jesus is saying here. If we do not do this, and instead use Jesus in some other way, we would turn him into just another magical figure, just another symbol of special love. We will do the same thing everyone else has done, and we once again will accuse ourselves of having crucified God's Son.

This is why the crucifixion of Jesus as it is treated in the gospels has been such a major symbol: it re-enacts for all of us what we all have done. In worshipping it and making it into a saving act, the world did exactly what the ego wants. It brought the truth into the illusion and then the illusion swallows up the truth. This has no effect on the truth that is never in the illusion anyway. But the world will now believe it has claimed truth and knows truth, but all that it has done is dress it up in the clothing of illusion. Then we worship the clothing and think it is the truth, but it is not, because there is no love there. There can be no love there until the guilt in the mind is exposed. We must look within.

Again, the purpose of a spiritual teacher or a spiritual symbol is to help us go within and look at our ego without judgment, without fear, and without guilt—but we must look at it. Only then does its solid granite appearance change to a fragile veil and the light shine through.

**(T-13.II.5:3-6) Yet the wish has hidden him from you because it is very fearful, and so you are afraid to find him. You have handled this wish to kill yourself by not knowing who you are, and identifying with something else** [the ego]**. You have projected guilt blindly and indiscriminately, but you have not uncovered its source. For the ego does want to kill you, and if you identify with it you must believe its goal is yours.**

The ego wants to kill us, meaning kill our true Self, the Christ in us, God's Son. And if we identify with that ego thought, which we obviously all have done, then we will always seek to kill God's Son in everyone. Every time I judge you, every time I try to weave a web and entrap you in that web of specialness, what I am doing is crucifying God's Son. I am saying you are not innocent; you are not part of the Sonship; you are guilty. That is how we re-enact the moment of separation over and over and over again. Every time we make a judgment we are crucifying God's Son.

And I want to crucify God's Son in you because I do not want to look at what I believe I have done in my reality. I want to see you as the bad one. Then I always try to justify my crucifixion of you, my hatred of you. I try to justify my special love for you. It does not make any difference. I try to justify it and then get as many people as I can to agree with me so that I can avoid the real guilt inside, which is that I am the one who did this to God's Son. I try to take that guilt and throw it onto you, and since I believe I am a sincere student of a spirituality, A Course in Miracles or any other path, I will not be aware of what I am really doing. I will think my judgment of you is justified; I will believe that my special love for you is justified; my special hate for you is justified. And I will never be aware that what I am really doing is trying to escape from the punishment of my own sin.

Once again, that is why we need people in the world—so that we could have objects to project onto. There is no way out of this until we finally recognize there is something very wrong with this picture. That is what Jesus means in "The Two Pictures" section (T-17.IV), which I read from at the beginning, when he tells us not to look at the frame, which is the special relationship, but to look at the picture. The picture in the context of this section is the picture of death. For our purposes in this discussion we will say the picture is guilt. Jesus is telling us to look at the ego purpose for the relationship, which would be anything that would prevent us from going within to uncover the guilt, and behind the guilt to see the light of Christ that is in us. We do not need anything outside us for that; it is all within us. That is very, very difficult, because we believe that if we are all alone we will be destroyed—that if we are all alone it is just a hop, skip, and a jump back to the mind and finding the horror that is there.

The ego makes up all these separate bodies and says we need bodies—there is something missing, something lacking in us, and so there is this other person, this other thing, or this other substance that will bring us peace and make us feel good inside. Again, this is not saying we should not have relationships; it just means we need to look at the purpose, the picture, and then ask help of our Teacher to change the picture. We do not have to change the frame (the form), just the picture (the content). When we change the picture, the frame will automatically shift. Instead of having as its purpose to be dark and imposing, attracting us so that the picture is kept hidden, the frame will now become very light so that it lets the picture, now of light, shine forth.

**Part X
"The Cloud of Guilt" (T-13.IX)**

"We will go now to The Cloud of Guilt."

**(T-13.IX.1:1) Guilt remains the only thing that hides the Father, for guilt is the attack upon His Son.**

We have already seen this idea, and to say that guilt remains the only thing is to say that everything here is simply an expression of our guilt.

**(T-13.IX.1:2) The guilty always condemn, and having done so they will still condemn, linking the future to the past as is the ego's law.**

This is the same as saying that guilt will always have to be projected out. That is just a psychological truism. Being judged to be totally unacceptable, guilt gets repressed into the unconscious, and whatever is repressed automatically will be projected. That is just the way it is—that is the name of the ego's game. When we project guilt we obviously are attacking: I am not guilty, you are. That is what this sentence means, that the guilty condemn and they will always condemn. They link the past, which is where their guilt has its inception, to the present. Thus, my sin in the past leads me to experience guilt automatically, leading me to project it out. Another way of understanding this would be through the guilt-attack cycle that I described earlier: when we deny our guilt through projection and attack other people, a part of us will feel guilty, because it is reminiscent of the original attack for which we feel guilty, and so we just keep going around and around and around.

**(T-13.IX.1:3) Fidelity to this law lets no light in, for it demands fidelity to darkness and forbids awakening.**

That of course is exactly what we want. The decision to be special, individual, and separated, and to continue in that way is the decision to live a life in darkness. To live a life in darkness, a common symbol in the context of the Course and actually many other spiritual paths, means to remain asleep. At the beginning of the text, Jesus cites the verse in the Bible that says a deep sleep fell upon Adam, but it never says that Adam awoke (T-1.I.3:6). Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, used that as a metaphor to teach that everything that happened since the time of Adam and Eve's sin is a dream.

In A Course in Miracles, Jesus would basically say the same thing. Ever since we began the belief and invested our belief in separation, we have been asleep, and everything that follows from that is a dream. Later in the text in Chapter 27, Jesus talks about two kinds of dreams (T-27.VII). There is the secret dream (on the [**chart**](https://facim.org/online-learning-aids/excerpt-series/special-relationships/special-relationships-part-x/javascript%3Avoid%280%29), the dream in the ego's box of sin, guilt, and fear). Then there is the world's dream, which is nothing more than the projection of the secret dream. That is the dream of sin, guilt, and fear in the world. They are both the same dream. But we forget the secret dream, so all we are aware of is what is "out here," and since we do not know we are asleep, we think all this is reality. We have conveniently forgotten that the world's dream is simply the effect of the sleeping dream, the secret dream of sin, guilt, and fear.

