

ALL THAT IS GIVEN IS GIVEN TO MYSELF

Week #2 of a 5-Week Series, "A Course in Miracles – Love is Letting Go of Fear"

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Okay, today we're going to start with an old joke. [Congregants laugh] But it's one of my favorites. Here we go.

A strongly opinionated young teacher explained to her class of children that she is an atheist and then asked her class if they wanted to be atheists, too. Not really knowing what atheism was about, but wanting to please their teacher, the kids all raised their hands in the air with enthusiasm, except one girl who did not raise her hand, go along with the crowd. The teacher asked her why she decided to be different. And she said, *"Because I'm not atheist."*

Then the teacher asked, *"What are you?"*

"I'm Catholic." The teacher was a little perturbed and asked Mary why she is Catholic.

She says, *"Well, I go to church with my mom and dad, and my mom is Catholic, and my dad is Catholic, so I'm Catholic."*

The teacher is now angry and says, *"That's no reason. What if your mom was a moron and your dad was a moron? What would that make you then?"*

And Mary paused and smiled and said, *"Then I'd be an atheist."* [Congregants laugh]

So, we are in Week #2 of our five-week series on the book, *Love is Letting Go of Fear*, by Gerald Jampolsky, which is inspired by the book, *A Course in Miracles*.

Last week, it was entitled, "Preparation for Personal Transformation." You know, if we want to have transformation or great success to achieve something great -- whether it's in business, whether it is in sports, or whether it's in music or spiritual; in the spiritual realm -- preparation is an absolute key.

Gerald Jampolsky said that his goal in writing this book is so that we will all experience inner peace and have a deeper connection with our oneness with God by removing the blocks to our awareness and experience of the presence of love. You know, *A Course in Miracles* says that love is the only reality and the only two emotions in life are love or fear; you know, truth or illusion.

You know, it supports 1 John, Chapter 4, that says, *"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear."*

And so, last week we looked at the five things we need to do to prepare ourselves for transformation to have a deeper experience of peace and love. And the first one was to be aware that we are our beliefs: that our lives are a reflection of our belief systems; a reflection of our consciousness. And that, if we want to change and transform, we need to be aware of our negative thoughts and our limited mindsets.

The second way to prepare ourselves is to identify the blocks. There are five things that block us from feeling peace and love: fear, control, judging, attacking or being defensive, and holding on to the past.

The third way to prepare is to set inner peace as our highest goal. Because he absolutely believes that inner peace is the requisite or precondition for healing and transformation. But we must turn within -- turn to the Source -- to connect with inner peace.

Number four was about practicing letting go in all of its forms: forgiveness, acceptance, surrender. Forgiveness and letting go is really a willingness to see life and others and ourselves differently.

And then, finally, is extending love: spreading love to those people we already love, but also to those who may not show up in the most positive way in our lives -- with anger or jealousy or other negative emotions. And he said that fear is really a call for love; that anytime we show up in ways that are negative or angry, it is really that person hurting. And what they really want is love, but they don't know how to ask for it. And with us knowing that, we can engage with them from a place of compassion and from a place of understanding to help them feel reconnected to love and move away from fear.

Over the next four weeks, we're going to look at 12 lessons through each week of mindsets to help us transform and shift to experience greater peace and divine love. The first one is: **ALL THAT I GIVE IS GIVEN TO MYSELF**. All that I give is given to myself.

In Luke 6, Verse 38, it says, *"As we give, so too shall we receive."* It is the Law of Giving and Receiving. It is a spiritual law that, whatever we give, that we also receive. Whatever we put out there -- whatever we give -- comes back to us. You know, as we give, energy flows; it increases; it expands; it circulates; it grows. And it blesses and enriches others, ourselves, and all of life.

You know, life is about giving. And as we give, we shall receive.

