

A Course of Love chapters 1, 2, & 3

Chapter 1

The heart is the center of our being, that place from which all feeling arises (1.1). There are only two feelings, love or lack of love. All true feeling is love. All feelings are generated by the heart and have nothing to do with the body (1.2). God's only thought is love, endlessly creating (not static). Jesus exists within us in the same thought. (1.4)

None of what we formerly possessed is needed now (worries, fear, struggle, effort to teach yourself, loneliness) as none of these things are part of the new world. We let go of the old to make way for the new. (1.7)

We don't know the way out of illusion on our own so we follow until we know the way. (1.9) Thus we surrender the lower self and are asked to follow the teacher given- to resign as our own teacher. (1.10) Love yearns for Love. To think of achieving love "on one's own" is ludicrous. (1.12)

The authority problem is inherent in our acceptance or resistance to this request (to resign as our own teacher). We think our independence proves we have control over a world of chaos (1.14). Only when we give up the goal of trying to stand on our own will we recognize we are complete only within God. (1.13)

We fear giving up struggle because we feel responsible to the world we have made, yet still strive for that which has value (through our yearning for love) (1.14). We have made the world to prove our separate existence (1.15), but we have a new choice. A new world can be created by a new choice. Love or fear is our reality by choice, and choosing Love will lead to the new (a choice for heaven) (1.18).

What feelings arose as you read this chapter?

What feelings arose when you were asked to resign as your own teacher?

What does the expression "Love yearns for Love" feel like to you?

Chapter 2

Love cannot be taught, but you can be taught to see love where it already exists (2.1) Love is everything. Fear is nothing (2.2) We will be taught to recognize love through its effects (2.5)

"Love it not something you do. It is what you are. To continue to identify love incorrectly is to continue to be unable to identify your Self." (2.6) We live through limited options within the world of illusion (try to avoid intense feelings, find a purpose/make a small mark on the world, live without a purpose/enjoy as much as you can, or try to make our small corner safe and secure). "To think these are the only options available to creatures of a loving God is insane." (2.8)

There is a part of us that knows there is more to life than these limited options. The part that knows is the Christ in you. We must know the insanity of the thought process of the world we perceive before we are willing to give it up. The Christ in us does know this, but we constantly forget. The forgetting is the work of the ego (2.9).

We have accepted illusion as the truth and thus seek other illusions to change what never was into something that never will be (2.11). This is because we "do not see reality for what it is." (2.14). Christ is within you and you rest in God. This calls for a reversal in thinking that has not yet happened because we have separated mind and heart (2.16). Your mind rebels because it is the stronghold of the ego (2.17).

Until you are what you have learned, you leave room for the ego's machinations (2.19). "All you have learned is still with you regardless of your perception of the outcome of your learning. Your perception of an outcome within your control is all that needs to change." "What you want to learn you cannot fail to learn." (2.21) A state of neutrality is where the return [to love] begins (2.23).

What feelings arose as you read this chapter?

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

Chapter 3

This chapter introduces some basic tenants of ACOL and acts as a starting foundation.

1. **Love is. All to all.** (3.1) Love doesn't do anything; it teaches by what it is. Love doesn't strive. It is eternal. Love is in relationship to everything.
2. **You are the universe** (3.2) All that you desire and cannot learn is already accomplished. It is you. All exists within you.
3. **All is shared.** (3.3) There is no human condition that is not shared.
4. **Truth is Truth.** (3.3) There are no degrees of Truth.
5. **You and your real world are not form.** (3.4) To truly see is to begin to see the formless.
6. **All that you see are only symbols of what is really there before you.** (3.7) Nothing is what it is, but only what it means to you. You give all meaning to everything.
7. **Love is.** (3.8) No form can encompass it, for it encompasses all form. Love is the light in which all form disappears and all this is, is seen as it is. Through love we will learn to see things as they actually are.
8. **Everything is born from an idea.** (3.10) You are the cause of the effects you see.
9. **We will not remember what love is by using the learning methods of this world.** (3.10-3.12) We start to let go of the normal mental processes which we are experts at (gathering evidence, comparing and contrasting, true/false, right/wrong, sensory input, cause and effect).
10. **We must move from the head to the heart to learn that which is not of this world.** (3.13-3.18) The only change in thinking you are asked to make is to realize you do not need it. We give up trying. We simply learn a new way and in our learning realize that our light shines from within our heart, our altar to the Lord. It is to our hearts that we appeal for guidance, for there resides the one who truly guides.

Remember it is your heart that yearns for home. Your heart yearns for love remembered. (3.18)

The pain you have suffered from opening your heart only proves love's value to you. (3.19-3.21) We recognize the call for love is all encompassing. We let go/release our judgments of love and we can experience what love really is.

What feelings arose as you read this chapter?

What are your feelings around letting go of the learning methods of the world?

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

Thought of the Week:

"The only change in thinking you are asked to make is to realize that you do not need it. (3.14) We begin by simply accepting the proof we have been given of love's strength. For this we will return to again and again as we learn to recognize what love is." (3.23)

As we go through the week and recognize times where our thinking is pulling us out of love or is fear based we can choose to instead focus on love. Realize I do not need the thinking causing me a feeling of lack of love and rather choose to accept proof of the strength of Love.