**(T-13.IX.1:4) The ego's laws are strict, and breaches are severely punished.**

Earlier in the text, Jesus says that when we begin to take the Holy Spirit's evaluation of us as holy Sons of God as true, the ego becomes vicious (T-9.VII.4). Now, strictly speaking, the ego does not become vicious. The ego is not a thing; it is not a person. The ego is a thought, but it is our thought. This is saying that as soon as we begin to take steps toward the right mind, toward the Holy Spirit, and we begin to forgive—to give up judgment and to look at the ego—that little voice begins whispering again and says that if we keep this up we will be destroyed, but what will save us is guilt and attack. At that point we start feeling guilty and start attacking, whether we do it in an overt way, which is what special hate is, or we do it in a covert way, which is what special love is. That is really what this statement is saying—that the ego punishes breaches of its law. The punishment is simply what we do: we continually project and project and project.

**(T-13.IX.1:5-6) Therefore give no obedience to its laws, for they are laws of punishment. And those who follow them believe that they are guilty, and so they must condemn.**

What we are seeing is really the same principle articulated over and over again, starting from the beginning of the chapter and here again at the end. As I mentioned other times, the Course is written as a symphony and its themes are continually recurring, each recurrence slightly different from the previous statement of it. The same material is presented over and over again because of our resistance and our fear. Once we understand how sin, guilt, and fear work, everything here will make perfect sense; everything in our lives will make perfect sense, or as much sense as total insanity could ever make. Simply being here makes us guilty, and once we are guilty we must project and seek to punish other people. Then we will believe we will be punished in return.

Another cycle that is talked about in A Course in Miracles, specifically in the workbook, is the attack-defense cycle, which of course nations love to play out all the time. We attack and then we believe we will be attacked back, so we have to defend ourselves. We conveniently forget that we are the first attackers, because in our mind we are always the first attackers. All we are aware of, however, is that other people are going to attack us, and we forget the cause. In fact the whole Course can be seen as an attempt to help us remember the cause. The cause of every attack, the cause of every pain, every suffering, every discomfort is a decision to be guilty.

**(T-13.IX.1:7) Between the future and the past the laws of God must intervene, if you would free yourself.**

These laws free us through the holy instant, which does not really get spoken about until the fifteenth chapter, but is implied here—that letting go of the future and the past means that we live only in the present.

**(T-13.IX.1:8) Atonement stands between them, like a lamp shining so brightly that the chain of darkness in which you bound yourself will disappear.**

The instant we choose Jesus as our teacher we do not see other people's interests as separate from our own. It is not one or the other; it is both; it is all. In that instant, we are free from the belief in separation, and we are the ones who have freed ourselves. If there is no separation there is no sin, no guilt, no fear, and there is nothing to be defended. We do not have to defend against the Atonement because in this holy instant we have chosen it, and everything else just falls away.

**(T-13.IX.2:1-2) Release from guilt is the ego's whole undoing. Make no one fearful, for his guilt is yours, and by obeying the ego's harsh commandments you bring its condemnation on yourself, and you will not escape the punishment it offers those who obey it.**

Now we are beginning to see the practical applications of this in terms of how we are to be in our relationships. The way we are released from guilt is by not projecting it onto other people; in other words, to forgive. Specifically what this means is not that we do not project—we cannot help it. We first project, then we become aware there is something wrong, and then we reverse the projection. That is what forgiveness does; that is what the miracle does. (Imagine telling a head of state "make no one fearful.") The way we make other people fearful, of course, is to attack them. And why do we attack them? We attack them because we do not want to look at our own guilt, so we deny our guilt, project it out, and attack. That reinforces the same insane thought system of sin, guilt, and fear in the other person as it reinforces in ourselves. We all share the same insanity, and we all want the other person to reinforce our thought system.

We love to engage people in this dance of death, attack, defense, and specialness. We just love it, and we always tacitly invite people to join us. We know how to get them going. We know how to say the very thing that will ensure a response. It is as if we are on a dance floor all by ourselves, and so we invite all these people as our partners. Of course they, too, believe they are on the dance floor all by themselves, so they like to be invited. We do the same thing with each other all the time. That is what most relationships are all about. They are invitations to the dance. Some of you may know the Von Weber piece, "Invitation to the Dance," which is delightful and lovely. This is not—it is an invitation to the dance that is lethal, but a dance we all engage in.

We see it with nation states—they do it all the time, not just what we see happening right now. They do it all the time because their citizens do it all the time. We love to get people entrapped in this web of specialness, this dance of death, trading off guilt, and making each other fearful. The interesting thing about special relationships is that both partners in the relationship are doing exactly the same thing to each other, desperately trying to prove that they are not. And yet we are all doing this same thing. Sometimes one person will be the victim; other times the other person will be the victim. It does not matter; it is always the same.

The point Jesus is making is that when you make other people fearful through attack, you are reinforcing your own guilt, because if you were not guilty, you would not have to attack other people. The very fact that you are attacking others is telling you there is something in you that needs protection, something that needs to be defended against. That is what is in back of the very important line coming later in the text, "defenses do what they would defend" (T-17.IV.7:1). It is in the same section I have been quoting from in this class, "The Two Pictures." The purpose of a defense is to protect us from our fear, but the very fact that we are defending means there is something in us that has to be protected. So we are reinforcing the fact that we are afraid every time we seek to protect it and defend against it. Defenses are designed to protect us from our fear, but all they do is reinforce it. "Defenses do what they would defend." The purpose is to defend from fear, but defenses only make us more fearful.

This is an example of that dynamic. My attacking you, my judging you, my criticizing you, my condemning you, is an attempt to defend against the fear of looking at my own guilt. Yet all that I do by attacking you is, first, to make myself even guiltier because I am attacking you; second, the very fact that I am attacking you is witnessing to the fact that there is something in me I should be afraid of; otherwise I wouldn't be invested in the defense. This is a very insidious cycle, and the problem is that we are not aware of how we got into it. We are not aware of its beginning. It is like coming in all the time at the end of the movie. We forget all the steps that led up to it, and we simply re-enact the end of the movie, which is always attack, suffering, and death, without realizing how it began.

**Part XI
"The Cloud of Guilt" (T-13.IX) (cont.)**

We skip to paragraph 5.

**(T-13.IX.5:1) Lay not his guilt upon him** [your brother's guilt upon him]**, for his guilt lies in his secret thought that he had done this unto you.**

Everyone walks around this world burdened with guilt, so by attacking others you are telling them they are right—that this is a place of attack and defense, of guilt and attack. When we attack others, criticize them, reinforce their guilt, or make them fearful, we are telling them the ego thought system is alive and well in them and in us, which implicitly means there is nothing else. As Jesus explains in a couple of places early in the text, we cannot make others guilty because that is their decision; but we can reinforce the decision others have made. That is what he is talking about here. We are not responsible for other people's egos or what their egos do, but we certainly are responsible for strengthening our own egos.

