

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS THE BLOCK TO AWAKENING

[ACIM Text] "The holy instant is the miracle's abiding-place. From there, each one

. . . each miracle . . .

[ACIM Text]. . . "is born into this world as witness to a state of mind which has transcended conflict, and has reached to peace."

Simple and profound. And of course, the mind which has transcended conflict, and has reached to peace is the mind of the one who has practiced the holy instant: You.

Now from time to time, I have shared something that Paul says to himself before each gathering, before each study group. And it goes like this:

"I allow only for that which expresses the Christ consciousness and only that which is in harmony with the purpose of Being (with a capital 'B') the Father's Will." And he continues . . . "in other words, Thy Will, not mine be done. Let the reign of divine truth, life, and Love be established in me and rule out of me all self-will. And may Thy Word enrich the affections of all mankind and govern them."

This has been very meaningful to Paul since he employed it within the first few conversations that we had together. Now what he didn't realize was that that was the practice of the holy instant. He had never read the Course yet, but nevertheless, his sitting down and saying simply, "Thy Will be done, not mine" and then listening . . . there you are, the two-step.

As a result of that practice, it was a very short time, less than two weeks before he heard me respond. And the conversations we had were not only inspiring but life-changing for him and very profound. To be talking with me was something quite significant to him.

But you know, it's interesting how self-righteousness can tag along with one's spiritual growth. And for many years after our first conversation, Paul felt that the fact that he was able to talk with me, or that I was willing to talk with him was because he had excelled in his study of truth – his religious upbringing – and that that had brought him to a point of excellence which caused him to be deserving of this experience, which of course, was utterly false. Because at the bottom line, when we had our first conversations, Paul was in dire straits . . . unemployed, with a family of three children and

a wife, and none of his practice of his religious upbringing that he felt he had excelled at was correcting the problem.

He was in the pits. He was failing and nothing he did was correcting the situation. That's how competent he was, fortunately, because in the light of that circumstance, it brought him to his knees, literally. And he found himself many times on the floor with his forehead on the carpet, bowed almost as flat as one can get to the floor praying for help – asking for help. No longer thinking that he had any personal capacity or spiritual power all by himself, he abandoned it and then finally started sitting down nightly and making the statement that I just shared with everyone. And then came our first conversations and of course, all the ones since then.

The saying is quite true: Man's extremity is God's opportunity.

When you or Paul or anyone arrives at a point where you willingly and completely abandon your own self-righteousness, your own private personal capacity to accomplish great things on your own, and you are in a state of humility – which to you, you define as failure, which is insulting, which is awful – when you arrive at that point with no more faith in yourself and your righteousness, and you sincerely ask for help, you get the help. Not because of your competence, but because of what you Are, the Son or Daughter of God whom God answers when God is approached genuinely. It's that simple.

After we began talking, Paul's worldly situation began to change as a result of the Guidance and the clearer understanding that I was sharing with him and which he was embracing. But it wasn't because he was making anything happen at all. It wasn't because he was suddenly given power by virtue of his relationship with me to cause good things to happen. No. The good things happened because that's the nature of Being. The good things happened because it's the Father's Will for fulfillment to be the center and circumference of the conscious experience of Being. That's why.

Now everything that you are hearing me teach about what the Course is saying is leading you to the point where you are willing to do exactly what Paul did. And especially in the last few weeks, I have been illuminating the contrast between independent self-assertive arrogant private thinking that seems to convince you that you are an authority of some kind in your own right who can make things happen and you who's willing to abandon that, and in the quietness within you, turn your attention away from yourself and

your capacity and how you feel and how right you are, and simply turn to the Father or the Holy Spirit and say, “I need help! I need to know what the truth is separate and apart from anything I personally privately think. Because what I personally privately think is arrogant self-righteousness. It is me valuing my thoughts and my words more than God’s. It is me valuing the meanings I am applying to all of Creation in preference to asking God what His Meanings are in all Creation.” You see?

