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Suggested Links and Additional Reading:
The Voice for God - Learn how hearing the Voice for God, the Voice for Peace and Love
within you, can help you create Joy in your life, Peace within, and Answer your most
burning questions.
# The Ego Conspiracy

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The Ego Conspiracy

Introduction

A most amazing event has taken place during our "lifetime" here on this planet. This event has stimulated a great movement that will eventually touch virtually every person on earth. Already, hundreds of thousands of people have been affected by it, and their lives, for the most part, will never be the same.

This event happened about 20 years ago when a remarkable set of books, known as "A Course In Miracles," was being created through a method most of us could not understand, or believe could happen today. The material was "channeled" through a person here on earth from a source that was not present in a physical form. Before you get upset and throw this book out as pure rubbish, you might consider the fact that this is the same process through which some of the material used to write the Christian Bible came into existence. If it could happen then, why not now? There are many other very fascinating events and facts that happened during the time period when this material came into existence that, to me, substantiate its authenticity. I'll let you be the judge. All the details on how "A Course In Miracles" came about can be found in a book entitled, "Journey Without Distance," written by Robert Skutch. Both this book and the set of books on "A Course In Miracles" can be obtained by writing to The Foundation for Inner Peace whose address is listed in Appendix C at the back of this book.

Whether you accept the authenticity of this material or not, don't let this prevent you from reading it. The material and what it has to say speaks for itself. This, plus the fantastic effects it has had on thousands of lives so far, should convince you it is a "must" for everyone interested in improving their lives. Speaking from my own personal experience, never has any written word ever had such a profound impact on my life. I might even say this material, what it stands for, and the application of its principles have become my life now. And what a wonderful life it has opened up to me. My life has become so filled with love, peace and happiness that I just have to share these with everyone who will listen.

This book was written primarily to interest people in "A Course In Miracles" and not to supplement or duplicate the material presented there. However, the material in "A Course In Miracles" is difficult for many people to understand without help, and some get discouraged before they really find out what it is all about. There are many churches and study groups all over the nation where help is available, and I encourage you to take advantage of them. For most people, an understanding of what the Course teaches is needed before they would seek out such organized study groups and classes. It is these people I desire to reach, for the message of love, happiness and peace they are missing is so all powerful that I don't want anyone to be left out. My motivation for writing this book is the desire to share perfect love with each and every person, without exception or limitations of any kind. If the life of just one person is improved by what I have said here, then all my efforts will have been rewarded many times over.

All my love,

Chuck Okerstrom
The Ego Conspiracy

Foreword

This book contains material that can help you escape from a life of stress, unhappiness, sickness, pain, worry, fear, and finally, even the concerns about death itself. It explains why you now live in a world that seems to be against you, filled with all kinds of "evil," where luck or misfortune happen by chance, and innocent people continually become victims of accidents or "evil" actions of others.

All this is the result of a conspiracy so great that it is very difficult, if not impossible for most people to believe it could be true. This is basically the reason the conspiracy has continued, unabated, for as long as human beings have inhabited this planet. I would like to add a word of warning here at this point. This conspiracy will even penetrate your thoughts, causing many readers to refuse to accept the material being presented here, even though its only purpose is to give them back the love, peace and happiness that is lacking in their present lives. Even those that really want to understand this material and have a desire to change their lives, will have to constantly fight a very strong urge within themselves to stop reading this material and declare what it says to be untrue.

The reason this is happening is simple. There is a part of each of us directly involved in this conspiracy. That part actually helped create the framework on which the very existence of the conspiracy depends. No wonder it has been so successful, up to now, in keeping this conspiracy secret from our conscious minds. Those of you who find the strength to overcome the urge to declare this material untrue, and allow your mind to open up to what is being presented, will reap a reward greater than can be defined in worldly terms. This reward will come to you here and now, in your present life, not at some future time undefined and unobtainable until after death of the physical body.

So, you ask, what is this part of me that would do such a thing as create a conspiracy to make my life miserable and unhappy? In this book we will call it the “ego.” This is not the commonly accepted definition of the word given by the dictionary and as used in psychiatry and psychology. This book uses the word “ego" as a "thought system" created by each of us based on our perceptions of this world, other people and ourselves, as seen through our physical eyes. Herein lies the problem. In this world of perception we are taught from day one that what we see with our physical eyes and experience through the other four senses is the only reality that exists. These five senses are used to confirm the "truth" each second of our waking state of consciousness. As this book progresses, we will discover there is more to life than "meets the eye."

The ego conspiracy is so powerful and so complete that it even invades many of our religious beliefs, making its secrecy undetectable, while using these beliefs to maintain and support its continued existence. This is the reason anyone is met with strong resistance and even accused of committing a "sin" when he questions some of the popular religious beliefs generally accepted today.

Please understand my intent here very clearly. I am not, nor would I ever advocate attacking any religion or religious belief. I sincerely believe that all religions were created for a purpose and the underlying purpose is to do the Will of God. I am only trying to indicate how deeply entrenched this conspiracy is in our present way of life, nothing more.

Since the ego is a part of all people, though the degree of its control varies, even our religious leaders
fall prey to its influence, although they may not recognize it. Once anyone clearly recognizes it and sees how its control can be reduced and finally eliminated, then a whole new way of life will open up for them. They will look back at their past life and say to themselves, "How ignorant and ridiculous I was to ever believe I knew the truth about life and my real identity."

This is exactly what the ego conspiracy has done to us. It has prevented us from discovering who we really are and what life is all about. The reason is the ego knows its existence is doomed once we find this out and change our lives accordingly. This book, hopefully, will start you on your way, on a journey without distance, to a goal that is far greater than anything this world has to offer.

Chuck Okerstrom

ACKNOWLEDGMENT
The material in this book is based, in part, on the teachings from "A Course In Miracles." Quotations directly from the Course will show an asterisk (*) at the end of the quote, indicating those portions reprinted by permission from "A Course In Miracles," copyright 1975, Foundation for Inner Peace, Inc.
Chapter One

"The ego is a wrong-minded attempt to perceive yourself as you WISH to be, rather than AS YOU ARE." *

THE EGO

One of the first things we need to clearly understand is this "thing" we call the ego. We briefly discussed it in the Foreword, but now we need to expand on what was said there.

We have talked about the ego as if it is a separate "entity," something or someone trying to control us against our will. However, this is not the case. The ego is really a thought system that we made up. For those who understand computers, it is similar to a computer program we made and stored in memory to help us understand and respond to all the various things that are occurring in our world. It came into existence through our choice of what we want things to be like in our world as we perceive it. The word "perceive" is very important here. It means to comprehend or become aware of something through one or more of the body's five senses. As we know, these senses only relay messages to the brain, nothing more. Before we can understand the meaning of these messages, an interpretation must be made. This is where choice comes in, for herein lies the very basis of our ego thought system.

When we encounter different situations in our world, our mind does a memory recall of all past messages which were similar to the present ones, along with the choice or choices we made in the past and what results were experienced. We now must make a decision whether to think about this situation as we have in the past, or change our way of thinking about it. Our choice always depends on the way we want to see our world. Thus, it is only our perception of the situation, not necessarily the real truth about it.

Sometimes, we have no past memories to recall, so we're not sure what to think about a new situation. Then we are willing to listen to the opinions of someone else, and if we accept them, store them in our memory for future use. Again, this information is not necessarily the real truth.

This process continues as long as we live in our physical bodies, allowing us to store a massive amount of information about our world of perception. Remember though, each of us has stored only our interpretations, or the interpretations of others that we accepted to be correct, in our memory. The real truth about the world, about ourselves and others could be completely different from our perceptions of them. That doesn't matter to us because we can and do continually prove to ourselves, using our five senses, that our perceptions of the world are right. We will defend these perceptions of the world, ourselves and others because we made them, and what we make we believe to be true.

Up to this point, I have tried to explain to you that the ego is not a separate entity, but something we made, by choice, and placed our trust in it. We have willingly given it a sense of power to rule our lives, control our emotions and decide our fate. In many places throughout this book, I will refer to the ego as if it were a separate entity. Please understand that my only purpose is to show there is a part of
us that "appears" to be operating separately and independently within us. In truth it is only a choice of how we want to think.