When I withdraw my investment in the ego, I am then giving you a message that says I made the choice for the Holy Spirit, and you can make the same choice. I do not say that in words, but the peace within me will somehow get through to you, and that peace speaks volumes. It says there is another choice you could make. When I attack you and join you on the dance floor of death, however, I am saying we are both insane, and we are both condemned to die. The only question is who will be seen as the victim? And each of us of course is going to try to be seen as the victim. We all feel justified in doing what we do.

**(T-13.IX.5:2-4) Would you, then, teach him he is right in his delusion? The idea that the guiltless Son of God can attack himself and make himself guilty is insane. In any form, in anyone, believe this not.**

What underlies this whole discussion is Jesus saying to us that we have another choice: "You have chosen insanity, and let me show you, as I am doing now, how insane this thought system is. Is this really what you want? And can you possibly pretend this is the Will of God? Let me show you that all of this is a defense against the truth in you, and the way I will begin to show you this is to help you learn how to look at this other person differently." That is what the central thrust of the Course ends up being: to help us look at relationships in a different way.

**(T-13.IX.5:5-6) For sin and condemnation are the same, and the belief in one is faith in the other, calling for punishment instead of love. Nothing can justify insanity, and to call for punishment upon yourself must be insane.**

Jesus is basically saying the same thing over and over again. The reason sin and condemnation are the same is that first, sin by its very nature is a condemnation of the Son of God and of God. Sin says that we can destroy God's unity and wholeness, and that we can crucify His Son. Second, sin and condemnation wind up being the same because once we believe in sin, our guilt will demand that we project it out and condemn others.

As I was saying earlier, the whole thought system of the ego is one piece. If you believe one piece of it you must believe all of it. All of the pieces logically follow one from the other.

**(T-13.IX.6:1) See no one, then, as guilty, and you will affirm the truth of guiltlessness unto yourself.**

The way that I see you shows me the way I see myself. We do not understand this—no one in this world understands this. We cannot understand it until we are able to say there is something radically wrong with how we are perceiving and have always perceived all of our relationships—from the time we were little children up to now. In all of these we are miserable, and we always blame the other person. And so in desperation we say there must be another way. The other way is to look at the relationship not as a prison house from which neither party will emerge or a battleground in which both parties will end up dead, but rather as a classroom. We now have a new teacher with a new pair of eyes who asks us to let him help us see that what we are perceiving and making real in the other person is a projection of what we have first chosen and made real in ourselves. That shifts the whole thing around. Now instead of being a dance of death, the relationship becomes a classroom of learning, and we now have a teacher, Jesus, who shows us that the way we are perceiving the other person is really a misperception, despite what that person has done. This has nothing to do with the other's behavior; it has to do with our response to what was done. Our response is never caused by what others do. Our response to what others do is always caused by the decision we make in our mind, and that is what we have to be taught.

That is what Jesus tells us in the Course. He is saying, "I cannot teach you the meaning of love because there is no way you can understand it. Besides, it cannot be understood; it can only be experienced. But I can teach you how to forgive, and what that means is that I can teach you how to undo what your ego has made real: first, the guilt in yourself, and then the sin and guilt you have made real in another person." That we can be taught, but it requires a lot of willingness on our part. Jesus says "a little willingness" most of the time, but as you begin doing this, you realize that to do this right requires a commitment, a commitment to practice this as often as you can day in and day out.

That is what Jesus is saying in the sentence, "See no one, then, as guilty, and you will affirm the truth of guiltlessness unto yourself." Thus, I first make you guilty; I get sick and tired of what I am doing to you; and then I ask for help. Then Jesus says to look at this person, hear yourself condemn him, and then use those same words with yourself because that is what you are really doing. That is what the lines in the workbook mean that say that before you are tempted to accuse anyone of anything, first stop and ask yourself whether you would accuse yourself of doing this (W-pI.134.9). It is not always in the same form, but the content would always be the same.

**(T-13.IX.6:2) In every condemnation that you offer the Son of God lies the conviction of your own guilt.**

Jesus is trying to have us recognize that each and every time we make a judgment of someone, we are going to suffer for it. That is not how the world thinks and not how we usually operate. Every time we condemn someone—even mildly condemn a person or do it with ferocity—what we are really doing is sealing our own fate. We are saying I am the guilty one; I am trapping myself and trying to entrap you on this dance floor of death. The only thing that is still up for grabs is who will be the victim. If each of us is desperately trying to be the victim, then both of us believe we are the victim.

Jesus is trying to train us to realize that each and every time we have a harsh thought or word about someone, this is not hurting that person but is hurting us: I am going to suffer because of my criticism. I am going to suffer because of my specialness. I am going to suffer because of my judgment. And why do I want to continually do that? So he is pleading on behalf of our self-interest that we will feel better if we can begin to see the effects of what we are doing, because it is seeing the effects of our doing that will motivate us finally to let it go.

**(T-13.IX.6:3-4) If you would have the Holy Spirit make you free of it** [your guilt]**, accept His offer of Atonement for all your brothers. For so you learn that it is true for you.**

Of course the key word there is "all." You cannot forgive some parts of the Sonship and not all of them. That is why separation and special relationships are so insidious. They always set up—and set off—certain parts of the Sonship. We are not talking about form; we are talking about content. We cannot be with everyone in the same way on the level of form, but on the level of content we do not have to exclude anyone from our love. That love will be expressed in many different ways, depending on the nature of the relationship, but the content will still be the same.

If people took this to heart we could not have a world the way it is now; we could not have a world of alliances. Indeed, we could not have a world of separate countries and separate interests because nationalism breeds special interests. It is all about my country. I have to protect my country. Now that makes perfectly good sense historically, but remember the whole course of history is insane. It is all about justifying and reinforcing a thought system of separation and exclusion. Remember how the separation began: we excluded God. So why should it come as a surprise that ever since that moment we have excluded everyone except those people who strengthen our position? So whether you are among people in an office ganging up on some other person or groups of persons, or you are a head of state joining with certain allies and ganging up against other countries, you are always involved in the same thing. There are "good" people in the family and "bad" people in the family, and each of them talks about the other group. This is always the case. There is always a sense of exclusion, but this does not mean form. It does not mean that you have to be with everyone all the time, or that everyone in an office or your family has to be your best and closest friend. What you guard against, what you are vigilant for, is your attempt to exclude them—the thoughts of exclusion, the thoughts of specialness, the thoughts of attack, the thoughts of finding fault. That is what you look at.

**(T-13.IX.6:5) Remember always that it is impossible to condemn the Son of God in part.**

This principle is very, very difficult. It is not meant to make us feel guilty because we condemn some people. It is meant to help us see what we do. If we do not see it, it is because we do not want to see it, which means the guilt is blinding us to what we are doing. It is much better to say: Of course I do not want to be with everyone. Of course I do not want to like everyone. Of course I love to hate certain people or certain groups. If you could look at that in yourself without judging yourself, then you will have taken a big, big step.