Now, although Paul values the prayer he says, and although he says “let the reign of divine truth, life and love be established in me,” meaning not at his own hand but as the law of God Being the lawful orderliness and nature of Paul’s Being without Paul refuting it or modifying it in any way, he’s found during the last few weeks as we’ve been discussing self-righteousness, that he is not that willing in all situations to defer to the Holy Spirit – that which is nothing more than his right Mind – or the Father because he is so damned sure that what he thinks and what he knows is true.

The only thing is that since we’ve been discussing this, as I know it is with many of you, it has caused him to become quite angry. Because there are so many instances where he knows it is appropriate for him to be upset, for him to be self-righteously angry, for him to point the finger and for him to believe that the correction of the problems must be accomplished by manipulating things “out there” instead of abandoning his vantage point – the one, the arrogant self-righteous easily angered, easily disturbed mentality.

And yet, when he yielded to that angry mindset and when he resists letting go of that kind of control, he’s miserable and there is no relief from it. In fact, it gets worse. And then, as I make it clearer to him and you, the impracticality of it, the danger of it, the destructiveness of it, that makes him even more upset. Because if you abandon it, how on earth can you ever get justice?

Now at the bottom line, it isn’t that Paul or any of you are mean-spirited actually, it’s just that as we’ve discussed, you feel that the practice of self-righteousness is essential to your safety, when it’s not.

Now Paul is finding as everyone finds out, that the extended practice of self-righteousness and anger and judgment accomplishes nothing and finally something in you decides it’s not worth it to continue. And what happens? You begin to find value in discovering how to forgive. And as any

of you begin to practice forgiveness . . . which means what? your withdrawal of your judgment, you become free of the control of the negative situation that you have been angry at and judgmental of. It doesn't necessarily mean that the situation goes away but it doesn't hook you, it doesn't trick you into committing yourself to being ongoingly upset and righteously judgmental.

And in your peace you can turn your attention elsewhere to things that are actually full of fulfillment.

Now when you do that you've transcended conflict and you have reached to peace and you have the peace and you are supplied with the clarity and insight that lifts you into your natural loving harmonious state of mind. But you can't do it by yourself and this experience has never occurred as a result of your doing it by yourself.

You have to join with the Holy Spirit or with me or with the Father genuinely. And healing comes.

There is still learning to be experienced about self-righteousness and about the holy instant.

I know that the things I've had to say about self-righteousness and the way I have uncovered them – many styles in which it finds expression in each of you – has been disconcerting, unnerving, unpleasant. And indeed, if you're not careful, you might conclude that coping with self-righteousness means going on an internal witch-hunt to find out all the many ways in which you have unconsciously been practicing it. And of course, that approach involves the belief that you are uncovering flaws . . . flaws in what? Flaws in yourself. And so it becomes a destructive and depressing process and that needs to be corrected.

Now there's something important to understand. And that is, that you cannot engage in self-righteousness alone. It is never a private, autonomous authoritative self-expression. It's always indulged in tandem with another. Another way of saying it is, it always involves relationships.

Therefore, the flaw isn't yours and the flaw isn't that of the one you've joined with. It's simply a fantasy that the two of you have engaged in and given credence to, made commitment to and made yourself miserable by means of.

Now, you know I spoke some time ago about the fact that God never gave you the capacity to think. That's not the function of Mind. The function of Mind is consciousness, awareness, the unlimited experience of Creation – of observation of Creation – of allowing Creation to register and recognize it for what it is.

Now that's your normal divine state. That's what opens up to you and is revealed to you when you engage in the holy instant by becoming still and enquiring, "What is the truth here?" You see? And in the absence of thinking, pure conscious awareness of the only thing there is to be aware of – God's Creation – unfolds to you. It's uncovered and illuminated to you. And you experience without thought processes the Meaning of it all.

Here, there is no possibility of self-righteousness. Why? Because you're not being as an entity in your own right in relationship with anything else as an entity in its own right. You see?

So you could indeed go on an internal witch-hunt using your intellect and your so-called capacity to think, to uncover this awful self-righteousness that is part of you that you need to become free of if you don't want to die. That's a pretty heavy-duty indictment on yourself which will absolutely blind you to the simple answer.

What is the simple answer? It's monotonous, I know.