Here then, is the ego we have made, a thought system that allows us to feel secure and confident that we understand all about life. If anyone or anything tries to tell us we are wrong, our ego immediately springs into action and attacks whatever it is that dares question what we know to be the truth. If the other source of information comes from what we consider to be reliable, and this different point of view can clearly be substantiated to our satisfaction, then we might modify our perception as long as it doesn't threaten the security of our ego thought system.

A question that might come to some readers is, "Why aren't our perceptions correct, in which case they would be the truth?" The answer to this question may cause the first reaction of our egos to come forth. So let's approach it carefully. Take this example first, just to allow a clearer understanding of what is to follow.

If we take a pan of water, which is in a form we call liquid, we can feel it, we can see it and we can lift it to prove to us it has a tangible quality about it. If we simply heat it until it changes into steam (not vapor which we can see), the water disappears. Our senses, tell us it is no longer present in our world and thus doesn't exist. Is this the truth?

Of course not, because we have been taught by science the water is still there, but in a form our five senses cannot detect. If we used only our five senses in this case, we would reach a false conclusion about something that is a part of the world we live in. If our five senses can be used in reaching a false conclusion in one area, can we really trust them to be correct in every area of our lives? Scientific and medical experiments are constantly showing us that our five senses are very limited in detecting the full range of conditions or information that exists. No matter which of the five senses you pick, there can be found some animal, insect, fish or bird that has far greater range of detection in that sense field than we possess. So, the awareness of our world, using our five senses, is seen to be very limited and somewhat inadequate in defining what really exists, even though we believe our senses faithfully let us know all there is to know about our world.

I don't want to offend anyone's intelligence with the above example of water and steam. I know some readers might say, "Schools and colleges exist to teach us what is correct. We don't have to depend on the body's senses totally." I would agree with this answer in part, but not completely. We must recognize that much of the information we are taught, even in our schools of higher learning, is based on someone else's interpretations, even though it may have been obtained by experimental results or past history. The point is, our advances in science are constantly showing us that what we once thought to be true, isn't true at all. I'll be discussing some of these scientific advances in a later chapter, so for now let's get back to the ego.

At least let's agree, from the example given above, that our five senses can feed us information that could allow us to arrive at an incorrect perception of a situation. Unless we are proven wrong, this perception is the truth for us. The only way we're going to change our mind is for some reliable source to prove to us, by a means we can accept, that we're wrong. As long as this new information does not affect our basic concept of life, we usually accept it and modify our memory accordingly. But let this new information affect the very foundation of our ego thought system, and our whole being seems to muster every ounce of energy and intelligence we possess to fight this enemy that appears to threaten our security. The ego immediately uses every tactic it has to keep us from even trying to understand this new piece of information, because it fears for its existence. If we are allowed to pursue this new line of reasoning, the ego knows that its conspiracy will be uncovered and we will find out the real
truth about ourselves, other people and the whole world of perception that we accept as the only reality that exists.

At this point, I'm sure many readers are feeling the effects of their ego as it is trying to get them to stop reading this book and say that what is being said here is a bunch of baloney. It is reminding them that all they need to do is open their physical eyes and confirm that what they see is the truth and the only reality they should accept. If we give in to our ego, it will leave us alone and we will feel we were right in this action.

The question is, would we rather continue to believe we are right, or learn how to change our lives into one filled with love, peace and happiness? Do we want to discover who we truly are, or live the rest of our lives believing we are something much, much less? Do we want to be in control of the world we live in, or allow the world to control us? Do we want to continue to live in a world of pain and suffering, or learn how to be part of an extraordinary movement that is now under way with the goal of bringing love, peace and happiness to a grief-stricken world? These great decisions do not appear to be connected to this one small choice whether to continue or discontinue pursuing the line of reasoning this book is following. However, this choice is one of the greatest decisions we will ever make during our present "lifetime." If we can offer nothing more than a little willingness to follow along with what is being said here, and let our minds open up to the possibilities that exist for a fabulous improvement in our lives, this is all that is needed. We will have put the first crack in the great shell that the ego has built around us, keeping the real truth about our identity hidden from us. As we follow along on this course, that crack will widen more and more, until at last the shell will break open and we will be reborn into a world more marvelous than we could ever imagine. Be assured that it is there, waiting for us to finally reach out and take hold of it. Is this all really above board, or is this just someone's pipe dream? I wish I could offer the reader documented reports on how the lives of thousands of people have been changed and are being changed every day. But, no formal recording system has been established to my knowledge. In every lecture I attend and every class I teach, I'm continually told how "A Course In Miracles" has changed lives and how excited people are about it. Of course I can go on and on about how "A Course In Miracles" has changed my life and the lives of several of my close friends and relatives, but since I am the author of this book, that might not be very convincing to most readers. So for now, I'll have to ask the reader to trust me, until we reach the place where each of you can prove it to yourself.
Chapter Two

SIN AND GUILT
We have seen how we made the whole ego thought system and how it responds to what it considers to be an attack on the foundation of its existence. We need to understand why the ego feels threatened and why we, the maker of the ego, go along with all the defenses the ego requires us to establish and maintain.

Earlier we stated that the ego was only a part of us. What is the other part? Most of us can agree that there must be a perfect Creator (God), having a perfect mind where all creative thoughts occurred. The resulting creation was perfect and all parts of something that is perfect must also be perfect. We, being a part of this creation, must have been created perfect. If this was the case, then we must either accept we are perfect, or God did create us perfect in the beginning, but we have changed into something no longer perfect. Which of these two choices we pick must necessarily be based on the thought system we made and believe to be true.

Remember, the ego thought system is based, primarily, on our perceptions of what our five senses are telling us. If we look out on our world and see evil, then we must make the choice that we have changed what was created perfect into what is no longer perfect. This is exactly what all, or nearly all, of us here on this planet have done. We believe, deep down in our thought system, that we are guilty of causing this change to happen. This we consider to be a "sin" against God. Here is the place where our belief in guilt and sin has its origin. Our ego thought system believes those that do wrong should be punished. We must then conclude that God is going to punish us for our "sins."

The awareness that we are guilty and will one day be punished, places us in a state of fear. We cannot tolerate this constant fear, so we try desperately to hide it or put it out of our conscious minds, so we can find peace and happiness. The ego thought system we have made seems to be the ideal place to find release from this fear. It allows us to come up with all kinds of escape methods and schemes to get rid of the guilt and fear we believe we have. The list is so tremendously long that we couldn't even begin to talk about each one, but let's just pick a couple as examples.

The first one is that if we can find other people who appear to be doing evil things, we can project our guilt onto them since we are no longer doing those "sinful" things. This way, they become our "scapegoats" to which our guilt can be transferred. God will reward us for changing our ways and our punishment will be reduced or completely forgiven. This allows us to feel better about ourselves and obtain a sense of relief from the fear of punishment. The second one is that we can cover up the guilt and fear we believe we have by proving to ourselves and the world how great we are through various ways, including fame, fortune, status, possessions, etc. These, we believe, will bring us such great happiness that any guilt or fear will go unrecognized and be forgotten.

None of these methods seem to work for very long, so we must continually seek, and seek and seek for something or someone to help us block out the guilt and fear we appear to have, giving us the love, peace and happiness we are lacking. We never seem to find it, at least not permanently. "A Course In Miracles" makes this very clear when it states, "You must have noticed an outstanding characteristic of
every end the ego has accepted as its own. When you have achieved it, it has not satisfied you."*

Let's stop here a minute and remind ourselves how we got into this mess. We made a choice, using our ego thought system, that led us to the conclusion that we have changed what was created perfect into something less than perfect. This choice was made based on our belief that our five senses were confirming our perceptions that the "evil" people were doing meant they had changed into something less than perfect.