One very good operational definition of forgiveness is that to forgive is to look at yourself without judgment. If you look at yourself without judgment, you must look at others without judgment, too, because you first look within and then you look without. Projection makes perception. You first look within, choose the ego or the Holy Spirit, innocence or guilt, and then you project out the thought that you have identified with. This is not saying that you have to be perfect and loving and kind to everyone. Just do not justify it when you are not, that is all. Be aware where it is coming from. The more you can see where it is coming from, the more nauseated it will make you, until finally you get so sick of running to the bathroom that you will say there must be another way.

**(T-13.IX.6:6-7) Those whom you see as guilty become the witnesses to guilt in you, and you will see it there, for it isthere until it is undone. Guilt is always in your mind, which has condemned itself.**

That is a wonderful line. Guilt is not outside. There are not guilty bastards out there. The evildoers are not out there. The evildoer is in yourself. Guilt is only in your mind, and one very helpful way of remembering that is to remember the ultimate underlying metaphysics of the Course—that there is no one out there. There is no world. There is no body. It is all a projection of thoughts in the mind. So how could there be guilt out there? How could there be an enemy out there? There could only be an enemy out there if I put the enemy there. Everyone knows the famous line out of Pogo, "We have met the enemy and it is us." It is a very astute line.

Just imagine the implications if people really believed that, not only on the world scene, but in their personal lives. Be aware of just how quickly we leap to judgment. It is habitual, as if built into our genes, and in fact it is. It is the gene of guilt. That is the building block of the universe. It is not love; it is not innocence. It is guilt. Therefore, the idea is not to feel guilty over being guilty and judgmental all the time, but to look at it and say this is what I have done. I now understand what I do, why I have done it, and that there is a part of me at least that does not want to do it anymore. That is a big, big step.

**(T-13.IX.6:7-8) Guilt is always in your mind [again], which has condemned itself. Project it not, for while you do, it cannot be undone.**

That is a very, very important line. As long as you project guilt and see the problem outside you, the guilt will never be undone in your own mind, which is why there has never been world peace and there never will be, unless people start looking within. We are not going to have world peace until we start having peace inside.

Jung and Freud, who did not agree on very many things, did agree on this point and both said the same thing over and over again. They were both very much involved with what was going on in the world, and both of them lived through World War I. Freud died in 1939, but he saw the seeds of Naziism. In fact, he had to flee Vienna. Jung of course lived through it. They were wise people and both wrote over and over again that there would never be any change in the world unless the change first began with individuals. They both saw the horrors of what was happening. The First World War was probably the most devastating thing that happened because it shattered all the illusions. World War II was awful, and what is happening now is awful, but World War I shattered all the illusions anyone ever had. It was a cruel, cruel war that shattered all the illusions everyone had about there ever being peace. What both men wrote very clearly, and obviously they were not the only ones to say it, is that nothing will ever change unless people individually change their minds.

Jung and Freud saw psychoanalysis as one of the major ways of ridding people of their guilt and their hatred of their shadow. The world cannot be changed unless people first change their own minds. That is what is so important. You must first look within and realize how you keep on projecting, and understand why you do it. You do it not because you are bad; you do it not because you are a poor Course in Miracles student. You do it because you are terrified of the love that lies behind the guilt, because in that love, guess what? You are not there. So to keep you there, you must keep guilt there. And to avoid the pain of guilt, at least consciously, or the effects of it, what you do is project it out. That is how the world grows, and that is why these lines are here.

**(T-13.IX.6:8) With everyone whom you release from guilt great is the joy in Heaven, where the witnesses to your fatherhood rejoice.**

Obviously this is a metaphor. The witnesses to our fatherhood are what the Course refers to as our creations (T-13.VIII.9:1). And basically what you get here and in other places is kind of a cute symbol of these furry, warm, cutesy little things to cheer us on, and go yea, yea! But basically what is in back of it is the idea that each and every time we let go of guilt we come closer in ourselves to accepting the light of Heaven.

**Part XII
"The Cloud of Guilt" (cont.)**

**(T-13.IX.7:1) Guilt makes you blind, for while you see one spot of guilt within you, you will not see the light.**

The first way we see guilt as blinding is that as long as we are guilty we are shrouded in this darkness and do not see the light. The second way is what we are going to see in the next sentence:

**(T-13.IX.7:2-3) And by projecting it** [the guilt] **the world seems dark, and shrouded in your guilt. You throw a dark veil over it, and cannot see it because you cannot look within.**

This is exactly what we have been talking about. We first make guilt real because we are afraid of the light. Individuality does not exist in the light; it only exists and thrives in the dark. Then we become so terrified of the guilt in our minds that we project it out, and now we live in a darkened world. To deny the dark we make a sun, so the sun gives us light, and then we invent light bulbs and we have electricity. All of this is artificial light. This is not the light of Christ or the light that shines forth from the Great Rays. These are all attempts to conceal the darkness of our life here. That is what special love is: an attempt to conceal the pain of what it really means to be living outside Heaven. The denial is expressed in being with another person, a substance, or anything else that makes us feel good. That is what tells God, I do not need your Love, because I have this. I have a warm body next to me. I have a warm bottle next to me. I have a warm drug in me. I have warm apple pie inside me. It does not matter what it is, as long as it is comforting. What we are doing is thumbing our nose in God's face, telling Him we do not need Him. We tell Jesus, too, we do not need him, because we have what we need. There is a line in Hamlet where Hamlet says, "Here is metal more attractive." We say to God and to Jesus, "I found something more attractive than the love you are offering me."

That just makes us feel even guiltier, and the guilt becomes heavier and heavier on us, which means we have to deny it more and more, which means we need more specialness, more things, more objects, and more warm bodies. We just keep going on and on, and there is no end. The ego's lust for guilt and specialness is insatiable. It will never be satiated. The only thing that will end it is to choose against the ego; then the whole thing just stops. The ego is like one big mouth: it just wants to be filled and filled and filled, and it is never enough. Again, what ends this mad, insane cycle is simply to realize it is mad, then to say there is something else, and then to make the other choice.

**(T-13.IX.7:4) You are afraid of what you would see there** [The ego tells us, as I quoted earlier, "do not look within because your eyes will light on sin" (T-21.IV.2:3). Here Jesus is talking about guilt], **but it is not there.**

This is the other side. This is the Voice of the Atonement that says, "What are you so upset about? Nothing happened. You did not leave God; this is just a bad dream. Nothing happened." But, again, we must understand and recognize our resistance to hearing that Voice, because if nothing happened, we are not here. So in order to preserve our identity here, we have to put that light away. What Jesus is trying to tell us is that what we have opted for is awful, and what he is offering us is wonderful. That is where real peace is found.

