

ACIM Practices during Lent

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Week Five: The Gifts of the Spirit

On my kitchen wall hangs a large chalkboard. When the kids were young I would come up with a “question of the day”, write it on the board and ask each child to write their response. One day I wrote the question; *“If you were to receive an unexpected gift at the front door, what would you want it to be?”* I told the kids to imagine that what they asked for they would receive no matter how outrageous or outlandish. They had fun writing their responses....a *forever* vacation in Hawaii, a *year* off from school and a DS Nintendo (this was from my youngest who believed this would be the most amazing gift ever). When it was my turn to answer, I thought about writing ‘money’ or ‘a relationship’, or ‘a job’ , but when I searched within for my true desire *and* remembered that I could have whatever I asked for, what I wanted most was peace that was constant, joy that was complete and freedom from fear. Of all the things I could have in this world, what I desired most was a change of mind. This desire has been driving me most of my life and eventually drove me straight into the pages of A Course in Miracles.

It was in the pages of this treasure book, where I first learned that the gifts of peace, joy and freedom from fear were attainable. I would read the words of the text, and my inner state of turmoil would change to peace. I would practice a lesson and fear would disappear or the sadness would lift. Why did this happen? Because reading the text and practicing the lessons, placed me in my right-mind. The Course teaches that we have a wrong-mind (ego thoughts) and a right-mind (Holy Spirit). The wrong-mind holds the belief of a false self (body and personality) and all ego thoughts of separation, fear and guilt. The right-mind remembers our True Self (divine spirit) and keeps our Real Thoughts in safe keeping through the Voice of the Holy Spirit. When we invite Holy Spirit to correct our errors, heal our perception or guide us, we open the door to our invited Guest who is standing there with a treasure house full of gifts; peace, gentleness, patience, generosity, perfect safety, abundant joy etc. These gifts are a natural part of What we are. Like an apple that naturally springs from an apple tree, the gifts of the spirit naturally spring from What we are. This idea is most understandable to me when I have been reflecting on the words in the Course or practicing a lesson. When I am in my right-mind, it is the most natural thing in the world to be at peace, to experience joy and to be free of fear.

Why does it seem that we go back and forth between receiving these gifts and then putting them down? Because we are going back and forth between our wrong-mind and our right-mind. The gifts of Holy Spirit can only be found in the right-mind where the memory of the True Self is held. If your mind is in turmoil and fear; sadness or agitation; all that has happened is that you have wandered into the wrong-mind. Choose to remember What you are and open the door to Holy Spirit. He will come because you called and He will lay at your feet the gifts of the spirit. When we receive these gifts we learn of His Presence and remember that we are God’s holy Son. *“By following the right Guide, you will learn the simplest of all lessons. By their fruits ye shall know them and they shall know themselves.” (T.9.V.9:5)* This is one way to get to know your True Self. Spend the week experiencing What you are by going to your right-mind (opening the front door) and receiving all the gifts that await you there. Watch these gifts emanate from you naturally and spend time getting to know your Self a little better.

Week Five Practice:

Throughout the day:

Take a few moments and think of what attributes come from being a Son of God. If you need help in describing a Son of God, think of the spiritual masters that have walked the earth whose essence is pure acceptance, gentleness, joy, peace, calm, etc. All of these wonderful qualities are not something you try to be, but rather what you already are. You are happy, peaceful, loving, patient and perfectly safe *because* you are a Son of God. (Reference W#40)

- With eyes open or closed repeat: *"I am blessed as a Son of God"*.
- Then add several of the attributes you associate with being a Son of God, applying them to yourself.
- For example, *"I am blessed as a Son of God. I am happy, peaceful, loving and content"*.
- *"I am blessed as a Son of God. I am calm, quiet, assured and confident."*
- For a brief practice, repeat: *"I am blessed as a Son of God"*.

Morning and Evening Prayer:

"I am God's Son, complete and healed and whole, shining in the reflection of His Love. In me is His creation sanctified and guaranteed eternal life. In me is love perfected, fear impossible, and joy established without opposite. I am the holy home of God Himself. I am the Heaven where His Love resides. I am His holy Sinlessness Itself, for in my purity abides His Own."
(W.p11.14.1)

During times when you are in your wrong-mind: (Reference W.#67)

By wandering into the wrong-mind I have closed the door to the gifts of the spirit. I invite Holy Spirit into my awareness so I can receive the gifts that are mine.

- "Love created me like itself".
- "If Love created me like itself, this Self must be in me. I will find it now."
- Then sit quietly and reach to the truth in you.