

When Something Seems Unforgivable

I am involved with a group of teachers who work with students of *A Course in Miracles*. One week during our phone meeting we were discussing forgiveness in relation to domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Thankful for what came from our discussion, especially the reminder there are “no order of difficulties in miracles”, I filed the notes and went about my day. A few hours later, I had an unexpected phone call. Someone was asking me for assistance with a situation in which they were advising a teenage girl who had been sexually assaulted in her high school. As the details came forth, I began substituting my teenage daughter’s name and face with that of the young girl’s. I felt my fear and disgust rising. At the end of the story, this person asked, “Can you help me?” Swept away in my own fear, all I could muster was, “I hope they nail the boy to the cross!!” It never occurred to me to ask Holy Spirit for his release from guilt until a few hours later when I was looking for release from my own guilt because of a small “sin” that I had committed.

I was parked on a street and was trying to maneuver my way out of a tight parking space. I decided to inch up closer to the car in front of me instead of risk damage to my tires by going up on the curve. I bumped the car and immediately upon impact, I was consumed with guilt. As I was busy mulling over what I should do to ease the guilt, a Course passage popped into my mind: “...if you judge the reality of others you will be unable to avoid judging your own.”

(T.3.VI.1:4) I immediately thought of the judgment I made on the boy. The message was clear: guilt is an all-or-nothing thing. Seeing no way out for him, closed off my chances of being exonerated as well. My acceptance of guilt in him was my agreement with the idea of a guilty self, and it was just a matter of a few hours before I was holding the hot potato. If I wanted to be free of the guilt I had to be willing to deny guilt both in him and in me. This seemed impossible considering what the boy had done. My trust in Holy Spirit’s Wisdom far outweighed any doubt there was an answer that would make sense. So I turned my focus within, joining with Holy Spirit to teach me.

When it does not even enter our mind to ask Holy Spirit for guidance because we think we already know the facts, do not worry. The filter that you are seeing this story through is the filter you will see everything through, until you are so uncomfortable with what you are seeing that you will ask with your whole heart; “What am I seeing? What is true? What is blocking truth?” When the awareness comes, notice it and be grateful for it.

Why We Are Stuck In Our Unforgiveness

The Holy Spirit began by showing me my first slip in the mind: a judgment that what I saw was real. Not only did I see the crime as real (a body attacking another body), but I also judged the bodies as their reality. *“Forgiveness through the Holy Spirit lies simply in looking beyond the error from the beginning and thus keeping it unreal for you. Do not let any belief in its realness enter your minds at all, or you will also believe that you must undo what you have made in order to be forgiven. What has no effect does not exist, and to the Holy Spirit, the effects of error are totally non-existent”* (T-9.IV.5:3-4) Why is it so important to *not* believe that you have to undo what you have made to be free of guilt? Because it is impossible to undo what has already occurred. How can you undo the hurt that you have *already* caused? It is in the past, and unless you can go back in time and have a “do-over”, you carry the guilt with you like a heavy ball and chain. We all realize this on some level. Once the crime is committed, there is no way to go back. That is why we feel deep regret when we think about the past.

The ego has plenty of solutions to offer us when we experience the guilt. Pay off your guilt by paying a price. We can only find absolution if we pay a penalty in equal proportion to the pain we caused. The boy could be forgiven only if he paid the price for his crime. But how? Only if he felt the pain the girl felt, could he even begin to make amends. And that means another attack must take place for that to happen. Which means the attacker feels the pain of guilt and therefore must pay in the same way. Notice these solutions do not restore innocence. They merely make our guilt more tolerable. The best we can hope for is knowing we are suffering in equal amounts to the suffering we caused. This is not

freedom. Instead of a never-ending chain of forgiveness”, we see the ego’s plan of the never-ending chain of guilt. It is the perfect ploy of the ego, to never be free of guilt.

It’s All The Same Guilt

You might be thinking that hitting a car does not equal the crime of sexual assault; the damage I caused was nothing compared to the damage he caused, therefore the boy is guiltier than I. To believe this is to believe two things: we are guilty *because of* what has happened and the amount of guilt we have is dependant on the crime committed. In A Course in Miracles, this way of thinking is false. The guilt existed in the mind *before* anything was manifested in form and there are no varying degrees of guilt. The seed of guilt was planted in the mind the moment we believed we destroyed our true nature, shattered Heaven and usurped God as Creator. Now deeply rooted, and firmly established, guilt becomes manifested through many different forms such as sickness, sacrifice, attack, punishment, and death.

Many forms, one guilt- in one mind. If guilt already exists in the mind and the form is only an expression of the guilt therefore fixing the form does not release the guilt, what then is the way to be free of guilt? Holy Spirit taught me this through a dream.

Dream

I was with my children (symbolic of our real Creations in Heaven). We were in a store and it was closing time. The children left through the front door, but I was distracted by a figurine on the table and by the time I wanted to leave the door was locked. The owner told me to exit another way—out the window and down the sloping roof (symbolic of the belief that we wandered away from Heaven and our real Creations because we became mesmerized by the fantasy of specialness). As I landed on the ground, there was a man who was a doctor. He wanted to make sure I was ok. As he was tending to my ankle we began talking and I became mesmerized by our intellectual conversation. It was all very engaging and stimulating. We began walking away from the store still very engrossed in our conversation (symbolic of our intellectual thinking mind distracting us and causing us to forget). We seemed to walk in and out of scenes as if in a play or on stage (symbolic of our various events, situations, places in this dream we call our life). The first scene was a beautiful meadow with a crystal blue sky filled with brilliant colored hot air balloons. The people were having a grand time flying in the air. We then wandered into a scene of sandy white beaches with palm trees and a grass hut. As we went inside the hut, I was dazzled by everything my eyes were seeing. The good and beautiful aspects of the scenes captivated me and I went deeper into forgetfulness.