We should recognize that any other choice than the one defined above would mean our whole ego thought system was completely wrong. To the ego, this would be unthinkable because it would be the end of its existence. To us, it also would be unthinkable because we would be saying that what we made and believed to be true, is now considered false. This is why we not only go along with our ego's attacks against anyone who dares question the whole basis of this thought system, but we also join in with these attacks.

Let us consider another choice. It is the same choice we talked about at the end of Chapter One. This time, however, the choice may appear much more difficult to make, since now our whole value system is being questioned, to say nothing about our belief in good and evil. It really is the same choice. Would we rather continue to believe we are right, or find a path out of the ego conspiracy into love, peace and happiness?

We probably would like to make this other choice, but we are afraid if we did, we would lose everything this world has to offer, including our own individuality. We just can't see how we could possibly have been wrong about life all these years. The reasons this other choice couldn't be right go on and on.

In the Course, this decision is brought out in a very striking way by these words, "Undermining the ego's thought system must be perceived as painful, even though this is anything but true. Babies scream in rage if you take away a knife or scissors, although they may well harm themselves if you do not. In this sense you are still a baby. You have no sense of real self-preservation, and are likely to decide that you need precisely what would hurt you most."*

Again, I reiterate what was pointed out before. The ego conspiracy is a very solid and thick shell that completely encloses us and our world of perception. It is not easy to crack this shell, but it can be done. We only need one small tool to do it, but we must be willing to hold on to this tool and not let all the ego's urges talk us into putting the tool down. That tool is the willingness to continue reading this material and just allowing what is being said to slowly sink into our minds without fighting it, even though we may not agree with what it is saying. Is this too much to ask? If there is the slightest possibility that our lives will be greatly improved, isn't it worth just this small effort? Our freedom of choice will not be taken away from us by doing this" so what do we have to lose, except all the pain and suffering that we seem to have in our lives?

Think about this for a minute. If the ego weren't trying to hide something from us, why would it be fighting so hard to convince us we should not listen to what is being presented here? This alone should make us curious about what it is that the ego can't possibly allow us to find out. At least, we should listen to both sides of the story before we make the final choice of which one we will accept, right?
Chapter Three

THE OTHER CHOICE
We will now try to calmly open our minds and allow what appears to be our adversary state its case. Since we are very curious about this other choice, we will try very hard to keep our ego urges at bay, at least until we understand the complete story.

The other choice, remember, was that God created us perfect and we still are perfect. "How can this be?" our egos immediately interrupt. "How can an 'evil' person be perfect?" Wait a minute, we agreed to keep the ego quiet until we have heard the complete story, right? So, let's continue.

In order for us to understand this, we must first be willing to forget, just while we are discussing this other choice, who we think we really are, and what we have defined as God. Can we do that, just for the sake of letting us understand the other side of the story, without saying we are accepting these definitions? Good, I'm glad we're all at least trying to have an open mind.

Let us say that God is not merely a separate Entity, but an Infinite Spirit, having an infinite mind that encompasses all knowledge and having infinite power to do whatever He wants to do without any opposition whatsoever. Our mathematicians tell us there can only be one infinity; nothing outside of this one infinity can exist. Given our new definition of God, we would conclude there can be only one God that exists everywhere within this infinity and everything that exists in this infinity must be a part of God. I know this may be difficult for most of us to understand, let alone get a clear picture of it. In our world of perception everything has a separate form and a separate space this form occupies. But remember, we are talking about spirit, not the type of form we understand. This "thing" we call spirit has no limits as our forms have, so it permeates everything. Again, I have to ask the reader to just go along with what is being said here, not necessarily to agree with it.

Using these new definitions, it would follow that everything existing must be a part of God. Another way of saying the same thing is that everything has God within it. We're still talking about spirit remember, so we are saying that the Spirit of God can be found within everyone and everything that exists. We also stated that God is perfect. What is perfect cannot have a single part of it that is not also perfect. We, being a part of God, must be perfect.

Now we can answer the question asked on the first page of Chapter Two; what is the other part of us? It is the perfect Spirit of God within us. This is the part that God created when he brought us into existence. What God has created as perfect must always remain perfect because it must always be a part of Him. Since He is infinite, there is nothing outside of Him that has the power to change it into something else.

If there is nothing that exists outside of God, then what is this part of us we call the ego? Aha! Now we are beginning to understand why the ego is fighting us so desperately to keep us from following this line of reasoning. It must be that the ego did not want us to ever ask that question. If we should ever accept the answer to this question, it would mean the ego is not an entity. The ego has no power and the ego does not exist except in our own thoughts. If our thoughts made the ego, then our thoughts can be changed, allowing the ego to just fade away into the nothingness from which it came.
Now we are free to join into another thought system, one that will be our pathway to the one goal we were never able to find under the influence of the ego thought system. This goal is the permanent love, peace and happiness that is our reward when we finally accept our true identity. We are the perfect children of God. We have been from the time we were created and will remain so forever.

Some readers may say, "Wait a minute! This all sounds wonderful and super fantastic, but we only agreed to listen to what this other choice is all about. We haven't accepted it yet because there are many unanswered questions that still cause us to believe our ego thought system is right. For instance, what about the people who are doing all kinds of "evil" things? If they are perfect and the ego doesn't really exist, then this state of love, peace and happiness has some flaws in it."

Let me try to answer this question with a fictional example only so we can understand the principles involved. Suppose a computer company hired a group of engineers who were all tops in their fields. These engineers were given free rein to spend as much as was necessary to design and build a massive computerized system with every conceivable capability required to produce perfect products that had no flaws. So the system was build and tested by its creators and found to be perfect in all details.

The company wanted to have just an average man on-the-street to be able to run the system. Of course they know he's going to make mistakes, but in the end, he'll be able to use it perfectly. By making his own mistakes, he will learn a much greater lesson and be much happier than if he were told what he could and could not do. So this person starts feeding all kinds of extraneous inputs into the computer's memory, hoping to get something out that is perfect and will make him happy. This doesn't happen. What he gets out is just as bad as what he puts in. The computer industry has a little acronym for this called "GIGO" (garbage in, garbage out).

The operator now gets very angry and upset. He blames everything and everybody for the awful mess he has made, not realizing the problem is the incorrect inputs that he is putting into the computer's memory. Instead of correcting his inputs, he turns to doing all kinds of wrong (evil) things to get back at a world that is against him.

People who look on this situation, using only their ego thought system and not knowing the true story about the creation of this perfect computer system will judge and condemn both the operator and the computer system. They would immediately laugh if anyone tried to tell them the major portion of what they were looking at was perfect. It was only the input information that needed to be corrected to allow the total system to produce perfect results and return peace and happiness to what appeared to be evil.

In this example, the perfect computer system represents each of us, the perfect creation of God. The operator represents our freedom of choice and the input information represents our thoughts. This computer system must work with a perfect set of laws designed into the system so that it produces exact results, directly corresponding to the input given it. If we stop and think about our example a minute, we will see that the computer system was operating perfectly, even when it was putting out what the operator and onlookers considered junk. It was faithfully reproducing exactly what the operator put into its memory, even though he was hoping, by some magical means or through pure luck, to get something out that would bring him happiness.

I know this is just a silly fictional example, but the moral of the story is what we're after. An "evil" person is not what our five senses and the ego thought system would have us believe. He is a perfect creation of God, but has chosen to put thoughts into his mind that are incorrect. The effects he is experiencing are the result of incorrectly programming his mind. Just as the perfect computer system required a perfect set of laws to operate in a perfect manner, so does God's universe have a perfect set of laws. It is our ignorance of these laws that cause all the problems in our lives. We are using these
laws every day of our lives, but we're using the "GIGO" method.

We are free to think the way we want, but we don't realize there is a perfect law, called the law of mind directly tied to all thinking. This is the same law used by God in the creation process. Sometimes, this law is referred to as the law of cause and effect, because this title better defines the way it works. The law is activated by thought (the cause) and a corresponding experience or result (the effect) always follows. It is this effect or manifested result that is the reward of the person having the thought.

In the case where the results are considered bad, the person may believe he is being punished, or has fallen on bad luck. This can never be the case because God's laws are perfect. For every effect we experience, there has to be a cause we activated by our thoughts. For every thought we have, we activate the law to bring forth a corresponding effect in our life experience.