**(T-13.IX.7:5-6) The thing you fear is gone. If you would look within you would see only the Atonement, shining in quiet and in peace upon the altar to your Father.**

The "altar" is always the mind, the part of our mind that chooses. Jesus is saying to reverse our original choice. We made a mistake when we chose guilt instead of the Atonement, and we can now change our mind. He is promising us that when we look within we will not see guilt; we will simply see the light of the Atonement shining that gently reminds us nothing happened: "You are at home in God, [yet] dreaming of exile…" (T-10.1.2:1). And the dream is now over.

**(T-13.IX.8:1-2) Do not be afraid to look within. The ego tells you all is black with guilt within you, and bids you not to look.**

That is the same idea that opens Lesson 93: "You think you are the home of evil, darkness and sin." Again, it is this thought—do not look within—that we heard at the beginning, that led us to look without. But there was not a "without," so we had to make one. That is the world.

**(T-13.IX.8:3-4) Instead, it** [the ego] **bids you look upon your brothers, and see the guilt in them. Yet this you cannot do without remaining blind.**

We can see how very simply and clearly all this is stated. What you have to be able to do is remember this as you go about your daily life and begin to make judgments, whether you are doing it in terms of current world events, or in terms of current events in your home or place of work.

**(T-13.IX.8:5) For those who see their brothers in the dark, and guilty in the dark in which they shroud them, are too afraid to look upon the light within.**

We are afraid of the light within. We cover it with guilt, and then we take the guilt and put it outside us. And we re-enact this over and over and over again.

**(T-13.IX.8:6) Within you is not what you believe is there, and what you put your faith in.**

We put our faith, the power of the belief of our mind, in the ego and then in the ego's tale of sin, guilt, and fear.

**(T-13.IX.8:7-10) Within you is the holy sign of perfect faith your Father has in you. He does not value you as you do. He knows Himself, and knows the truth in you. He knows there is no difference, for He knows not of differences.**

That is the problem. God does not know about differences, which means we do not have a different identity. We are not separate from Him; we are not distinct from Him. One of the things that people have always found so comforting about the Bible is, for example, that in the Bible God knows about us as individuals. People like to hear that, and obviously it makes us feel very special if God loves us even more than the lilies of the field or the sparrows. How wonderful that God counts every hair on our head! It is wonderful to believe that God personally cares about us. That is not the Course's God. That is not the real God. We do not want to be told that God does not know about us. That is what the fear of the Atonement is all about.

**(T-13.IX.8:11-12) Can you see guilt where God knows there is perfect innocence? You can deny His knowledge, but you cannot change it.**

This theme is repeated over and over again in A Course in Miracles. Within the illusion we have the power to push knowledge away, to push Heaven away, to push God away. But that has no effect upon God. And our relationship to Him as His one Son, totally unified within Him, has never changed.

**(T-13.IX.8:13) Look, then, upon the light He placed within you, and learn that what you feared was there has been replaced with love.**

What enables us to do that is to first project our guilt and fear onto other people, then come to Jesus for help. The help comes in having us look differently at what we have misperceived. Jesus is saying that you should look, with his loving guidance, at what you see in the other person, at what you are condemning in the other person, at what you are coveting in the other person, and you will see it as a projection of what you have first made real in yourself: guilt, the belief in scarcity, the belief in lack.

So what he does is bring our attention from the world back within. If you look on the **chart**, you will see that that is what the miracle does. The line on the right-hand side leads from the world back up to the black dot. That is the miracle. It begins where we think we are, which is in the world, in relationships that are filled with victimization, one or the other, kill or be killed—all of our special relationships.

The way Jesus helps us is to have us look through his eyes and hear him say: "There is nothing out here: What you are seeing is a dream. Let me help you understand the origin of the dream. It began when you chose against God's Love and chose guilt instead." Then he goes through everything that we have just been through. That is what this whole Course is about. That is the only hope.

**Part XIII
"Release from Guilt"**

Let us now move to the next section, "Release from Guilt." We will see here, even though Jesus does not use the term "special relationships," that he is beginning his discussion of it. The in-depth discussion of special relationships does not begin until the middle of Chapter 15, but he is already leading up to it, as we will see in a moment.

**(T-13.X.1:1) You are accustomed to the notion that the mind can see the source of pain where it is not.**

That is what this whole world is about. The source of pain is in our mind's decision to be guilty, but we are accustomed, conditionally trained—because that is how we made the world—to see the source of guilt and pain somewhere in the world. Earlier I referred to a line from Chapter 27 that says that of all the many causes of our pain, never once did we think that our guilt was among them (T-27.VII.7:4). That is what Jesus is saying here.

**T-13.X.1:2) The doubtful service of such displacement is to hide the real source of guilt, and keep from your awareness the full perception that it is insane.**

The ego does not want us to see that guilt is insane. That is why it never wants us to get back into our minds, because if we did and we looked a second time at our decision to make guilt real, we would say this is crazy. To ensure that never happens again, the ego devised this brilliant strategy of making us mindless. Again, that is why there is a physical universe. Purpose is everything. The purpose the world serves is to hide from us the source of our discomfort, which is not really our guilt but our decision to be guilty.

**(T-13.X.1:3) Displacement always is maintained by the illusion that the source of guilt, from which attention is diverted** [the mind]**, must be true; and must be fearful, or you would not have displaced the guilt onto what you believed to be less fearful.**

This, in a sense, is the same thing I was saying earlier, "defenses do what they would defend" (T-17.IV.7:1). The very fact that I have to defend my guilt by projecting it onto you is telling me this guilt inside me is awful, it is terribly fearful, and must be avoided at all costs. It reinforces the very thing I am trying to shield myself from.

**(T-13.X.1:4) You are therefore willing to look upon all kinds of "sources"…**

And "sources" is put in quotes because the sources we are willing to look on are not the sources. Sources are always seen as being in the world: thus we are sick not because of guilt but because of a disease, because of a germ; I am upset not because of my guilt, but because of what you just said to me.

**(T-13.X.1:4) You are therefore willing to look upon all kinds of "sources," provided they are not the deeper source to which they bear no real relationship at all.**

The ego smiles with great approval and gives lots of grant money for all kinds of people in all walks of life and for government and science to study this world in all shapes and forms, and to find all the sources of our disharmony, discontent, disease, displeasure, discomfort, etc. The reason is that all of these further the ego's purpose of keeping us away from the real source of our guilt and our pain, which, once again, is the mind's decision to be guilty.