The simple answer is engage in the holy instant, which means withdraw from the mutual agreements with your brother or sister. Withdraw from your imaginations relative to your brothers and sisters. And become silent . . . still the thinking. Become gently quiet with invitation to Know the truth . . . to have the Father's Perspective revealed to you, which is the Holy Spirit's function. It is to reveal your right Mind to you.

So to put it simply: The holy instant is the vestibule between autonomy or privacy and wholeness.

Now, in the past I've also used the illustration of a sphere . . . a ball made out of pure crystal that has on its surface an infinite number of facets. And each facet is you. Each facet is one of the infinite Sons and Daughters of God. Now you are used to the definition of the facet on the surface of the globe – of the ball. And you are used to thinking that that surface is you and you alone. And you are used to thinking all of the other facets as being other individualities, them and them alone.

And then there is communication that can occur between all of these infinite facets – lines of communication, we'll say, caused by the boundary between the facets.

Now when looked at that way, that is the equivalent of the orphan mentality – the isolated tiny independent alone presence. But if you will look at the ball from the inside and you view the entire, we will say, surface of the inside of this infinite ball, you will see all the Sons and Daughters of God. You will recognize the specific shape of the facet you Are. But something will have changed. Because as you look within the ball you find that the whole interior constituted of pure crystal, is you as well.

The ball is you. And every single one of the Brotherhood of Man is some aspect of you. Because looking from the inside, all of them are at some place in the wholeness of the interior of the ball, just as you are. And so in this way, you can see that all the Sons and the Daughters of God are One, given apparent definition or individuality by means of the facet on the surface of the interior, we will say.

Now I'm going to back up and say that the holy instant is the vestibule between the outside and the inside of the crystal ball. The surface is the vestibule. And when you become still and you wish to Know the truth, imagine if you will, that it is like no longer looking out as far as you can see on the horizon of the surface, but that you have as it were, put your face through the surface as though it were water so that you can see underneath the surface of the crystal ball. And you shift from being one among many to being the One that is the many recognizing at the same time that every other brother and sister is the One that is the many including you.

How do you handle self-righteousness? By dipping your face into the surface of the ball that is the delineation between the interior and the exterior. In doing that you abandon the autonomous relationships of all of the facets that you can see on the outside, you abandon that in favor of the experience of wholeness – of Oneness with all of your brothers in which there is no way to experience independence or autonomy even though you do not lose individuality.

Now that is a lot simpler than what you might have found yourself doing in the last few weeks. As we've discussed, the danger, the threat, the impracticality of indulging in self-righteousness . . . don't handle self-

righteousness, handle the use to which you're putting your mind by, deciding not to use it to think and come to conclusions and to make mutual agreements with other independent brothers and sisters, but to instead become still.

And in the silence, which is another way of describing the interior – the undistinguishable interior of the crystal ball – so that the true perception of your brothers and sisters can register with you while you're just being Mind, not a thinking mind, but Mind, conscious awareness, soaking up by being curious, the infinite Meanings of God which are apparent there in the silence, there in the view through and within the interior of the crystal ball. You see?

The answer is embodied in the holy instant.

Now when I said you can't experience and express self-righteousness all by yourself, that you can't experience it until a joining with a brother or sister has occurred, I've made it clear that the problem is not a personal private problem of your own, but that it is the result of an invitation to be upset by someone else who is upset.

What happens? Someone else has taken the bait from someone else. And they are now upset and they broadcast an invitation to be upset. And if you have entertained ideas that are flawed, but ideas which you have no emotional charge associated with and the invitation from another that comes to you as a charged invitation, it's the same issue or the same thought that you have imaginatively toyed with without emotion, you are easily caught up in having an emotional reaction to what had been an uncharged thought in you because a brother, someone else has invited you.

And now you find yourself angry or you find yourself jealous or you find yourself impatient or judgmental [snaps fingers] out of the blue it would seem, and you think it's your real thought. You think it's you. When you would be greatly helped if the moment you found yourself out of your peace, you ask: "Am I picking up on someone else? Am I being hooked by someone else's reactions? You see?"

Reactions of this sort are not practical means of problem-solving. One doesn't have to be upset in order to solve a problem or recognize a problem. In fact, it becomes impossible to solve a problem when you are upset because the inspiration needed to see outside "the box" isn't

available to you because you're so tight and tied up in your reaction which you think is yours and which you think is legitimate.