Once we understand how this law operates, we immediately realize the importance of only putting those thoughts into our minds that will bring forth the results we desire to experience. This brings us back to the reason the right choice is so important in our lives. If we choose the ego thought system, with its inherent "good and evil" way of thinking, what kind of results can we expect in our lives? With this kind of thinking, there is no way the perfect law of mind can give us love, peace and happiness. We can't blame God, or the world or other people for the fact that we put the wrong thoughts into our minds, can we? There is one thing we can do, and that is to choose again. This time we can choose to use a thought system based on love, rather than good and evil. Such a thought system does exist and we will be covering it in the chapters that follow. So we can refer to each way of thinking in the future, let's call the one based on love, "God's thought system," and the one based on good and evil, the "ego's thought system."
Chapter Four

THE WORLD OF PERCEPTION

We have now learned there are two ways of thinking, and which way we choose determines what experiences we will have in our lives. What may not be clear to us yet, is the fact that it will also establish the kind of world we perceive, as existing here and now. We have learned there is a perfect law of cause and effect. What we may not understand is that this universal law is so powerful and so all encompassing that it literally transforms the world we perceive each second of our lives, so that the events taking place and the effects we experience will always be exactly like the thoughts we have and believe to be true.

At this point, some readers may be saying, "Oh, come on! We can't go along with that. That's really going off the deep end if the whole world is going to change just to match our thoughts. How can this be happening when there are billions of people, each having thoughts that most likely are different from ours?"

Calm down a minute, and try to understand two very important words that were overlooked. First, we're talking about the world that each of us PERCEIVES, not what might or might not exist. Second, and this one is very, very important, it's only those thoughts that we really and truly BELIEVE to be true that count.

From "A Course In Miracles" we are given another law by which we live in this world of perception. It is called perception's fundamental law and it states, "You see what you believe is there, and you believe it there because you want it there."*

Again, some readers may reply, "That still doesn't make sense! If we look out and see evil occurring, the law says it's because we want this wrong to be happening! We can't buy that. We didn't have anything to do with the evil being committed by others."

We have to approach this law with an open mind if we are going to clearly understand its meaning. We need to remember, first of all, that it is our choice which thought system we believe is true and accept as the way we're going to interpret the information coming from our five senses. If we choose to use the ego thought system, we're operating from a basis of sin and guilt. In that case, we believe that everyone is guilty of sinning and needs to be punished. As we discussed earlier in Chapter Two, we don't like this guilty feeling and desire desperately to get rid of it. The easiest way to do this is to try to find others that appear to be more sinful than we are, thus making us feel we are better than they.

From this point of view, let's rewrite the law for this specific case. It now would read, "We see sin (wrong) being done by others because we believe we are all guilty of sinning, and we believe that if it is taking place out there, and we're not a part of it, then this will make us feel good about ourselves."

I know many readers feel they have no such intentions in their minds when they see wrong occurring. I'm sure, on the surface, all of us feel the same way. This is all part of the cover-up plan in the ego thought system. If we consciously knew this was the reason we were judging and condemning others, then our feelings of guilt would not be temporarily taken away. Our ego thought system does its job very nicely by convincing us in our conscious minds that all we really want is to have "justice" done
and to rid our world of all wrong doing.

This appears to be a very admirable trait to us and we pat ourselves on our back. However, in our ignorance, we have overlooked the law of cause and effect. This law brings back into our world exactly what we put into our thoughts and believe to be true. This means that if we believe our world contains evil (wrong doing) and our five senses are being used to confirm this to be true, then we are actually putting the law into motion to bring about more evil (wrong doing) into our world of perception. So, instead of helping to change the conditions of our world of perception, we are joining with others having similar thoughts to recreate those same conditions.

This may be very difficult for most readers to understand, much less accept. The law of cause and effect, as described in Chapter Three and expanded on in the first of this chapter, is a very real and ever working law by which we all live. Scientific and medical researchers have proven its existence in countless ways through experiments dealing with the physical and mental laws of our universe.

A new science, called quantum physics, has taken a giant step forward in proving that the mind can and does control matter. Through extensive studies, physicists have shown the way subatomic particles (the building blocks of all forms) act at any particular time is closely related to what the observer of an experiment thinks and believes will happen. They have reached the conclusion that an observer or observers of any experiment, event, or situation taking place will have an influence, to varying degrees, on the results or effects experienced. Those wanting to explore the detailed facts about this fascinating subject should read a book entitled, "The Dancing Wu Li Masters, An Overview of the New Physics" by Gary Zukav, published by Bantam Books, New York.

This is not the only field in which the existence of this law has been demonstrated. In the medical field, researchers are discovering amazing aspects of how our thoughts and beliefs control the physical body. Advances in biofeedback have shown that many common ailments can be controlled and cured by use of directed thought processes. Many readers are probably familiar with the "sugar pill" tests performed by medical researchers many years ago. Several patients were selected who were all suffering from the same illness. They were separated into two equal groups and treated with pills they were told would help cure their illness.

However, one group was given sugar pills, while the other group received actual medicine that had been proven effective in curing their type of illness. The researchers were surprised to find the results from both groups were very close to the same, with almost an identical percentage of cures in the group taking sugar pills as the one taking medicine. It was what the patients believed that made the difference, not what treatment they had received.

At some prominent medical colleges and universities, students working toward doctoral degrees are being taught that one of the prime factors in healing is the mental attitude of both the patient and the doctor. Unless a positive attitude toward healing is established, the results are usually less than should be expected when compared with a history of successful cures of the same illness where positive attitudes were present.

Finally, speaking about positive attitudes, we're all familiar with the hundreds of books and courses available all over the world dealing with the use of positive thinking in every aspect of life. Most of these self-improvement courses give detailed accounts of the amazing results obtained by people using the principles of positive thinking to control events and conditions in their lives.

All this is nothing more than using the law of cause and effect in a positive way. The law doesn't care whether it is being used for "good" or "evil." It is what we believe that is its cause and the cause must
always come first. The effect can never come before the cause or without a cause. This is very important to remember. We cannot have an effect occur as a result of another effect.

Even though our five senses send us messages that we interpret and perceive as happening this way, if the total truth were known, it would show what we were seeing was just a series of effects happening by law according to a cause or group of causes brought together under a common theme. Let us think about this "common theme" idea for a few minutes, for it is here the ego conspiracy places us in its vice-like grip. The old adage, "Birds of a feather flock together" could not be truer. Minds that think alike are drawn together under a common interest that seems to bond them together. This does not happen by accident. It's the combination of our two laws, the fundamental law of perception and the law of cause and effect, working together.

We see this happening all over the world as different special interest groups continually form to act out their common theme. What we probably don't realize is that our whole world, including the majority of the population, has continually maintained the common theme that has never changed since man began inhabiting this planet. That theme, based on guilt and sin, is one of judging, condemning, attacking and punishing others, or its counterpart, seek, seek, seek to find happiness by getting more, more, more for ourselves. What results is a common belief system that has been referred to by many great thinkers of our time as "race consciousness." With the majority of our population thinking and believing in this race consciousness as the correct way to live, a very strong "common cause" continually establishes and maintains our world of perception through the law of cause and effect.

This is the greatest conspiracy known to mankind. Here is the root of all the pain, suffering, sickness, despair, fear, anger, unhappiness and sorrow of our world. We have gone along with it all the time because our five senses are continually used to prove to us this is the only reality and the truth about our world.

We are now learning there is another choice, another way of seeing our world of perception that will not continue the cycle of pain and suffering in our lives. This choice can be made at anytime and a whole new world will begin to unfold before our very eyes. The ego cannot enter this new world, so a whole new thought system must be accepted to replace the one in which we now believe.