**(T-13.X.2:1-2) Insane ideas have no real relationships, for that is why they are insane. No real relationship can rest on guilt, or even hold one spot of it to mar its purity.**

What Jesus is contrasting now are real relationships—later on called holy relationships—and unreal relationships, which are special relationships. A special relationship is unreal because there is no real relationship between the two people. The people are seen as separate and as existing on a battleground—they may not actually be seen that way, but certainly that is what Jesus means: I have what you want and you have what I want, so let us sit down and negotiate and see who can get the most by giving up the least. That is what relationships are. In Chapter 16 in the section "The Choice for Completion," Jesus describes this altar where people sit down and bargain with each other, trying to seize the self of the other. It is awful! You know indeed that is what all negotiations are in business and in politics. They are all an attempt to give up as little as possible and get as much as possible in return. There are some people who are very good at this and other people who are not, but it is always the same thing. That is what specialness is.

Basically what happens in all special relationships, regardless of their form, is that I want to get rid of my guilt, which is what I am harboring deep within myself, and the only way I can get rid of it is to give it to you. And when I give it to you, you become guilty, and as we have already seen, I then become guiltless, because it is one or the other. The word "same" does not exist in the ego's vocabulary; the word "different" does—just as in the Holy Spirit's vocabulary the word "different" does not appear, but "same" does. In the ego world we are not the same. You have it or I have it, but we both do not have it, for we both cannot have it. It has to be that you have it and I do not, or I have it and you do not. The secret treasure, the "priceless pearl"—that is the biblical term used in "The Laws of Chaos" section in Chapter 23—is "innocence" or specialness, because it is not real innocence. I want the innocence, but how can I be innocent when I am guilty? Therefore I project the guilt onto you and by so doing I take your innocence. Now you are guilty and I am innocent. And of course what makes relationships fascinating is that you are doing the same thing to me. There could be times when we both think that we have won, but there is no relationship between two people. That is the point Jesus is making here, because we are not sharing anything.

The holy relationship only has to exist in the mind of one of the two people because it does not exist between two bodies—there aren't two bodies. It is only in the mind. In the holy relationship, the relationship is perceived as being between two people who share the same interest. In the special or unreal or unholy relationship, the two people are perceived as having the identical opposite interests. It is the same, but it is expressed as opposite; we both want the same thing but we both cannot have it: I want your innocence; you want my innocence, which means we always are perceived as different. In the holy relationship, we are perceived as wanting the same thing: the true innocence of Christ that does not see separation.

**(T-13.X.2:3) For all relationships that guilt has touched are used but to avoid the person and the guilt.**

I am not interested in you as my brother or sister in Christ; I am only interested in giving you my guilt so you will have it and I will not. That is the purpose. That is why we made the world the way we did. Right at the beginning, physical life starts with our being born absolutely pure and innocent, at least that is what the mythology says, and then we are made to be miserable. We are made to be petty, selfish, grasping, manipulative, and on and on—all those "wonderful" things. But we convince ourselves that the world made us that way because we believe we were born angelic and innocent; someone else makes us guilty. Now we are justified in giving that guilt back and reclaiming our innocence. That is what the whole world is about. That is what "life" is all about, as long as we follow what the ego says.

**(T-13.X.2:4-5) What strange relationships you have made for this strange purpose! And you forgot that real relationships are holy, and cannot be used by you at all.**

The real relationship is simply the acceptance of the Holiness of Christ in you and the Holiness of Christ in me. What comes first, of course, is that I accept the insane ego in you and the insane ego in me—and it is the same insane ego. Thus, we both share the same insanity and we both share the same need to awaken from the dream of insanity. Only then will we realize that we all share the same Christ, the same nature as spirit.

**(T-13.X.2:6) They are used only by the Holy Spirit, and it is that which makes them pure.**

The Holy Spirit uses them as classrooms. In special relationships, I am using you: I want to get something from you and pay as little as possible for it. The holy relationship occurs when I ask the Holy Spirit for help to transform my special relationship. He uses that as the classroom for helping me realize that what I am perceiving in you is a projection of what I first made real in myself.

**(T-13.X.2:7-8) If you displace your guilt upon them, the Holy Spirit cannot use them. For, by pre-empting for your own ends what you should have given Him, He cannot use it for your release.**

This is a plea from Jesus to all of us: "Please ask me to help you with your relationships because I cannot help you otherwise." All relationships are awful, and we make them increasingly awful. So he is saying, "Please come to me and let me help you use them as classrooms in which you can learn to be healed yourself, which will also then act as an instrument of healing for the other person. Let me help you look at the situation and the relationship differently." This whole course is an expression of what he wants to teach us. He wants each of us to study what he gives here, understand what the principles are, and then ask him to help us use and implement these principles in our everyday relationships. Otherwise it means absolutely nothing.

**(T-13.X.2:9-10) No one who would unite in any way with anyone for his individual salvation will find it in that strange relationship. It is not shared, and so it is not real.**

In other words, salvation is not individual. As the workbook says, "When I am healed I am not healed alone" (W-pI.137). Whatever it is that I want to be saved from in myself must be shared with you. Now what I want to be saved from, from my ego's view, is my pain—the pain of my loneliness, my sickness, my depression, whatever it is. And so I use you, and the "you" could be a person, an animal, a thing, a substance, or anything in the world. I use you as the means of achieving this individual salvation from my pain. I am not interested in you; I am interested only in what you can do for me. Now sometimes this is very subtle; other times it is right out in the open. What Jesus is saying is that this will never work, and he cannot help us with this. He can help us only through our willingness, understanding, and acceptance of the fact that interests must be shared; otherwise they will never make us happy. We all share the same need—the release from guilt—to awaken from this insane dream of pain.

We must realize that this must be done by our not attacking others. The relationship is not worked out between two separate people. This is not marital counseling or couple therapy or anything like that. It is worked out between each of us and the Holy Spirit or Jesus. That is where it is worked out in the context of a relationship with another person. That is what will enable us to generalize very quickly from the healing of one relationship to where all the relationships will be healed because we will realize it is all the same problem. We bring that same problem to the same Teacher inside and His answer is always the same. Do not see the other person's interest as being separate from yours.

A Course in Miracles helps us to have a theoretical context for why this is so. The entire thought system of the ego began with the belief in separate interests. It may be in God's best interest to have me stay with Him, but it is in my best interest for me not to stay with Him. It is one or the other: since I do not care about Him, I care only about me, I am going to take care of me, and so I do, and I begin this whole awful, awful dream. That is what started it and that is what keeps the whole thing going. It is always one or the other.

