

A Course of Love



COMBINED VOLUME

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CHAPTER 15

The New Beginning

- 15.1 Some of you have had more experience with new beginnings than others. For most mature adults, some form of new beginning has taken place or been offered. Often, those within the relationship of marriage have had occasion to choose to forgive the past and begin again to build a new relationship. Others, in a similar relationship, might have chosen to let the past go and enter into new relationships. Parents have welcomed home errant children to give them the chance to begin again. At all stages of life new friendships are formed and the relationship with each new friend provides for a new beginning. Some begin anew through changes in locale and employment. Each new school year of the young provides a fresh start. Deaths of loved ones and the births of new family members form new configurations in a life. Nature begins anew each spring.
- 15.2 What hampers new beginnings of all kinds within the human experience are ideas that things cannot be different than they once were. The only true departure from this idea has concerned the occasions of birth and death. This is something we will return to, but first let us look at other types of new beginnings and all that would hamper them from taking place.
- 15.3 New beginnings do not occur outside of relationship. The idea of special relationship is one that hampers new beginnings. Special relations of all types are based upon expectation—expectations of certain behavior—and expectations of continued special treatment within the relationship. Even, and sometimes especially, what is considered poor behavior can come to be an expectation difficult to deviate from within the special relationship. But whether the expectation is of special treatment or poor behavior matters not. It is the expectation of a “known” set of criteria concerning the relationship, a set of criteria based upon the past that is most often what prevents new beginnings from truly being new.

- 15.4 Often new beginnings are offered or considered “in spite of” circumstances of the past that would seem to make them foolish. There is always some “thing” that is expected to change. This idea is countered internally, however, by the idea that at some basic level, human beings do not change. You cannot imagine those with whom you are in relationship being other than who they are. This is consistent with the truth. Yet who anyone is, is not contingent upon whom they have represented themselves to be in the past.
- 15.5 When attempting to give oneself or another a new beginning, you often act “as if” you believe a new beginning is possible, even while awaiting the lapse that will surely prove to you that the new beginning is but an act and that nothing has really changed. A student who failed to learn the prior year, while eager and confident in being able to succeed in the current year, will continue to be plagued by memories of failure. The alcoholic can approach each day with faith while keeping fresh memories of past abuse or humiliation in the hopes that they will discourage a repeat of the old behavior. The loved one of an alcoholic can similarly approach each day with faith even while suspiciously looking for signs that faith is unwarranted. The criminal is not expected to be rehabilitated despite the efforts of the system and the hopes of their loved ones.
- 15.6 Everyone believes they carry the baggage of the past, not only their own but that of all the special relationships in which they have been involved. To have a special relationship with someone who has failed at offered new beginnings becomes a failure for all involved. Each sets their own criteria for success or failure and their own timing for the accomplishment of the same. Some would see six months of change as the basis for trust in the new. For others six years would not be enough.
- 15.7 You must now birth the idea that human beings do indeed change. While you have known instinctively that there is a core, a center to each that is unchangeable, you must now give up the idea that this core or center has been represented by the past. You must forget the idea that the future cannot be different than the past.
- 15.8 With the death of the ego, special relationships too have breathed their last. As I said before, these will seem to be remedial lessons. What they are, in truth, are aides to help you birth the new ideas that will break the patterns of old.

- 15.9 The new beginning you are called to now is a new beginning that, like all others that you have offered or attempted, will take place in relationship. The difference is that this new beginning will take place in holy, rather than special, relationship.
- 15.10 The holy relationship has been accomplished by the joining of the mind and heart in unity. The holy relationship is with the Self, the Self that abides in unity with all within the house of truth. This relationship makes the Self one with all and so brings the holiness of the Self to all.
- 15.11 There are no impediments to this new beginning save for the finalizing of the translation of the thought system of the ego to the thought system of the truth. As we have said before, it is impossible to learn the new with the thought system of the old. It is impossible to learn the truth through the same methods that have been used in the past to learn illusion. This Course teaches that love cannot be learned. I have said here that love, peace, and truth are interchangeable ideas within the new thought system. Thus, truth, like love, is not something that you can learn. The Good News is that you have no need to learn the truth. The truth exists within you and you are now aware of its reality.
- 15.12 How then, do you access and live within this new reality, this new beginning? Through living by the truth.
- 15.13 These Treatises are no longer concerned with coursework as the work of this Course has been accomplished in you. These Treatises are simply concerned with assisting you to live what you have learned. Learning was needed in order to return you to your Self. Despite whatever method you feel you used to learn what you have learned, what this Course did was bypass the way of learning of the ego and call upon the Christ in you to learn anew. That learning put an end to the old. Living what you have learned will usher in the new.
- 15.14 These examples of your former ideas about new beginnings have simply been used to demonstrate why you cannot approach this new beginning as you have those of the past. What will assist you most, as the translation of the old thought system for the new continues, are the beliefs that you adopted with the assistance of "A Treatise on Unity:"
- 15.15 *You are accomplished.
Giving and receiving are one in truth.*

There is no loss but only gain within the laws of love.

Special relationships have been replaced by holy relationship.

- 15.16 What we are adding now to these beliefs is the idea that these beliefs can be represented in form. These beliefs can, with the help of the new thought system, change the very nature of the self described by the words *human being*. This calls for still more forgetting as you must consciously let go of all your ideas of the limitations inherent in your concept of what it means to be a human being.
- 15.17 While you would not be other than who you are, who you are is not limited to the concept of human being nor to the laws of man. If you continue to act as if you are still the same being that you have represented yourself to be in the past, you will not be living by the truth but by illusion.
- 15.18 Illusion is the “truth” by which you have lived. The total replacement of illusion with the truth is what the new thought system will accomplish. Obviously, this replacement must be total. The means for making this total replacement are in your hands but you are hardly empty-handed. The truth goes with you as does the love and peace of God.