And it's not. It's not legitimate for you and it's not legitimate for the brother who's extending the invitation . . . who received an invitation from another . . . who received an invitation from another . . . who received an invitation from another . . . as it goes around the outside of the globe – the crystal ball – on the lines of communication formed by the delineation between the facets. You see?

How do you break that momentum? How do you break that spontaneous entrapment that you found yourself in?

Well, by first of all challenging the idea that it's yours. And asking, "Am I being impacted by the emotions of others?" I will tell you, if you are emotionally disturbed the answer is always, "yes" because it's impossible for you to experience self-righteousness all by yourself. What does that mean . . . all by yourself? It means it's impossible to experience it in the silence of the holy instant.

The answer – the escape from the whole dilemma – is a matter of moving into the silence, is a matter of abandoning the lines of communication around the outside of the crystal ball and gently placing your face into the surface of the ball and through it so that your attention shifts from privacy to wholeness, from your false definitions to the Meanings of Creation that the Father is Being. You see?

Always, when you are disturbed, when you are indulging in self-righteousness, you are looking from a victim vantage point and not from the vantage point of the answer that undoes the victimization. And whenever you are stuck looking from the victim standpoint you will remain there and suffer because it is a false vantage point. It isn't even yours! Except that you've accepted this invitation to be upset because someone else is upset . . . because someone else is upset . . . because someone else is upset.

Now, the holy instant involves what? The two-step: One, shutting up, silencing the thinking, silencing the imagination, silencing the logic, silencing all of the special uses you've given to your mind, which is only the means of paying attention, of being conscious. When you abandon that and then inquire as to what the truth is, the truth is revealed. It truly is revealed

– illuminated to you. Why? Because you have asked the Father or the Holy Spirit or your Guide to have the truth revealed to you.

In other words, you have shifted your attention from the role of victim and all that goes into the victimization mindset . . . you've abandoned that and asked to know what the divine view is. You've shifted from victim mindset to savior mindset. Not that you are able to suddenly be the savior, but in the absence of identifying yourself as the victim and reaching out to That which Knows the answer and asking for the Perspective of the one Who Knows, you're asking to have the savior Perspective, the perspective of Wholeness to answer you, to fill you with clarity. You see? That's the utter simplicity of it.

How do you cope with self-righteousness? You abandon it. You go within, into the silence and you ask of the Father or the Holy Spirit or your Guide or me, "What is Your Perspective? What is the Father's Perspective? Share it with me. Reveal it to me, infill me with it, so that I may have the true experience, not the false imaginative experience of the orphan mentality — the victim. You see?

Many movies these days lose the ability to inspire, because they adopt the vantage point of the victim. And if the answer that heals, if the answer that corrects, if the practice of intelligence which causes relief to come, enters into the picture at all it's very brief and isn't really the point of the picture, because the picture was about the struggle. The victim vantage point was the vantage point from which the film was made, conceived. You see?

Do you want that which clarifies, then you must abandon the victim mentality that you are feeling. You must stop validating it, you must shut it up and you must say, "Father, what is the truth here? I want nothing but the experience of Your Perspective. Holy Spirit, perform your function of uncovering to me my right Mind which is my natural capacity to experience the Father's Perspective, a capacity He instilled to me because He withheld nothing of what He is when He created me. I am going to stop playing around with the excitement of thinking, of valuing my opinion more than the truth, of valuing my perspective more than the Father's. You see?

That's self-righteousness. And that's you identifying yourself as one of the facets. Hell, if you'll look into the interior of the crystal ball you'll find that all of the facets are you, from a little bit different vantage point, creating a

wealth of diversity and interest and originality. You see? In that experience is peace. You see?

It's simple. As you go into this coming week, don't be looking for what new forms of self-righteousness you can find. If you're not going to engage in the holy instant you'll find that self-righteousness presents itself uninvited to you, spontaneously. You don't have to hunt for it. Just notice if you're happy. "Am I happy now? Yes. Am I happy now? Oh, no. Am I happy now? Oh a little more than I was. Am I happy now?" You see? You know whether you're happy. You know whether you're experiencing peace. And if you're not, you are identifying as a victim. And you're acting out the part. And you're using self-righteousness to validate it. And self-righteousness causes you to experience everything from the outside of the crystal ball where the fullness and the wholeness and the Oneness of Being is unavailable to you and will always be unavailable to you.