Gerald Jampolsky says this: *"The law of love is based on abundance. We are completely filled with love all the time. Our supply is full and running over."*

[Repeats:] We are completely filled with love all the time. Our supply is full and running over. How many people believe that's true? That we are filled with love all the time and our love is full and running over? How many people have not felt love all the time and feel like it was running over? Anybody feel a time you weren't filled with love?

Jampolsky says that the world's mindset is based on scarcity, not on the truth of abundance. A scarcity of love: *"There's not enough love; there's not enough wealth; there's not enough happiness; there's not enough success; there's not enough good."* So we -- when we think about giving -- we think we lose. That, as we give, sometimes we think ... You know, that whenever you spend money and you give over your money and you think, *"Well, there goes my money."* Even though it's a medium of exchange -- or actually exchanging for something else -- our mindset is we're losing. When we give, we lose. When we give, we're depleted.

And that's just not the truth! The mindset of scarcity does not dwell in the Law of Giving; it dwells in the idea of getting: *"I have to get, get, get, get, get."* And, you know, and including love. *"If I could just get you to love me."* *"If I could just get someone to love me."* *"If I could just get the people who love me to love me more, then I'll finally find what I am seeking."*

You know, a mindset like that, regardless of whether it's love or anything else -- that I have to get something from someone else to feel fulfilled -- shows a disbelief and a distrust in the Law of Giving. And the law says, *"All that I give is given to myself."* And it shows that we don't always believe that. You know, when we're feeling down or alone or unloved, you know, we think, *"If I could just get someone to love me"* ... but the truth is our idea should be, *"How can I give more love? How can I express more love? How can I share more love?"*

And particularly, share love with no expectation of return. But just sharing because we are filled with love. Love is our nature; love is our purpose. Love actually aligns us with the truth of who we are. And to love our family, to love our friends more, to love strangers, co-workers. As we give, so too shall we receive.

You know, giving actually shifts our consciousness; shifts our energy. We feel good when we give, because we feel connected to our nature; connected to ourselves.

Again, Jampolsky, "*The world's distorted concept is to have to get other people's love before we feel love within.*" The Law of Love is different from the world's law. The Law of Love is that you are love and that, as you give love to others, you teach yourself who you are.

Today's affirmation is: "*I, alone, hold the truth of who I am.*" And who we are is love. I am love. You are love. We are love.

"I am love."

Together: [with congregation] *"I am love."*

"You are love."

Together: [with congregation] *"You are love."*

"We are love."

[Congregation:] *"We are love."*

Let's say them all together: [with congregation] *"I am love. You are love. We are love."*

Turn to somebody left and right and say: *"I am love. You are love. We are love."*

[Congregation overlapping:] *"I am love. You are love. We are love."*

How many people when you were growing up had a teddy bear or a blanket or a toy that you just loved? Anybody? How many still smile when you think of how much you loved your teddy bear or your blanky? And so, my question is for you is Where did that love come from that you felt for your teddy bear? Was it from the fur? [Congregants laugh] Was it from the stuffing? [Congregants laugh] Was it from their little button eyes? [Congregants laugh]

I would suggest that all love that we felt for our teddy bear or blanket just came from our own heart. We are filled with love all the time and it's waiting there. We're the ones that gave ourselves permission to open our heart to love. And, as children, you know, that love and awareness of the love within us is always there. And so, it's poured out.

To do it -- to love an inanimate object -- could you imagine how powerful it would be if we loved more people that are in our lives and in our world? Expressing and sharing that love is a powerful thing. It will bless others and it will bless ourselves.

"All that I give is given to me." And so we need to give all of the things we want alive and radiant and flowing and active in our lives. To give love; to give peace; to give joy; to give kindness; to give compassion. To give of ourselves; to give of our service; to give our abundance and tithe.

And it's important that, when we give, we give from a place of fullness and abundance and not scarcity and lack. You know, the kingdom of God is within us, which means the fullness of God is within us. The fullness of love is with you/within you. The fullness of joy and peace and unlimited goodness is always within us. But the question is: Are we giving from a mindset of scarcity or abundance? We need to give from a place of self-fullness. Not selfishness, but self-fullness. That, when we give, we know that there is an abundance of good in ourselves.

