

A Course of Love Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Love's Equity

Pure love, to simply love, is to know God (whether you realize it or not) (4.1). We let go of false idols and the idea of God as form or a personality. False idols are “what you think love will get you.” (security, belonging, self-esteem, specialness etc.) (4.2) Longing is proof of love's existence and proof of Self. (4.4) All fear ends when proof of your existence is established. All fear is based on your inability to recognize love and thus who you are and who God is. Identifying our self incorrectly leads to fear. (4.5)

A shift from who I thought I was to who I AM is the goal. Love alone has the power to awaken us from the dream of death into awareness of life eternal. (4.7) What we made as replacements (yearning, learning, seeking, acquiring, the need to own, the need to keep...) for what we already have (God's Love within) can lead us back as surely as they led us astray. “Your decision, couched in many forms, is simply this: to proceed toward love or to withdraw from it, to believe it is given or withheld.” (4.8)

We practice living the law of love, a law of gain not loss, a law that says the more you give the more you gain. There are no losers and no winners under God's law. Our thoughts/mind remind us of the pain love has brought, this is an ego trick to keep us from recognizing “love cannot fail” (an experience of the heart). (4.10) Our expectations and false perceptions of our brothers and sisters and of our Father is what has caused us to believe love can fail. (4.11)

Our image of love has been based on comparisons. (4.13) We believe love is a choice, something to be given to some and not to others. We hope to be a winner in this game we play, the chosen one who will have each ounce of love that is given returned in kind. (4.16) In no other area of life do we expect such fairness, such exchange of equal value. Life is not fair, nor meant to be, you claim. But love is something else. (4.17) Love is seen as personal, something another gives in a special way to you alone, and you to him or her. (4.18)

“Even you who do not recognize what love is protect what you call love from the illusions you have made.” (4.19) Regardless of our false beliefs and previous perceptions, we still recognize love's value. Everyone agrees love isn't like anything else happening here. (4.23) Now we shift our perception from what love is believed to be to what love is- an internal joining, a joining within. The world is but a reflection of your inner life, the reality unseen and unprepared for by all your strategy and defenses. This joining of the world within is but your recognition of what love is, safe and secure within you and your brother, as you join together in truth. This joining is the goal you seek, the only goal worthy of love's call. (4.26)

What feelings arose as you read this chapter?

Did any of the misperceptions or false beliefs of love stand out to you?

Did any sections bring up feelings of discomfort, resistance, or denial? Feelings of relief, ease, peace, or joy?

Thought of the Week:

“Your decision, couched in many forms, is simply this: to proceed toward love or to withdraw from it, to believe it is given or withheld.” (4.8)

At any point during the week when our awareness of choice arises we can focus on this: Am I proceeding towards love or withdrawing from it? Am I giving love or withholding love?