

ACIM Practices during Lent

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Week Three: The Truth Will Set You Free

We all want to be free from the human experience of suffering, lack, unworthiness, rejection, loss etc. therefore we are in a constant search for ways *to be* free. I tried all the ways the world told me would work. I became self-reliant and independent. I pursued an education. I sought to establish a career. I looked for the right partner that would make me feel special. I sacrificed for others and worked hard to be good. When I became a student of the Course, I was exhausted from trying so hard to free myself from pain and fear and disillusioned because none of it had worked. I was very open to learning about a *different* way, one that I hadn't tried before, and the Course did not disappoint. The Course teaches that the way to be free from human suffering; the guaranteed way to perfect happiness, safety and peace is to accept and know the truth. In other words; "The truth will set you free". The truth sets you free from the human condition because the truth is; you are not human, you are divine. You are part of the Kingdom of God. You are the holy Son in whom God is well pleased. You are light. You are love. Accept this as your *only* identity and you are as free and unencumbered as spirit is and you will find yourself living within the Kingdom which has a plentiful supply of peace, joy, love, acceptance, union and safety. Deny this truth and continue to want to *be* something else and you will experience yourself outside the Kingdom, toiling for every scrape, working hard to protect yourself from danger and feeling alone.

On paper this seems simple enough; just accept the truth. It's simple in theory but not easy in practice. Why? Because acceptance of the truth means you must lay aside wanting anything else. It reminds me of the scene in the movie "A Few Good Men", when Tom Cruise's only mission was to discover the truth and Jack Nicolson responds; "You can't handle the truth". Let's look at a few examples to illustrate why we would not want the truth.

Suppose you find yourself alone after being in a relationship. Loneliness is an experience you would like to be free from. If the truth is what sets you free, than accepting yourself as already whole and complete and joined with everyone is what will free you from this loneliness- not finding another relationship. Feel any resistance? Let's look at another example. Imagine that you are a capable, independent person. You like being in control because it feels less fearful. You do not rely on anyone for anything. You are an island unto yourself. You are weary from doing it all alone and feel the pain of being alone. If the truth is what sets you free, the truth is you are forever one with God and therefore *He* is your strength your protection and your source. To be free you must let go of control and trust to be led and provided for by Holy Spirit. Feel any resistance? Let's look at one more example. Do you have a relationship where there is conflict? To be free of conflict you need only accept the truth. What is truth? It is seeing your partner not as an enemy or as someone else but as yourself- another part of the Sonship- divine and holy and joined with you. Feel any resistance? Jack Nicolson's words seem to apply to us. We may recognize that the truth is the answer to all of our pain and suffering and we might take steps toward truth, but when truth presents itself we recoil from it. Can we handle the truth? Do we want the truth? There reminds me of a great line in the movie "The Waking Life". *"In time God is posing a question; 'Do you want to be one with eternity?'" and we're all saying, 'No, thank you. Not just yet.' And so time is actually just this constant saying no to God's invitation. And life is a story that moves from the "no" to the "yes"."* Our journey through time is to learn that truth (one with God and with all our brothers) is *what we want* and to let go of the pursuit of wanting something else. This may seem like a long time coming, but as we learn that truth does not leave us in danger but rather frees us from the human condition and restores us to safety and peace; we begin to walk faster to the truth. When we say "yes" we want truth in that moment we are free.

Week Three Practice:

Truth is unchangeable and is available anytime we want it. What stops the flow of truth is our wanting something else. We believe that we can hold onto our desire for independence, control, grievances and specialness and at the same time be free of suffering, pain and fear. This is not so. The truth is the only thing that will free us. Therefore, we will devote our practice this week to wanting truth above all else.

Read: Workbook Lesson #251- "I am in need of nothing but the truth."
Workbook Lesson #104- "I seek but what belongs to me in truth."

Morning and Evening Prayer:

All I would ever need, all I could ever want- truth offers me. The world offers me nothing; no protection, no solutions, no joy and no peace. Accepting truth and letting go of my search in the world does not put me in danger because any attempt to put reliance on myself is magic; an illusion of safety that doesn't work. God is my protection and my strength. It is the truth that sets me free and keeps me safe. And it is this I choose today.

Daily Mantra and During Times of Temptation:

Ask: "In this situation what is it that I would rather have *be* true other than *the* Truth?" (IE: I want them to be wrong, I want them to be responsible for what they did, I want to be in control, etc.)

Say, "It is the truth that will set me free. Nothing else will work. I give my willingness to accept truth for myself and the world. I desire in this situation an experience of truth"