So when Jesus says, it is "together, or not at all" (T-19.IV-D.12:8), or salvation is a collaborative venture" (T-4.VI.8:2), or "the ark of peace is entered two by two" (T-20.IV.6:5), he is not talking about literally having to have another person with you. What he means is your mind cannot remember Heaven at someone else's expense. You cannot find peace by bludgeoning someone else or using or manipulating someone. In your mind, you must go with your brother. There is no way you could find the peace of God and remember Who you are as God's Son if you exclude anyone, because to exclude one part of the Sonship is to exclude the whole. That is very nice to say, and it is a lovely sentiment, but it is very difficult, as we all know, to really live that.

And the idea, once again, is not to feel guilty when you do not live it, but to be very aware that you are not living it. The Course gives you the understanding of why you are not living it—it is the fear of what it means to be back in the light. When you are in the light no one is excluded. The circle of Atonement embraces all people, not just the good ones. It has to embrace all people if it is truly corrective and healing.

**Part XIV
"Release from Guilt" (concluded)**

**(T-13.X.3:1) In any union with a brother in which you seek to lay your guilt upon him, or share it with him or perceive his own, you will feel guilty.**

You can see that Jesus is appealing to the basis of all human motives—selfish interests—saying you will feel better if you stop projecting your guilt onto other people. Part of the process of learning this course is to begin to feel how true that is and how miserable it feels to condemn, criticize, or judge other people. If you do not feel the pain of that, it means you are still defending against it, so do not force it on yourself and do not judge yourself; simply acknowledge that you are still too afraid of the truth of the Atonement, of what it means to be a true Child of God, that we are all one. Acknowledge that you still love to hate; you still love to get angry; and you still want to punish the "evil" people out there or in your own life. And you do not feel there is anything bad about that. Just be aware that is a fact right now; that you are still able to hold judgments, criticize people, and that you are okay.

When it begins to dawn on you that you are not okay, you will then be motivated to make the change. At least you can be aware of what the process is and that you know where the journey is taking you, that it is helping you to begin to realize how awful it feels when you get angry at someone. It seems to feel good, but in the end it feels awful. It really feels awful when you get away with manipulating and seducing someone into giving you what you want. There is that momentary triumph, for instance, if you strike a clever business deal, get the other guys, and make a great deal for yourself. You are triumphant. You spend all the money, you take your spouse out to dinner, and so on. It is great, but be aware that somewhere inside you know you have cheated. You might not have cheated in terms of the letter of the law, but you cheated because you got what you wanted and did not care about the other person.

I have mentioned other times that in the 1920s Freud said the reason Marxism will fail is that Marx did not understand the selfishness that is inherent in every human being. The idea of sharing equally without separate interests, he said, will fail because of the hatred and greed that is buried in everyone. It will never work. Freud was not interested in the economic system as such; he was saying that the ideal that all people would have what they need and would share in the same way would never work. So, do not feel bad when you get in touch with this in yourself. Be aware, though, that it is impossible to criticize someone else without feeling pain yourself. And if you do not feel the pain, it is because you are still very well defended, but at least you have learned something. Above all, this course calls for great honesty, so that you can really be aware of what is happening in yourself. The idea of being honest with yourself is to look, but without condemning yourself and without trying to justify what you are doing. Simply say that you are not there yet. You are still too afraid to let go of the defense against your guilt, and that is why it still feels good when you get what you want, either in a special love relationship or by beating up on the other guy and feeling justified in doing so.

**(T-13.X.3:2-3) Nor will you find satisfaction and peace with him, because your union with him is not real. You will see guilt in that relationship because you put it there.**

This has nothing to do with what you do, but only with what I do with you. If I perceive guilt in you, that has nothing whatsoever to do with your behavior—it has to do only with my perception. I see guilt there because I put it there, because if I were in my right mind, I would see your attack as a call for love, not worthy of judgment, but of love in return. If I do not see that and see guilt and sin instead, it is because I put it there. I want to see it there. Remember, projection makes perception. What I perceive outside comes from what I have first perceived and made real inside.

**(T-13.X.3:4-5) It is inevitable that those who suffer guilt will attempt to displace it, because they do believe in it. Yet though they suffer, they will not look within and let it go.**

We are seeing the same thing over and over again, so if you missed it the first or the tenth time, you will get it the twentieth time, hopefully. Everyone in this world suffers. This is a place of suffering. The Introduction to this chapter, which I did not read, makes that very, very clear. Anyone who does not think this is a place of suffering is not paying attention. This is not a happy place. We could even say that one of Jesus' purposes as our teacher is to convince us this world is not a happy place. That is the motivation for wanting to leave it, not through death, but through changing one's mind about it.

**(T-13.X.3:6-7) They cannot know they love, and cannot understand what loving is. Their main concern is to perceive the source of guilt outside themselves, beyond their own control.**

The same thing once again. Our concern in all relationships is that we would have an object onto whom we can project our guilt, that we can displace or project our guilt from our mind and put it on another person. Once it is out there, what goes on is not our fault. Again, on this level we are not responsible for what others do, but we are always responsible for the way we perceive what others do. Jesus makes it very clear in the Course that perception, a term he uses all the way through, is interpretation. Perception is not what our physical eyes see or our ears hear. It is the way we interpret what our eyes see and our ears hear. It is the meaning we give it. We either see it as a means to prove that we all are the same, that we all leave this dream as one, or we see it as a means of proving that we are all different, and we leave this world without anyone else: it is one or the other.

We turn now to paragraph 11 in the same section, "Release from Guilt."

**(T-13.X.11:1-4) You cannot enter into real relationships with any of God's Sons unless you love them all and equally. Love is not special. If you single out part of the Sonship for your love, you are imposing guilt on all your relationships and making them unreal. You can love only as God loves.**

This is an extreme statement, but it must be true if you consider what is involved. If I love everyone except one person, what I am doing is making guilt real first in myself—which means I am making separation real first in myself—and then I project it out and see it in someone else. Even if I love everyone else or think I love everyone else, I am loving none of them because I have made separation real. Separation, like love, is total. Remember, it is always one or the other, and each of those is a total thought system. Either separation is real or love is real, love meaning unity.

This is what Jesus means right at the end of the text, in the glorious final vision, when he says that "not one spot of darkness still remains to hide the face of Christ from anyone" (T-31.VIII.12:5). So what he is saying is that you cannot truly love as God loves unless your love embraces all. If it embraces all except one, then you have excluded all. Again, this is not meant to bring guilt into your life; it is meant to say: "You have already brought guilt into your life, so let me help you ferret out all the roots of this and see exactly where it is and how insidious it is. And let me help you do this by showing you how to look on your guilt and your need to exclude, without judging yourself and without feeling guilty over having chosen guilt. Let me help explore with you all of the relationships that you have, and let me help you uncover all the little seeds of guilt, all the seeds of hate that are there. Let me help purify you of the illusion that you can truly love some people without loving other people."

