

FORGIVENESS

“A Course In Miracles” says that learning forgiveness is our only function here. One of its most beautiful passages on this topic reads. **“The holiest of all the spots on earth is where an ancient hatred has become a present love.”(T.26-IX-6)** It is very important, I feel, that we make a distinction between earthly forgiveness, the kind the mind, body, emotion, or ego self practices, and true forgiveness, which is an aspect of Christ Consciousness. Most individuals are content to strive and settle for the former, a kind of forgiveness “to condemn.” With this limited forgiveness, we judge when individuals have hurt, or wronged us and then, after this has been made clear to them, from some higher place, let them know we forgive them. So first we judge them critically and then, from some more holy place, tell them we will forgive their wrong. Not only do we condemn them, we rub it in by placing them somewhere beneath us on the ego’s scale of goodness, a kind of **“I’m ok, you’re not ok”** game. Is it any wonder we often feel hurt, put down and angry when someone tells us, “I forgive you anyway.” The thought, “I’d like to ring your neck!” might feel quite appropriate here.

In contrast to this, “forgiveness to condemn,” stands the forgiveness offered by our Christ Consciousness, the learning of which is our most important lesson here on earth. I call this **“Authentic Forgiveness.”** If whatever coming at us is not love, then it is a fear-based **cry for love**. Since only love is real, we must be participating in a dream that cannot be real or able to harm us in any way, even though it feels quite the opposite from our ego’s view at the time. What comes from fear is not real. In truth then, **there is nothing to forgive**. From the strength of Christ in us, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we must learn to **overlook** what is not real, their attack, and respond with Love to the Love or Spirit within them that is their truth. Although practicing this kind of forgiveness may at first seem to be impossible, “A Course In Miracles” makes it clear that the **means** to accomplish this seemingly impossible task are **given** to us by the Holy Spirit the moment we desire it **with all our heart**. In other words, we need not worry about how to achieve Forgiveness or Christ Consciousness. That is a gift from God or the Holy Spirit. We need only develop a single minded and whole-hearted desire for it by wanting **nothing else**. When we can whole-heartedly say and mean, **“Above all else I seek to see. I seek to see through the Christ in me,”** we are immediately given Christ Vision, the root of **Authentic Forgiveness**. That is why each time we are disillusioned by this world and turn inward, away from our seeking here, we step closer to finding the Peace within us. Forgiveness, Christ Vision, Zen Mind, Beginner Mind, Salvation or Enlightenment are all the same. When we gain their mastery, we have learned to identify with the Spirit, Christ or God within that is our True Identity. Then, we are able to experience our **Universal Oneness** or connection with God.

Authentic Forgiveness means to forget the past and see everyone and everything **NOW**, free from thoughts and judgments based on any past experience and learning, and most importantly, to **overlook with compassion** the parts of us not of love being reflected or triggered by the illusions of separation or a separate other. This is what Jesus demonstrated on the cross. From the strength of God or the Christ in Him, He was able to overlook the illusion of His pain and the hatred of the mob and see beyond to the truth of their Inner Love or Spirit. In other words, he did not give attention to their fear-base illusions of hatred or his pain, saw only their love and responded only with love. **“Forgive them Father. They know not what they do.”** This is **Authentic Forgiveness**.

In situations where individuals bring forth our emotional pain, we are provided with an opportunity to experience and heal these wounds we have carried within us for so long. In other situations we are being given the opportunity to see, accept and forgive disowned parts

of ourselves that threaten us. The awareness, acceptance and forgiveness of others are the only tools we have to gain the awareness, acceptance and forgiveness of ourselves and find Salvation. In truth, we only see ourselves in others no matter what our ego mind tells us. Our relationships are learning and healing dramas, dreams we create from our own consciousness. Feeling, surrendering into and through our emotional pain is not only the way we heal wounds and fears that block our ability to experience Love, this process also provides us with a **gateway** and sure passage into the Peace of our **Spiritual Identity**, if we are willing to give up our blame and surrender through the pain. Underneath the pain and fear is always our **Inner Light, Love and Peace**. So from "A Course In Miracles" perspective, individuals who treat us unkindly can be our **Saviors**. If we stop playing victim and give up our blame, we can use the painful situation presented as an opportunity to heal the pain and fear that blocks our **Inner Light** and offer "**Authentic Forgiveness**" to our brother or sister in Christ. By giving forgiveness, we receive forgiveness and gain our **Salvation**.

STEPS IN ACHIEVING AUTHENTIC FORGIVNESS

1. Identify and **express** the anger, blame and judgment long enough to find the pain or fear that lies beneath, feelings like sadness, worthlessness, emptiness, aloneness and separation. To achieve this, imagine the person who upset you in an empty chair and express **out loud**, "***I'm hurt and angry that you When you did this I felt.....!***"
2. Relax, breathe and surrender into and **through** the **painful feeling** as deeply as you can.
3. Call upon Spirit to heal the illusion of this pain or fear with a simple request like, "***Spirit, I ask you to heal this pain and fear of within me.***"
4. Acknowledge, **through faith**, the strength of your hidden God Self, even when you cannot feel it at the time, with these words: "***I am the strength of Christ in me.***" Repeat these words on every out breath until you feel some degree of calmness.
5. Call upon Spirit to help you forgive with an expression like: "***Holy Spirit, teach me to forgive here. Help me to see (this person, this situation) NOW, without thought or judgment based on my past experience and learning. Help me overlook with compassion the part of me not of love being reflected or triggered here.***"
6. Finally, place the person you feel wronged by before you, **in your mind**, and say to him or her, "***I give you my blessing holy (son / daughter) of God. I would behold you through the eyes of Christ and see my perfect God-Self in you.*** This is authentic forgiveness. When we give **Authentic Forgiveness**, we receive it and find **Salvation**.

Repeat these 6 steps every time you feel criticism, anger or fear-based discomfort in any situation until you connect with a sense of peace and calm. In time this process will bring you to understand that we all do the very best we can and its just a dream anyway, a drama to help us heal our pain and fear and force us to surrender our fear-based illusions and attachments in this world, eventually, to reconnect with the Peace, Freedom and Truth of our Spiritual Identity. After we have given up our blame and gained the awareness, acceptance and healing of our emotional pain and fear, perhaps our best response to these tests might be that of the Master's, "***Get behind me Satan.***" (***all fear-based illusions***) In other words, "***I will not recognize you or give you any power over me.***" Achieving "**Authentic Forgiveness**" or **Christ Vision** in this world is the most important and powerfully rewarding lesson we will ever accomplish or master here, a **True Miracle**.

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