

ACIM Practices during Lent

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ACIM Practices during Lent – Week 1

When Jesus emerged from the desert with the full awareness of his divinity and oneness with his Creator, he heard these loving words, “This is my Son in whom I am well pleased”. These words were not just meant for Jesus, but for all of us, for we are all the Sons of God. How can He not be pleased with what He Created like Himself? How God sees us is not in question. The question is, are we ready to see ourselves as God Created us? Let’s dedicate the next 40 days preparing our minds to accept the truth of who we are as God’s holy Son so we will be open to receive His love and care.

Week One: Peace

Are you feeling overwhelmed, off-balance or chaotic? If yes, you are in good company. The majority of us are in over-drive where the inner engine is running at full speed. If we took a poll and asked, “What do you wish to have more of?” What do you think the answer would be? Pause for a moment before answering and review your inner experiences as you go through your day. Does your heart race? Is your mind in a constant state of thinking? Do you sense an overall feeling of anxiousness? Wouldn’t it be amazing to go through your day with an inner calm, a sense of well-being, a core of stillness – all while in the midst of the “whirlwind” we call life? Of course it would. But you might be asking, “How can I experience peace when work is demanding, family life is vigorous and unrelenting, and relationships are tumultuous?” Most believe that to be at peace everything around them needs to be peaceful. If this were true, and peace was contingent on work demanding less, family life moving slowly and relationships running smoothly, then we would be waiting a long time to experience peace! Fortunately, the Course teaches that we don’t have to wait for the world to change to find peace. Peace is available anytime we want it.

To understand this, it’s important to remember the condition of our mind. It seems to hold two opposing thought systems: the ego’s and the Holy Spirit’s. If we engage in ego thoughts we feel confused, upset, fearful, overwhelmed, and off-balance. If we engage in Holy Spirit thoughts we feel peaceful, calm, content, sure, and relaxed. Therefore, to have peace we must choose Holy Spirit thoughts. This teaching is simple enough and yet, peace still seems to be evasive and out of reach. If this is our experience, the Course would ask us one very important question: “Is peace what you really want?” On the surface the answer would appear to be “yes, I want peace”. But underneath what we are really saying is: “I want peace as long as I can still hold ego thoughts in my mind”. In other words, we want to experience peace and at the same time still pass judgment on others, still pursue and desire the trinkets of this world, and still keep others at arms length (out of your personal space). We want to experience peace *and* be angry at our boss, see others as having the problem, hold onto the idea that others don’t appreciate us, etc. The problem is not that peace is unavailable in any given moment; the problem is we still want to hold onto ego thoughts. It is clear by our experience that a choice for ego is a choice for the *opposite* of peace. Therefore, the key to choosing peace is to let go of the desire for ego thoughts; want only the peace of God, and presto -- it is ours!

The Course does not ask us to take this on faith alone. It is through experience that we will know these words are true. Throughout your week in all circumstances, practice repeating these words: “I want the peace of God”. Visualize your mind resting in Holy Spirit thoughts. Speak to yourself over and over these thoughts (see below) and then feel the stillness and peace that comes from this choice. If your boss is raising his voice, children are demanding your attention, drivers are honking their horns, or the checkout line in the store is at a standstill, you *can* choose peace. Every time you practice you will learn that the condition of confusion, anxiousness, and upset (opposites of peace) is merely a choice for the ego, and in order to return to peace you need only *want* peace above all else. Through this practice you will learn that ego thoughts do not hold a candle to what God offers you. You will easily let them go and choose the peace of God.

Week One Practice:

The world is a very distracting place. It is full of dangling carrots beckoning us to chase after dreams that lead to nowhere. Therefore, it's important to set aside time for solitude *and* to make a commitment to practice throughout the day. Granted, it's not 40 days away on a desert island but it's a great start!

Read: Workbook Lesson #185 "I want the peace of God"

Morning and Evening Prayer: W-346.1.

Father, I wake today with miracles correcting my perception of all things. And so begins the day I share with You as I will share eternity, for time has stepped aside today. I do not seek the things of time, and so I will not look upon them. What I seek today transcends all laws of time and things perceived in time. I would forget all things except Your Love. I would abide in You, and know no laws except Your law of love. And I would find the peace which You created for Your Son, forgetting all the foolish toys I made as I behold Your glory and my own.

Daily Mantra and During Times of Temptation: W-205.1.

"I want the peace of God. The peace of God is everything I want. The peace of God is my one goal; the aim of all my living here, the end I seek, my purpose and my function and my life, while I abide where I am not at home. I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me."