Absentmindedly, I reached into my purse and spotted my cell phone. The presence of the phone seemed to jar a distant memory of something that seemed important (this can be any symbol that enters into our dream that seems to trigger a memory of our true nature or our home, such as A Course in Miracles). It felt like I was coming out of a daze. I seemed to recall a memory of leaving something precious to me. It was on the tip of my tongue but I couldn’t quite capture what it was I left. Just then a woman said, “Oh. That is my phone. Here is yours. They must have gotten switched.” When I looked at the phone I had 50 missed calls and I could tell by the date that I had been gone a whole week! With this information the memory of what I had done came flooding back into my mind. I had left my children without supervision, care, or concern and wandered off. How could I do such a thing? How could I be so self-centered? The guilt was overwhelming. I felt nauseous as I doubled over, moaning in deep regret (symbolic of the guilt that rises up to our awareness while working with ACIM).

With the crushing guilt came the terror. What had happened to them while I was gone? Were they even still alive? Were they hurt...hungry...scared? (Symbolic of the terror experienced when we believe we chose against God and caused real and devastating effects). I called my daughter’s number. When she answered, I cried out my remorse. I pleaded with her to forgive me for what I had done (symbolic of our crying out to God and Holy Spirit to have mercy on us for our sins). Her voice was very calm. “Mom, why are you so upset? What are you talking about? We are fine.” I couldn’t

believe her response! I asked, “But I’ve been gone for a whole week. Aren’t you upset? Didn’t you get scared?” She responded, “Mom, I really don’t know what you are talking about. You have not been away for a week. I just saw you. Really.....everything is ok. You did not do anything wrong.”

I wanted to accept her words, but how could it be true? The memories came flooding back of all that I had experienced while I was away. So instead of accepting her words, I began arguing with her as to why I was guilty. I recited all of the things I had done and seen as proof of my guilt. I had experienced myself leaving the store, leaving my children, wandering off without care or concern for them. If these events, people, and scenes happened, there was no way what she said was true. I wanted to believe her, but I just could not (symbolic of how Holy Spirit is teaching us of our innocence while we parade before Him all the reasons for our guilt). I woke up from the dream feeling guilty.

Our Innocence is Restored When the Evidence is Gone

Isn’t this just how we argue with Holy Spirit Who speaks of our innocence, purity and holiness? He speaks, and then we argue why this can’t be so. We relive the events from our memory and look at our body and our “life” and hold that up as evidence that we are guilty and have forever lost our innocence because of what we have done.

I wrote in my journal the next morning, that the only way I could be free of guilt around leaving my children was to realize that all the events, people, and experiences I used as proof that I *was* guilty for what I had done, hadn’t really happened; that it was all imagined. There was no other way. In my dream I wanted to believe I was innocent but the evidence (what I was experiencing and had experienced) proved I could never be. It made perfect sense as to why we must bring everything that we think, we see and we experience to Holy Spirit, including attack in all its forms. In my dream I could only accept my daughter’s words; “I did nothing wrong.”, if it could be proven to me that all I thought happened, did not. The same is true in our waking dreams. For this, we need a miracle.

When looking on scenes such as sexual assault, or other forms of extreme examples of guilt, the temptation for our mind to focus on the details and tune in to the ego’s judgment, is great. Let your thinking mind rest only on one thought; “I want to see this differently” and the judgments will cease. Belief and understanding are not necessary to practice. All that is necessary is willingness.

A Miracle

If a miracle is the way to remove the evidence so innocence is restored, how does it occur? First and foremost, it is not our function to bring this about. We must let the Holy Spirit do the job He was created to do. He Is the Giver of miracles. True Perception, which releases the evidence, is His Gift to us.

We do have a part, albeit very small. We must make room for a new perception. When we are experiencing the darkness of our thoughts, we might think that if we just call on God to save us from our thoughts; that will let in the light. But the light cannot enter a closed door. The door of our mind is locked from the inside, by our continued acceptance and willingness to listen to the judgments of the ego. Just because we hear these thoughts and experience the effects of the thoughts, does not mean we have to continue to settle for them. Do not settle for an illusion of yourself or for illusions of the world. Look for the key that will unlock the door so it can swing open to let the light in.

Make a commitment to innocence.
Question or doubt everything.
Stand firm in your desire for truth.
Be vigilant in denying truth’s opposite.
Turn in the direction of the Light.

The key is simply to begin to question or doubt what we think, see or experience as “the truth”. Stand firm in your desire to want only what comes from God and be vigilant in denying all that seems to be witnessing to an existence of what God did not create. Turn in the direction of the light and forget about the details of the darkness. Value nothing but the light and leave the darkness to Him Who knows how to dispel it.

We do not need to be afraid of the miracle process as long as we remember that the process is *not* to see ourselves as guilty and then try to find redemption through love. The guilt we feel will pass us by if we allow ***the miracle*** to transform our guilt. Surrender to this revelation without needing to understand, and thank God His Will IS done. Even if you come in tears, joy will be your reward because of ***your commitment to innocence***. God Promised that His holy children remain forever in joy and at peace. Our acceptance of the good news that we did nothing wrong, will surely come if we let His Voice to reveal to us WHY we are innocent.

“Be not concerned with darkness; look away from it and toward your brother. And let the darkness be dispelled by Him who knows the light, and lays it gently in each quiet smile of faith and confidence with which you bless your brother.” T-22.VI.9

“To lift the veil that seems so dark and heavy, it is only needful to value truth beyond all fantasy, and to be entirely unwilling to settle for illusion in place of truth.” T.16.IV.10

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