The following chapters will show the way this can be accomplished by anyone determined to break through what seems to be a solid wall that the ego has placed in our path, causing many to turn back in fear and disbelief. If we're still holding onto that small tool we talked about in Chapter Two, we will soon find it is more than enough to break through this wall, because the wall is nothing but an illusion.
Chapter Five

THE OTHER WORLD

In this chapter, we will trace back through some of the same scenarios used in previous chapters, but this time we will make the other choice. This time we will use God's thought system, or love's thought system, whichever name suits us, because they are one and the same. The reason this is so can be seen from the fact that God, being infinite and perfect, is not opposed by anyone or anything. Thus, only perfect love, which is unconditional and unlimited could possibly exist within God. One would also draw the conclusion that this necessarily eliminates such things as fear, hate, attack, condemnation, sickness, pain, suffering and unhappiness from existing in God's thought system.

These things are seen as impossible once we remember that the law of cause and effect is the same law used by God in creating the universe and everything within it. If anything except perfect love could enter the mind of God, the whole universe would immediately be destroyed since God's infinite source of power would be used to produce an infinite quantity of something that would be the opposite of love and perfection.

At this point, the reader might be saying, "This is great for God, but we do have all those things in our minds, so the significance of all this does not seem to be apparent." Be assured it is of prime significance to everything we're going to be saying from now on, so let's just keep it in the back of our minds for now.

Let's get back to the way this thought system could work in our world if we make this choice. If someone had offered the computer operator a simple set of instructions on how he could correct the input information he was using, and he could lay aside his pride of authorship of his input material (ego) long enough to try this new input method, he would see an improvement right away in the products he was making. This would convince him the new way was much better than his own, and he would be on the pathway leading to greater love, peace and happiness in his life.

Some readers may comment, "This all sounds great and wonderful for a fairy tale where everyone lives happily ever after at the end, but it's a long way from reality. There just aren't any simple solutions to this world of pain and suffering that would allow us to see immediate improvements."

Again, we have jumped to conclusions based on our interpretations of what is being presented here. We are not saying there is a simple solution to all the "problems" of the world of perception. What we are saying is there is a simple set of instructions anyone can start using to alter the way they think about the world. This change in their thought processes will begin to manifest in improved conditions in their lives and affairs. This set of instructions is fairly simple, but the application of these instructions may be very difficult for most people, especially during the initial period of time when the ego's screams and threats make us question our sanity for making such a choice.

For instance, let's take the case in which we look out on our world of perception and our five senses report to us that certain people are doing things which, under the ego thought system, would be interpreted as evil or wrong. Our instructions in love's thought system would immediately remind us that these people are all perfect creations of God, regardless of how they appear to our senses.
The products or effects from their actions should not be used to judge or condemn them. It is only that they are putting an incorrect set of input information into the perfect system that God created. What our new interpretations of the messages coming from our senses should be is that we see the need or call for love coming from these people. Any call for love should be answered by extending love to them unconditionally.

This answer is always placed in our thoughts, where the law of cause and effect is activated to bring about only love, peace and happiness in our lives. We would not ever approach these people and inform them that their thoughts are incorrect, for this would be interpreted as an attack. However, if they ask for our help, then we can offer them the same solution we are using to change our lives.

Some readers may say, "This sounds as if we're condoning all the "evil"(wrongs) in the world and just allowing all "evil" doers to go scot free. Won't that allow "evil" to continually increase until it goes completely out of control?"

Let's make it very clear we're not condoning the wrong others are doing. In fact, we're able to rise above the situation and allow our love thought system to offer a solution to the problem, rather than becoming a part of the problem. We clearly understand that the law of cause and effect is working for them, and also for us. The difference is they will be rewarded with pain and suffering in their lives, since they are incorrectly using the law. We, on the other hand, will have love, peace and happiness added to ours. Remember, the law is impartial. It only knows to do whatever is placed in it as the cause.

How does our new way of thinking help resolve this type of problem that is happening in the world? First, remember we discussed earlier in Chapter Four causes that support a common theme. This principle works in either thought system, but there's one big difference. In the ego thought system, race consciousness is the driving force to keep the world just as it is with all the pain and suffering being the reward. 'In love's thought system, the thoughts of God are the primary force. When we join with this thought system, we bring with us a power that is second to none. This power will and must result in bringing about conditions of love, peace and happiness to a darkened world. Such power doesn't attack or fight "evil" in any way, for how can love do any of these things? Being infinite, it just comes forth, not recognizing a thing such as "evil" could ever exist. It's like a light brought into a darkened room.

The light doesn't fight the darkness. The darkness just disappears into nothingness, because the light cannot see darkness or know a thing like darkness could ever exist.

Some readers may insist, "Wait a minute, we know that evil does exist. How can we go along with a theory which says it doesn't exist?"

Many readers will have another ego attack with the answer to this question. Let's be very careful not to allow our egos to stop us cold now, after we have come so far and are just about ready to see the whole truth about this horrendous and all encompassing ego conspiracy. Many will find the following answer to be unbelievable, and certainly not understandable. Be assured, if we can get past this one great hurdle, we're really on our way to freedom from the ego and ready to accept our rightful place in another world, along with our true identity.

In Chapter Four, we discussed the world of perception. In this chapter we've laid the groundwork for another world using love's thought system. Let's call this other world "God's world." In God's world, only the attributes of God can exist, because they are all infinite, like God. Thus, in God's world, the world of perception doesn't really exist since it is based on attributes such as fear, hate, guilt, sin, pain, suffering and unhappiness.

Many readers will shout, "This is really ridiculous! Now we're supposed to accept that our world of
perception doesn't exist at all? This is really too much. We're really going out of our minds if we buy into a story like that."

Please! Let's try to restrain our egos for just one minute. We're jumping to conclusions again without clearly understanding what was said. The world of perception does not exist as far as God is concerned, but that doesn't mean it can't exist to us. Here is where the ego thought system was made by us to bring forth such a world. We have chosen to believe in this world of perception, and because we, as part of a tremendous group of billions of people, all believe in it, the law of cause and effect has brought it into existence for us. The Course makes this process clear when it states, "Whatever you accept into your mind has reality for you. It is your acceptance of it that makes it real. If you enthrone the ego in your minds, your allowing it to enter makes it your reality. This is because the mind is capable of creating reality or making illusions."* That doesn't mean God needs to make the same choice, thank goodness. For if He did, it would be the end of everything.

Let's use a very simple story to make it a little clearer. Suppose a parent had a child who was taking a nap. During the nap, the child dreamed he had done all kinds of wrong things in this dream world he believed was real, but actually only existed in his thoughts. He saw others doing wrong also and condemned them, hoping to change things to the way he thought his world should be if he was going to be happy. However, he knew he also had done wrong and feared the punishment he would receive from his parent. This made him very unhappy and he tried all kinds of ways to hide his guilt.

The parent, loving the child and knowing nothing about the child's dream world or all the wrongs the child believed he had committed, remained at peace, with nothing except love and happiness in the parent's world of the awakened.

When the child started to wake up, he began to cry, fearing the punishment he thought would come. The parent immediately rushes to the child and comforts him, assuring him of the parent's love. After being asked, the child relates all the details of his dream to the parent. Of course, the parent reassures the child all these things did not really happen in the world of the awakened. The child had just believed what was happening in his dream world was the only reality that existed. The truth about the real world could not be made clear to him until he chose to wake up from his dream. When he did wake up, he was reunited with his true identity as a wonderful person, having loving parents and living in a world full of love and happiness.

At this point, the egos of many readers are probably really rolling in the aisles with laughter, then shouting out the familiar demand that this should be considered absurd. "All we need to do is pinch ourselves to prove we're not dreaming. Just use our five senses," it keeps reminding us. "They furnish all the proof that is necessary to confirm this world is all there is or will ever exist."

But something inside us starts to question the ego's insistence. Many questions start to come to us that the ego thought system or this world of perception has never, or will ever answer. Questions like, "If God is truly a loving God, why would He create something unlike the love He would want to share and experience? Why would He give us freedom of choice and then declare we would be punished in a horrible place like "hell" forever and ever if we made the wrong choice? Is this true love? Why not just create us with no freedom of choice so that we couldn't do wrong or evil?"