We are the ones that control the flow of how much love and goodness and joy is in our lives. Because as it says, "*All I give is given to myself.*" And the more love we give, the more good we give, the more joy and stuff that we give to people in the world, it increases its circulation and abundance.

So, the first lesson is, "*All that I give is given to myself.*"

The second lesson is: **FORGIVENESS IS THE KEY TO HAPPINESS.** To experience inner peace, to feel happy, to experience divine love, we absolutely require – it requires us -- to practice forgiveness. Without forgiveness, there would be no progress on our spiritual path. We would all just stay stuck right where we are.

A Course in Miracles has a mindset on forgiveness that's a little radical and different than we are accustomed to; that we have learned. And here's what ... I want to read you some of the quotes on it so we all get it clearly:

"Forgiveness is a process of letting go and overlooking whatever we thought another person had done to us or whatever we thought we did to others."

"Forgiveness is a correction of the misperception that the other person harmed us."

"Forgiveness is the vehicle for changing our perceptions and letting go of our fears; condemning judgments and grievances."

Now, what it's saying is that: it's recognizing that the attack, the sin -- whatever the wrong we thought came to us – was actually an illusion, and that nothing real was harmed. Our soul wasn't harmed. The nature of love in us wasn't harmed. Our inner peace wasn't harmed.

Everybody, I want you to think of somebody that you might have a hard time forgiving. And how does it feel to know that forgiveness is about overlooking that? That forgiveness is actually changing our perception and realizing it was an illusion, and that we actually weren't harmed at all?

How many people say that's a little stretch for where you are in your forgiveness process? [Congregants laugh] And it is! Because it is a huge shift. In our perception of whatever that attack -- whatever that wrong, whatever that bad – was in a way that we tend to judge and label, *"It is wrong; it's bad; it's unfair."* We have all lived in a mindset of times where we feel continuously offended and stuck and angry and justified in our own anger.

And this one is saying shift from that judging. Shift from that mindset. Shift from that fear and that sense of separation. And just move your whole mind from fear to love; your whole mind to a sense of oneness; a sense of connectedness and the higher truth that the only reality is love.

That is a pretty high level of spiritual practice: to say no harm was actually done and to just see the person with love; see ourselves with love; and know that love is the only reality.

We can hold on to and feel justified when we're angry -- when we feel and label that person as bad and blame them. We can feel justified. But does it really bring us peace? Does it really bring us the love that we're seeking?

And that's the little opening for me to begin to accept this. Because if I know the way I'm practicing is keeping me in bondage and stuck and suffering, and this one liberates me, maybe I can begin to open my mind to just see it through the eyes of love.

You know, the practice is: wherever you're having a hard time forgiving, just change the perception from fear to love; from separation to oneness. You know, to let go of the thing that makes us suffer the most, which is our judgment.

Jampolsky says this: *"When we choose to forgive instead of judge, we are choosing to heal ourselves."* And then the last one is to shift it in our consciousness and our mind. He says, *"Forgiveness doesn't change the past; it changes how the past lives in us."*

And so, to see that other person through the eyes of love; to see ourselves, that situation and life as love is the only reality. Love is the only thing that opens us up to peace, to love, and to true forgiveness.

Every grievance that we hold is a burden that we carry. Every judgment we make keeps us separate; keeps conflict alive and fear alive and at distance from God. And it is every act of forgiveness that brings us closer to the truth of who we are. Every act brings us closer to our real nature, which is love.

"I am love. You are love. We are love."

One more time: [with congregants] *"I am love. You are love. We are love."*

Just take a deep breath into that.

So, the second lesson is: *"Forgiveness is the key to happiness."*

And the third lesson is: **I AM NEVER UPSET FOR THE REASON I THINK.** [Congregants laugh] [Repeats:] I am never upset for the reason I think.