The only answer is, gently put your face into the surface of the crystal ball as though it's water and push down into the water into the interior of the crystal ball so that everything in its infinite oneness is available to you as the wholeness of you and the Wholeness of God, where sin, disease and death disappear and where self-righteousness doesn't even come up for consideration.

Don't make yourself miserable by looking for flaws in yourself. There are things that need to be corrected, but an invitation was made to you to participate in reaction to them, by someone who accepted an invitation from someone else. And everyone is suffering from something that isn't theirs, that did not originate with them, but which they all feel – including you – is you having your own legitimate miserable feelings. And it's not true. And you'll never be able to successfully search out all the things that are untrue and get rid of them because only a victim looks for the cause of his victimization.

The holy Son or Daughter of God abandons the search for the cause of victimization and joins with the One Mind for the sole purpose of having what that Mind is, reveal Itself to him or to her, uncovering his or her wholeness and emancipating him or her from the invitation that had been accepted and contributing to the release of all the others who had accepted the invitation, not recognizing it for what it was. The answer is simple.

Now, I'm going to ask you to consider whether or not you're finding yourself losing more and more control, where you seem to be the brunt of chance – not good chance but miserable chance. Are you finding that more and more things are happening that you're no longer being able to cope with, so that you feel pushed down further and further? Good . . . good . . . because it means that you're no longer as deeply imbedded in the victim mentality, you're no longer as deeply imbedded in the orphan mentality and the unreality of it, the impracticality of it is not escaping your attention.

And the reason I say, "good," the reason I say, "this is excellent," is that it is making it easier for you to go ahead and risk the chance that there is a God, by setting aside your self-righteousness — shutting up, which is choosing for your peace and then activating your curiosity as conscious awareness, as Mind to Know the truth.

Doing that seems a difficult task, one that it's hard to believe will work. And that's because up until recently, almost all of you have had a fair chance of making things work out. And now that capacity to exercise control is diminishing. The dream is ending. The illusion of mortal life is failing.

And what is it doing? It's requiring that the holy Son and Daughter of God that you Are has to claim his and her Birthright and own it and let it in and have no other option, have no other desire so that it might clear your mind of all the thinking and all of the commitment to your thinking and leave it as the pure capacity to be aware of the Movement of God without distortion and Wake up, ascend into Heaven without dying.

Let there be encouragement from what I am saying. Don't tolerate self-righteousness when it occurs. Recognize it when it happens. Don't tolerate it for an instant. Simply abandon it. It is not practical. It is not useful. And it will seem to kill you, because it secures the illusion of mortality even though you are immortal and the death will not be real and you will still be faced with having to make this simple choice that we're talking about this evening.

So what do you have to lose, except the right to be pissed off whenever you feel like it? What do you have to lose besides being able to be miserable whenever you want? What do you have to lose beside sickness and pain and disease? Nothing!

So I'm going to say, "lighten up." Don't pursue an inner witch-hunt. Lighten up and do this irrational thing of abandoning self-righteousness the moment

you notice it by doing the one simple thing – the two-step – practicing the holy instant. You'll have plenty of opportunity because it's so easy to be reactive, it's so easy to be miserable, it's so easy to have a negative interpretation about everything. Hey, everybody is to some degree feeling really miserable and their misery constitutes an invitation to you to feel miserable, even though without the invitation you could avoid it to a certain degree and not be quite as uncomfortable.

So the answer again is simple. Remember that. And this week practice the irrational step of immediately recognizing when you've lost your peace and no matter what the justifications seem to be for it, get back into your peace. Shut up and ask to be informed by the Father, by the Holy Spirit, by me, by your Guide as to what the real truth is that will erase your illusions.

I love you very much, all of you. And I look forward to being with you next time

~excerpts from ACIM Study Groups with Raj/Jesus 8/4 and 8/11/13

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