The answer to all these questions would be very clear to us if we really understood perfect unconditional love. God's love must be unconditional and unlimited if it is infinite. As explained earlier in this chapter, conditional love would allow exceptions to exist within God. Any exceptions would mean a part of God is not perfect. This is impossible because it would be a thought (cause') in the mind of God which produces an effect (lack of love) that would destroy Him and the whole universe. How
could He do anything except create us without placing conditions on us that would destroy the very nature of his Being? This could not happen. When we understand, and accept the truth about God's love, all the screams and threats the ego keeps shouting at us will start to fall on deaf ears. We have now broken through the thick shell the ego conspiracy has constructed around us. We are now ready to find and reunite with our true identity.
Chapter Six

OUR TRUE IDENTITY
We are so used to seeing ourselves and all others as physical bodies that the mere suggestion we are something else immediately causes us to rise up in strong defense of these flesh, blood and bone structures that mean so much to us. However, very few of us would doubt for one minute we will continue to exist after the physical body is laid aside. This in itself poses a very large unanswered question in the ego thought system since this system only recognizes that which the five senses can detect as existing in reality. Since the five senses are a part of the physical body, we lose them along with the physical body.

The Course makes this connection between the ego and the body very clear when it states, "The body is the ego's home by its own election. It is the only identification with which the ego feels safe, since the body's vulnerability is its own best argument that you cannot be of God."* The Course continues this line of reasoning with an imaginary discussion between the mind and the ego, "Therefore, the mind asks, 'Where can I go for protection?' to which the ego replies, 'Turn to me.' The mind, and not without cause, reminds the ego that it has insisted that it is identified with the body, so there is no point in turning to it for protection. The ego has no real answer to this because there is none.

So what is the "part" that continues to live after the physical body is gone? It must be a "part" that is also here and now, if it "continues" after the loss of the physical body. Here again, we find there must be something more to life than what our five senses can detect, even though our ego thought system tells us nothing else exists. What this something else is must be defined by a thought system that ignores the five senses and relies on an abstract form of logic and reasoning. This is not new to us, but we need to accept this form of reasoning if we are going to arrive at a conclusion that is consistent with life here and now as well as life after loss of the physical senses.

In Chapter Three we defined God as being the infinite Spirit of the universe, unlimited and unopposed by anyone or anything. It follows that everyone and everything must be a part of God, sharing his attributes and nature. It's similar to the analogy we would make about a bucket of ocean water. The water in the bucket has all the same qualities as the rest of the ocean, with one difference. It is just a small part of the whole ocean and can never be equal to the whole ocean in this one respect. In all other respects, it is the same as the whole ocean.

We, being a part of God, are like God in the same manner as the water in the bucket is like the ocean. This must be so if we recognize that the "part" of God in each of us must retain all the attributes of God or that part would be different from God. Since God is infinite, there cannot be anything or any part different or separate from God. The conclusion we reach from this abstract reasoning is that each of us has within us all the attributes of the infinite spirit of God, except we will always be just a part, never equal to the whole of God.

The tremendous impact of this conclusion may not have dawned on most of us yet, for its potentials are staggering. Even those that have mentally accepted this as true have difficulty finding words to describe it or mental pictures which could visualize all this entails. It is so completely overwhelming.
that our limited thinking has no way of handling such a colossal description of who we really are. So, we are left standing in disbelief. We can't accept this new description of who we really are because we feel there is no proof of its truth available anywhere in our world. So, we stick with our old belief that we're just physical bodies and maybe some small part lives on after the body is laid aside, but that's not important here and now.

The great ego conspiracy has just triumphed again, and we were so close to discovering our true identity. "If we just had some tangible proof," we keep telling ourselves, "then we might start accepting this new description of who we are."

The truth is, there is all kinds of proof here in this world, right now, if anyone really desires to put forth the effort to seek it out. We discussed a few of these back in Chapter Three, dealing with both scientific and medical proof that the mind can and does control matter. This control of matter has been shown to exist not only in objects separate from us, but also in our own physical bodies. We also have proof our minds even control our lives and the way others interact with us.

The tremendous amount of such proof is so perponderous it is impossible to brush it aside as coincidental. However, those who succumb to the ego conspiracy will always find an excuse for not agreeing with any kind of proof, no matter how valid it might be. To those who are still willing to listen, let's continue.

Our old friend, the law of cause and effect, in this case can be our worst enemy. This law continually brings into our life experience what we believe to be true. If we believe we're not good enough to have the same attributes as God, then the law sees to it our life experience demonstrates we do not have these qualities. On the other hand, if we change our thinking along with our belief, then we will start experiencing these attributes. This is not as easy as flipping a switch for most of us. Changing our thoughts seems rather easy, but our deep down beliefs; that's another question.

Our beliefs have been created over many, many years, primarily using our ego thought system. These beliefs represent the very foundation of our present lives, and changing them is no easy task. But it can be done. There are many people in this world today that can attest to the astonishing results being experienced in their lives. All one needs to do is look for such information in all the thousands of books and magazine articles on sale all over the world today. Many are backed by different kinds of proof as to their authenticity, but the sheer number of them speaks for itself.

Let's get back to the attributes of God and how our capabilities to control matter show we do have these attributes. As we have stated many times, the law of cause and effect or the law of mind, is a universal law that is always operating and always bringing forth the effects or results that exactly correspond with the thoughts and belief placed into the law as its cause. This is the same process that God used to create us and everything in the universe. Our use of this law to control matter is a very small event compared to God's gigantic accomplishments, but the principle is exactly the same. It's like a baby's first step in showing he has the capability and potential to be every bit as good as the most highly developed athlete.

Our greatest block to demonstrating these attributes of God is our belief. The law can only do that which we believe is possible, nothing more or nothing less. So the proof each of us is looking for before we are willing to change our belief will never come. The law requires the belief to change FIRST, then the proof follows. What someone else is capable of accomplishing may help us change our belief about what our potential could be, but the proof will never be ours unless we change our thoughts and belief first. The ego conspiracy has been so successful and so firmly entrenched in our minds that making this change in our belief about ourselves is very difficult. The world is blessed with
a set of books that is helping millions to change and begin to accept their new identity. This material is called "A Course In Miracles" and is, without a doubt, what most students of the Course consider the greatest work since the writing of the Christian Bible.

The Course has a unique way of presenting its message in both a theoretical and practical application method to lead each reader on a path of discovery and enlightenment. This Course is not just another self improvement program to help one get through some specific problems in their life. Its goal is a complete change in our whole understanding of who we are, what we are doing here and how we are to proceed from now on if we really desire to have love, peace and happiness in our lives. Our true identity as perfect spirits of God, having all the attributes of God and capable of demonstrating these attributes here and now are fully explained and described from several different points of view. In my opinion, this material does not conflict with the central theme of the Christian Bible as seen from a metaphysical viewpoint. However, it does place a completely different interpretation on many parts of the Bible that have often been misunderstood in the past (see Appendix A). These new interpretations restore all of us to our rightful place in God's kingdom and remove all the fear and guilt that we have carried with us all our lives. When we clearly understand and accept the truth about ourselves and all others, then God's attributes will be demonstrated in our lives.

Until this happens, we are forced to accept much less than what we truly are, solely because we refuse to believe it. It's our use of the law of cause and effect that keeps us tied to a world of pain and suffering, definitely not the will of God. God cannot interfere with our choice of what we want to believe and think is true. This would destroy God's attribute of perfect unconditional love. It is left to us to choose between heaven or hell. Which we choose is always based on what we believe.
Chapter Seven

HEAVEN OR HELL
We have discussed the two thought systems in great detail in our previous chapters and explained how each operates and the results that follow. What might not be clear to most readers is that the choice between thought systems is really a choice between heaven and hell. Heaven and hell are not places at all. They are only states of mind (see "God" in Appendix A). If God is infinite, existing everywhere, there can be no place where God is not present. The mind that accepts God's presence as here and now, all around it and in it, is in a state known as heaven regardless of its location. Likewise, the mind that believes it is separated from God and that God is off somewhere other than where it is located, is in a state known as hell.