You know, whatever we think we're angry about, upset about, ticked off about ... it is never caused by what we think. It is never caused by whatever is happening on the outside. You know, it's caused by our own perception; our own thoughts; our own interpretations. Often they're unconscious, but it is all based in fear and guilt. It is all based on our past wounds and pain, and our true sense of separation.

This lesson invites us to stop blaming the external events and other people and the conditions in our lives for our emotional pain. Instead, it invites us to look inward with love and curiosity. In all those situations where we feel upset, we have to ask ourselves a couple of questions. Number one is: What am I really afraid of? Number two is: What is the deeper belief that is triggering me? And is this about now or is this about something unresolved in our past?

You know, anytime we get triggered, it is an opportunity for healing; an opportunity for us to move closer to inner peace and closer to the fullness of our experience and awareness that we are loved.

Let me give you an example. You get cut off in traffic. You get annoyed and upset; you hit the horn and wave a finger at them or something crazy. [Congregants laugh] Like, you get angry because they disrespected you.

But if you go a little deeper, is there more? Maybe it's because you have a past of people taking advantage of you, and that's kind of what it felt like. Maybe you go a little bit deeper, and it kind of hits a little something in you like, *"I'm not important."* It was not about the traffic and getting cut off. It was about some unhealed part of ourselves that believes that we have no power. That we're not valued. That we're not seen.

You send a text to somebody and they don't reply to you. And you get angry. *"Come on; what is up? You're ignoring me."* You start getting angry. And you think, *"Maybe they're mad. Maybe they're hurt. Maybe I did something wrong."*

You go a little deeper: What's really going on? And maybe it's because you just have felt ignored or abandoned in your life. And that's what it feels like -- them not getting back to you when you hoped they would.

Make a mistake at work. And first you're angry at yourself, because you're messed up. You go a little deeper; then you're worried because maybe you'll be judged and looked at and be embarrassed. You go a little deeper. And maybe it is because some part of you feels like you're not good enough and you're not worthy. Maybe you're an imposter that's been caught.

Whenever we are upset, we need to pause and say: *"What is really going on here? What needs a closer look?"*

John Chapter 7, Verse 24, says, *"Do not judge by appearances, but judge by righteous judgment"* ... which means: don't just look at the surface; don't just look at the physical. Go a little deeper. Because something might need healing. That trigger might be a call for us to say, "Hey, there's something we need to release; something we need to heal; something we need to work on to bring us more peace; to experience more love.

A Course in Miracles says, *"Love is the only reality."* Gerald Jampolsky says that we are love, and that we are always filled with love all the time. And it is running over. And yet, we as human beings, don't always feel that experience of love and that fullness of love.

And that is our true work: is to do the work that is needed to bring forth and bring to life the reality and truth of peace and love in our hearts, in our minds, in our lives, in our relationships and in our world. And our world could certainly use it now! It always can!

The way to transformation is for us to practice these lessons daily. To wake up in the morning and state these lessons. Write a post-it note and stick it on our mirror and write one on a card and remind ourselves of it through the day. And in the day, apply the lesson to any and everyone and everything. And when we go to sleep, it's to restate the lessons and do a prayer to say, *"Open my heart to let this go deeper into my consciousness to change and transform me."*

"All I give is given to myself."

Together: [with congregants] *"All I give is given to myself."*

Deep breath.

"Forgiveness is the key to happiness."

Together: [with congregants] *"Forgiveness is the key to happiness."*

Deep breath.

"I am never upset for the reason I think."

Together: [with congregants] *"I am never upset for the reason I think."*

These three lessons are not only mindsets and good ideas and good practices; they are truly keys. They are keys to unlock the radiant peace and love that is always dwelling within us. And it helps us to do the work to realize that love is the only reality; love is our true nature; and that love is letting go of fear.

God bless you all.