

Chapter 4

The Illusion of the Ego

Devotion to a brother cannot set you back. Devotion is inspiring - the opposite of fatigue. The ego embarks you upon tiresome journeys. Rather: **"Be still and know that I am God."** The only message of the crucifixion is that you can overcome the cross. This lesson will help you to undertake the journey that Jesus intended to offer. The ego has convinced the mind that it is totally on its own.

Teaching and Learning

A teacher must believe what he teaches and must believe in his students, and both are strengthened in the learning process. Change is fearful to those separated, being a reminder of the pain of the original separation. The ego must be gently taught to slowly relinquish its dark and fearful thoughts to the light of spirit. But just changing your mind is not enough. You must be willing to renounce your role as guardian of your thought system and give it over to Jesus. He will gently make the corrections needed to guide you back to God.

This does not mean giving your ego over to a larger ego. Neither does your decision to learn or not to learn change your worth in any way. God has already decided that. Jesus will also substitute for your ego and your body so that initially no major changes in your social habits are required. "Be of good cheer because I have over- come the world."

The Ego And False Autonomy

Everyone makes an ego for himself and assigns one to everyone else. This interaction alters both in some way. Even thinking about another person changes your relative perceptions. Belief is an ego function. Undermining your ego's thought system does not need to be painful. What does this mean?

Stop equating your self-esteem with what you own.

Surrender all your fear thoughts.

The appetites of your body will gradually decrease.

"Right-mindedness" is the next step, which perceives without judgment and without attack.

This leads to the inevitable realization that all perception is unnecessary.

Myths are entirely perceptual and consist of ambiguous and symbolic stories around the battle of good and evil and, sometime, an account of "the creation."

Love without Conflict

The whole message of the Atonement is that you represent God's Kingdom. Recite frequently the mantra: **"The Kingdom resides within and the ego's belief system cannot prevail against it."**

The ego does not believe in unconditional love. It enters all love relationships with great ambivalence and is based only upon what it can gain for itself. However, love will come to you by your sincere asking for it. Remain seated quietly and just ask for God's love. Ask the Father, in the name of Jesus, to help feel His love for you. Allowing yourself to experience this is a declaration of your release from the ego's hold. When you feel saddened, it is because the ego feels deprived. If you cannot hear the voice of God, it is because you have chosen not to listen.

The ego's gifts are all temporary and addicting, including bodily pleasures, mind-altering drugs, money, sex, praise, power, and the adrenal rush of conquest and success. None of these can compete with the love that enters any mind that sincerely asks for God's love. Only your own will can decide which you choose.

This Need not Be

You can change your mind – but not by changing your behavior. Overcome your denial and force yourself to list consciously the thoughts that you are currently operating on.

Depression comes from feeling deprived.

Anxiety comes from an over-demanding ego.

Only the ego can experience guilt.

Fear and Anger come from expecting attack.

Feeling disheartened is the cause for fatigue.

Consider: How would Jesus (or your Ideal Person) have viewed and handled this situation?

The problem is not one of concentration but of consistent effort. Your feelings will tell you when you have used judgment rightly to protect and to heal instead of to hurt, and then let the ego die by withdrawing your allegiance from it. Consider the opportunities that you have missed to gladden yourself through love.

The Second coming of Christ means nothing more than the end of the ego's rule and the healing of the mind. Know that you have been chosen despite the disbelief of your ego. Only maintain your conscious seeking.

The Ego-Body Illusion

The ego selects what it will permit into awareness. It makes the body its home, thus denying that you can be of God. Then it preoccupies your mind with insolvable problems.

The Rewards of God

True peace and joy can only come from God. The ego persists because you identify with it. In doing this you throw away your birthright. Don't make this mistake with your brother who has come to share the life experience with you for a special purpose. You approach God when you treat all of your brothers with gratitude.

Creation and Communication

The ego is the part of your mind that sees everything as concrete and separate. It will disrupt communication with anyone who disagrees with it. However, God created one universal mind in constant direct communication with all parts of itself and with Him. Your sense of existence and of being depends upon your constant communication with everything that is real. And this constant sharing expands the universe. That is why He created you.

His joy and yours is expanded every time you share everything you have. God is praised by minds that surrender all resistance to maintaining this circuitry. Every mind that uses free will to change from selfishness to

helpfulness praises God and brings joy to the Kingdom. These are the miracle workers who will be guided to whomever they can be most helpful.