This state of mind called "hell" does not and cannot really happen in reality. But the mind that believes it can, will suffer all the effects that are associated with believing it is separated from God. Remember our discussion in Chapter Two on sin and guilt. In the ego thought system, we believed we changed what God had created perfect to something less than perfect. In order to accomplish this, we had to believe we were separated from God, since God is perfect. Being separated from God would mean that we were also separated from the attributes of God.

One could reason that if God is infinite, then it is virtually impossible to be separated from Him. This is true, in reality. Any state of mind that would believe it is separated from God must not be operating in reality, but just daydreaming it is in a state that really doesn't exist. Now we've really hit the nail squarely on the head. The whole ego conspiracy is exposed for what it really is; a gigantic daydream that has held us in its vice-like grip for what seems like millions of years.

We have all been here throughout the whole dream (see "Sin" in Appendix A), engaging in what appears to be a continuing sequence of sojourns in a seemingly never-ending search for the love, peace and happiness we thought was lost in our separation from God. Each time, we find only pain and suffering in our world of perception. As long as we continue to believe we are separated from God and as long as we accept the ego thought system as the only reality that exists, that long will we remain in hell.

The law of cause and effect will continue to give back to us exactly what we believe to be true. God would not interfere with this insane dream of ours because He does not recognize such a dream to be true. Our dreams do not exist in the mind of God where only perfect peace, unconditional love and permanent happiness abide. It's like the story of the parent and the sleeping child. The parent remains in the world of the awakened, not knowing of the dreams of the child. Only when the child chooses to wake up can the parent reconfirm the continued existence of the love, peace and happiness the child thought he had lost in his dream. However, God has never left us nor would He ever not be there to continually remind us of his love for us, his sons. Even in our dreams, out minds have a presence that constantly speaks to us in a very small, gentle voice. This voice cannot be heard over the shouts of the ego, for it would never try to force its thoughts upon us. Recognizing our freedom of choice, it waits, knowing one day, after we've had all the pain and suffering we can take, we'll turn to it for the answer.
Many readers are probably ready to declare this dream world stuff is really too far out for them to accept. It's asking a lot to even think our whole world of perception is nothing but a dream. The word "dream" may be the thing that bothers us about this condition since we associate this word only with the state of sleeping in our world of perception. No matter what word we want to use to define it, it is a state of mind in which we believe we can experience the opposite of God's love, which is fear.

There are really only two basic emotions, love and fear. All others are subsets of these two. If we really think about fear, we will see that attack, anger, hate, jealousy, unhappiness, etc. are all the result of fear. This emotion can only be experienced in a mind that believes it is separated from God, since the very thought of being separated from our Creator must place us in a condition where we are no longer secure. Our safety becomes our major concern and one in which we go to extreme lengths to maintain. When anybody or anything threatens our safety, we immediately place all our resources in the battle against it. Of course, the law of cause and effect is now placed into action to bring forth more and more things that are fearful in our lives. This turns into a cyclic and endless series of attacks and fears of being attacked in our world of perception.

If we look out on our world of perception right now, we can see very clearly that fear is the whole structure of our world. Our fears are endless, and never seem to be permanently defended against. We fear disease, injury, hunger, loss and finally death itself. The major part of our lives is spent building up an endless assortment of possessions to insure our security. Then what appears to be some unrelated accident or bad luck, causes death of our bodies and all is lost. Is this not a state called "hell"? Can this possibly be a condition that a loving father would create for his son? We would never think of placing our children in such a world of insane conditions if we were in God's shoes, would we? Then how can we believe our loving Creator could ever do such a thing to us?

Many readers may want to accept this greater concept of God, but are being held back by popular Bible interpretations which describe a God that punishes "sinners" by sending them to a horrible place called hell. In the Foreword, we stated that the ego has invaded many of our popular religious beliefs, using them to maintain its foundation of fear. This is exactly what the Course means when it states, "Nothing the ego perceives is interpreted correctly. Not only does the ego cite Scripture for its purpose, but it even interprets Scripture as a witness for itself. The Bible is a fearful thing in the ego's judgment. Perceiving it as frightening, it interprets it fearfully."* Since fear can only occur in the ego thought system, any interpretation of the Bible based on fear, condemnation, judgment or punishment must be of the ego. Only interpretations based on love are acceptable in love's thought system.

This world of perception has to be what we made and believe to be true, not a part of God's reality. So, call it a bad dream, a nightmare, an altered state of mind or a false way of thinking. The truth is it is not a reality, regardless of the name given it. It is a living hell and one we are in because of the wrong choices we have made. However, because they are choices, we can decide to choose again. And this time, we can make the right choice.

A question might come to some readers about exactly what would happen to our "dream" world should we change our thought system and belief to accept our oneness with God. The answer to this question must be given in two parts because of the complexity involved. First, this change occurs in different people at different times and to varying degrees of acceptance. It is usually a very slow process, in which we vacillate back and forth between the two ways of thinking until our belief becomes strong enough to hold us firmly in love's thought system.

When we reach this point, conditions in our lives begin to change as we experience more love, peace and happiness. However, we still live in this "dream" world where we see, with our physical eyes, all
the fear, hate, anger and attack going on all around us. But now, these things don't affect us because we understand that the people involved are just acting out their own dreams which are of their choosing. Our emotions remain peaceful and we extend unconditional love to everyone, without limitation, regardless of the type of dreams in which others are taking part. We must remember that to judge or condemn in any way would immediately make us a part of their dream and we would suffer the consequences of the law of cause and effect along with them.

Slowly, as we remain firm in love's thought system, even the physical awareness of all these "dream" world happenings seem to disappear. Not because they are gone, but because our interpretations of the messages our five senses are sending us have changed. Instead of seeing "evil" or wrong, we see people calling out for love, the love that would free them from their dreams. We realize that the whole reason for seeing them caught up in their dreams is so we can extend unconditional love to them since they are asking for it in the only way they know how, even though it may be the wrong way. This extending of our love is always done mentally, but in some cases a physical response should also be provided if such a response would be helpful and not cause the other person to be offended. In this response we are using the law of cause and effect correctly, and only the attributes of God will be returned to us.

The second part of the answer concerns the "dream" world itself. Since this "dream" world is being maintained by race consciousness which is the common theme being placed into the law of cause and effect by most people, it must remain as it is now. All the laws of this world used in maintaining a balance between good and evil are needed by these people to keep their belief system intact. A sudden change of these laws by those wanting to force the world into a new way of thinking would only result in causing more fear to be placed into the law of cause and effect, bringing about negative results instead of the positive ones that such "do-gooders" hoped to achieve. Remember, unconditional love never tries to force anyone or anything to change. The only change that is ever needed is in our own minds, never outside us.

As more and more people change their minds, then will the common theme of this world shift to the love thought system. When this occurs, the "bad" dream will be changed into a "happy" dream, but still a dream. Finally, when all people have changed their thought system and beliefs over to God's thought system will the need for the dream come to an end. At this time the state of mind known as heaven will replace all dreams and we will all be living in God's world of reality, where only the attributes of God are experienced. Our physical world of form which has limitations will have no meaning to us anymore since it will be replaced by minds whose thoughts are unlimited forever, in all ways. We cannot even begin to understand such a world in our present limited way of thinking, but our reasoning tells us it must exist since it is the only concept that agrees with our understanding of God as infinite. Any other concept of God, placing limitation on the Creator of the universe would be like a house divided against itself. Such a concept would be doomed to failure.

For those readers that question how all this ties in with the Christian Bible, a special section in Appendix A has been provided to correlate the concepts presented in this book and the Bible. All that has been discussed here is found by interpreting the Bible in both a spiritual and metaphysical (beyond the physical) method. The material in "A Course In Miracles" specifically does this in a form that takes out all the guesswork interpretation usually entails. If the Course is approached with an open mind and a little willingness to learn, then the rest will surely follow.