Again, we are not talking about form; we are talking about content. That is also the problem with nationalism, and with identifying with a specific group or sect—racial, economic, social, political, religious, etc.—because you will always embrace people who agree with you, people who are part of your group, without caring about anyone else. One of the criticisms Europeans make about Americans is that we have no knowledge of anything that goes on anywhere else in the world. We typically do not care about what goes on anywhere else in the world because we only care about ourselves, except insofar as our national interests are involved. That is not the case in other countries, but it certainly is the case here. That is just an example. Typically, we care about what goes on in our own family and not the families of others. We want our own family to have enough to eat, but if another family does not, well tough! It is their dream! That is the kind of A Course in Miracles distortion that goes on with Course students.

What this is saying is that, on the level of form, we obviously have to pay more attention to our family than to others' families, but that does not mean we have to exclude other people's families from our concern. "Concern" does not mean "worry," but rather realizing that we are all in this same miserable insane boat as one. In our minds, we cannot escape this boat unless we all leave as one. I cannot make the choice for you, but the choice that I make must be a choice that embraces everyone. Therefore, that is what we do. We practice with relationships that are specific and important to us—the relationships that are closest to us. The purpose of practicing with these relationships, though, is to learn to generalize. There is a nice statement about generalization in the introduction to the workbook. The whole purpose of learning is to generalize. We learn certain specific lessons and then generalize them. When we studied arithmetic, we learned certain specific operations: how to divide, add, subtract, and multiply. Once we learned those principles, we could generalize and multiply, add, subtract, and divide any number in the universe. We did not have to do it with every number in the universe; we learned the principles, and then we could do that with any number we were given.

Well, in a sense that is what we do with our work with the Course: We learn the principles of forgiveness in specific relationships, in all the obvious relationships in our life. From there, if we truly do this with the Holy Spirit or with Jesus, those lessons of reversing the projection and claiming responsibility for the guilt that we put in the relationship will generalize to all relationships. Then, any time a new person comes into our life, or we read about a person in the news, we will apply the same lessons and look at the way we react. Whether we are talking about a president, prime minister, or the person who just moved in next door, we will apply the exact same principles that we learned with our spouse, children, parents, colleagues, friends, lovers, etc. The lessons we learn with them we will be able to utilize with everyone. Then we watch to see how we do not want to do that. The idea is to just bring that resistance to the love of Jesus and ask him to help us look at this and understand why we are so fearful, etc.

**(T-13.X.11:5-6) Seek not to love unlike Him, for there is no love apart from His. Until you recognize that this is true, you will have no idea what love is like.**

The fact of the matter is that we do not want to love the way that God does, because God does not love persons, He does not love individuals, He just loves, but that should be the goal. One of the burdens that Jesus has as our teacher is to convince us that it is in our best interest to learn to love the way he does. That is very difficult, especially when we do not want to do that. The idea, once again, is to be able to look at that resistance in ourselves without guilt, judgment, or fear, and say, "Yes, I am not there yet. That is where I want to be, but I know I do not want to be there either." Just be aware of the contradiction in yourself and live with it. Do not try to resolve it or fix it. Live with it. Then all of a sudden the answer will come and the resistance will disappear, because on some level that you may not be aware of, you made the decision to let the resistance and the fear go. You must at least recognize what it is you are resisting: you do not want to love the way God loves.

**(T-13.X.11:7) No one who condemns a brother can see himself as guiltless and in the peace of God.**

Since I do not want to see myself "as guiltless and in the peace of God," what I do is condemn. Now I understand why I do it, because in the peace of God I do not exist. I have to leave my specialness and uniqueness outside the door.

**(T-13.X.11:8) If he is guiltless and in peace and sees it not, he is delusional, and has not looked upon himself.**

Very often in the Course, as in this passage, Jesus specifically uses psychiatric terms. Delusional is a psychotic state. The difference between hallucinations, a word he also uses, and delusions, is that hallucinations are perceptual: you hear, see, and smell things that are not there. Those are hallucinations. Delusional thinking is when you have insane thoughts, like believing someone is out to kill you: you hear a noise outside—the wind whistling through the trees—and immediately think people are outside the house plotting to destroy you. That is delusional thinking.

Here Jesus is saying that since the truth is that you are guiltless and in peace as God's Son, the fact that you do not recognize it, that you do not see it, is delusional, because you are denying what is there and making up a reality for yourself that is not true. While in this course Jesus never uses the words psychotic and schizophrenic, he does use the word insane. He never uses the word paranoid, but he describes us all through the dynamics of a paranoid schizophrenic. He is saying that we literally are psychotic, that we see things that are not there, namely, a world. We hear voices from other people that are not there, and we believe everyone is out to get us, including God. One could not ask for a better account of paranoid schizophrenia.

**(T-13.X.11:9-11) To him** [to the person who denies who he is] **I say:**

**Behold the Son of God, and look upon his purity and be still. In quiet look upon his holiness, and offer thanks unto his Father that no guilt has ever touched him.**

The Son of God he is saying to "behold" is the Son of God in the person we are in a relationship with, as well as ourselves. We cannot look upon the holiness in our brother until we first look at the fact that we have made him unholy. This is really an appeal to us: This is what you want; and if you want to see yourself as guiltless and at peace, then you must be willing to see that in your brothers. The way you will see it in other people is to first be aware of how much you do not want to see it in other people. Again, everything that we have been discussing explains why that is. We do not want to see it in other people because we want to keep the separation alive and well.

**(T-13.X.12:1) No illusion that you have ever held against him has touched his innocence in any way.**

In other words, not one note in Heaven's song of innocence has been changed. Nothing has happened. The Son of God is as innocent as he was before the separation, as he is now after the separation. Nothing changed.

**(T-13.X.12:2-6) His shining purity, wholly untouched by guilt and wholly loving, is bright within you. Let us look upon him together and love him. For in love of him is your guiltlessness. But look upon yourself, and gladness and appreciation for what you see will banish guilt forever. I thank You, Father, for the purity of Your most holy Son, whom You have created guiltless forever.**

That is a prayer that he says at the very end of the text, too. The bottom line in all of this is that we need to be aware that we first made the choice for guilt; we need to understand why we made the choice for guilt and what that choice for guilt has wrought in us—the awful effects of making us totally unhappy, miserable, and dis-eased. Finally, we need to recognize that this is not what we want and to remember Who we are as true children of innocence and peace. What helps us bring that about is to look at other people first and be aware of how much we have shrouded them in the darkness of our own guilt. Now we wish to remove that shroud, not so much from them, but from ourselves, recognizing at last that it is one innocent Son of God, not many, and that innocence embraces all people, not just some of them. It cannot be many sons; it must be all sons.