The words and terms used in this book and the Course are different from many of those found in the Bible, but the ideas behind each are the same. Words are only symbols, used to convey a meaning, nothing more. To understand the meaning, we must correlate the symbols used with the meaning that is
trying to be conveyed. Arguing over what meaning a symbol must or must not have only interferes with learning and gets us nowhere. To learn the Course, we need to let go of all our previous meanings that certain symbols (words) have for us and accept new or different ones only while we're trying to understand the meaning the Course wants to convey to us. It is not asking us to permanently change our definitions of these words, but just to accept the Course's meaning while we're reading it.

For example, this whole book has talked about the ego and the ego conspiracy. Here, the meaning is a thought system based on our perceptions of life using the body's five senses. This may come as a surprise to some readers, but in the Bible a much different symbol is used. It is called by different names, but the primary ones are the "devil" or "satan." Satan rules the world of perception and his voice is that of the ego as used in the Course and this book. He has been defined as if he were a separate entity fighting God for our souls, but in truth he is only our ego thought system.

Likewise, love's thought system is the Christ mind that represents the mind that has made the choice to be one with God. Both the Course and the Bible define the small, gentle voice of God within each of us as the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the link between our "dream" world and God's world of reality. Without this link, our pathway leading out of the world of perception and the ego conspiracy would not be there and we would live forever in this state of mind called "hell." Thank God, He gave us the Holy Spirit so we could find our way back to that state of mind called "heaven."

Appendix B has been provided as a starter list of symbols (words) and their meanings for those wanting to use it to help them get started in the Course. However, in various places throughout the three volumes of the Course, definitions can be found. The "Manual for Teachers" is especially useful for this purpose and in answering many questions.

Finally, in Appendix C is a summary of the primary concepts that have been discussed in this book. Understanding these will greatly improve one's ability to comprehend the central theme of the Course. This theme is accepting our oneness with God and all of God's creations. Our goal of perfect love, infinite peace and permanent happiness rests entirely on our complete acceptance of this theme. This acceptance is reached when we can truly embody it the way the great master teacher did when he said, "The Father and I are One."

Now that both sides of the story have been provided, the reader can make the choice of which thought system to accept as true. No one else can make this choice for you, or force you to accept one over the other. However, God's plan for our awakening is certain. Our choice is not whether we will or will not awaken to the truth, but only when we will allow it to happen. Time will be used by the ego to bring us more pain and suffering until we finally decide to choose again. So, why subject yourself to any more of this "hell" now that you know there is another choice? When you do make the other choice, all of heaven will celebrate your decision, and you will enter into a world of mercy and full of love.
Appendix A

BIBLE REFERENCES
The concepts and philosophies discussed in this book and the Course can be related to a spiritual and metaphysical interpretation of certain scriptures in the Christian Bible.

THE TWO THOUGHT SYSTEMS
The general theme of the material in this book dealing with the two thought systems has its basis in the story about Adam and Eve, found in Genesis, Chapters 2, 3 & 4. Here the tree of knowledge of good and evil represents the ego thought system. The serpent is the ego, or devil, within each of us that entices us to eat of the fruit of this tree. Eating of this fruit refers to our accepting and believing in the concept of good and evil as a way of life. Adam and Eve represent the conscious and subconscious parts of each person's mind, where our thoughts and beliefs are created and maintained. Once Adam and Eve had eaten of the fruit, they felt naked (guilty) and tried to hide from God because they feared God's punishment (the origination of our belief in original sin and guilt).

In Chapters 2, 3 & 4, the words "Lord" or "Lord God" are found. Using metaphysical interpretations, the Lord or Lord God is the law of God, or as defined in this book, the law of cause and effect. The Garden of Eden represents the state of mind called heaven. The tree of life in Eden represents God's thought system.

Using these interpretations, we can see that God created us perfect and placed us in the Garden of Eden (heaven). In this garden were many trees (thought systems) and we were given freedom of choice to eat their fruit. One tree (a thought system opposed to God's thought system) was not to be used as food for our minds if we were to remain in Eden (heaven), Eve (our subconscious mind) saw the fruit of the tree of good and evil as pleasant to the eyes (use of the five senses) and desired it to make her wise (our interpretations of what is good and what is evil). The serpent (our ego) enticed Eve to eat the fruit (believe that good and evil are the truth). Eve gave Adam (our conscious mind) the same fruit which he accepted (accepting the belief in good and evil in our conscious awareness and basing all our conscious thoughts on this belief).

Having accepted the belief of good and evil into our minds, we set the law of cause and effect (Lord God) into action bringing about a different series of effects (punishment) than is possible to experience in the Garden of Eden (heaven). Thus, we had used the law to remove us from heaven (that state of mind where only love, peace and happiness abide). The tree of life (God's thought system) is still waiting there in the Garden of Eden for us to choose to eat of its fruit. Eating of this fruit brings us everlasting life in the Garden of Eden.

Another interesting point about the Bible story is found in Chapter 2:21 where it states that the Lord God (law of God) caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam (our conscious mind). This is where the dream started, for the thoughts and belief in good and evil that we placed into the law of cause and effect (Lord God) could only happen in a state of mind that was different from God's thoughts (the awakened world of reality). So only in a deep sleep (dream world) could such thoughts exist and could the experience of sorrow, pain and suffering be believed as true. Notice also that nowhere in the Bible
does it ever say that Adam woke up, although there are many scriptures that talk about waking up to the truth.

THE LAW OF MIND
The law of mind, or cause and effect, is discussed in many Bible scriptures, but the way it is presented would not be immediately recognized by most readers. One scripture does, however, give a very dramatic example of its existence:

"For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith." (St. Mark 11:23)

The key words in this scripture are, "shall not doubt in his heart and shall believe." In the Bible, the heart refers to the subconscious belief that has been accepted as beyond question, not just what we think we believe in our conscious minds. This is what happened in the Adam and Eve story. Eve accepted the fruit first (entering the belief into the subconscious mind as truth) and then gave it to Adam (our conscious thoughts). The law of cause and effect requires both the thought (Adam) and the belief in the heart (Eve) as a valid cause to bring forth the effects. Adam represents our "male" or directive function of our conscious minds and Eve represents our "female" or nurturing function of our subconscious minds. When they agree on any situation or condition, the law brings forth their offspring (effect) automatically. When they disagree, only confusion results.

When Adam and Eve both accepted and ate the fruit (believing that good and evil were true) the law had no choice but to bring forth an offspring (the world of perception) that agreed with the concept of good and evil. This then is the ego conspiracy that has held us in chains all these years. Our salvation comes only by changing both our thoughts and subconscious belief in good and evil, sin and guilt, and all forms of fear. This leads to our rebirth into God's world of reality.

GOOD AND EVIL
Many people have trouble understanding why believing in good and evil causes all the problems they have in their lives. This is primarily because they do not understand the law of cause and effect and how it operates. Even after understanding the law, they still can't see why the "good" part would result in undesirable conditions. This is not easy to answer in one simple statement, but it is very important for us to realize why either of these two extremes is harmful.

First, let's look at the "evil" end. Each of us knows that everyone has their own definition and categories of things they label as evil (or bad, wrong, sinful, etc.). No two people could ever agree down to the last item what should be labeled as "evil." So, where do we go to find the undisputed, authentic listing of what is evil and what is not? The correct answer is there is no such list. It must be that such definitions are based solely on each individual's own thoughts and nothing more. There are several Bible scriptures that bring this out, but let's settle for the following for now:

"I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean (evil) of itself: but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean." (Rom. 14:14)

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." (James 1:13,14)
So, it is our thoughts that label things as "evil," not the thing itself. To distinguish things we call evil, we must have a reference to something which is not evil, and this we label as "good." Likewise, we could not distinguish what is good unless we have a reference to what is not good. The two must always be tied together in a thought system that is based on perception and interpretation. To believe something or someone is good, it must always be at the expense of something or someone that is less good or not good. Here again, we are saying that part of what God created perfect has now been made less than perfect. With this type of thinking, we're going to reap the same results from the law of cause and effect as we do by seeing and believing there is evil in our world.

There is however another thought system where the word "good" has a different meaning. In God's thought system, good has the same meaning as perfect. Since all is perfect in this thought system, all is also good, and no opposites can exist. Where no opposites exist, perception and interpretations have no place and only truth abides. This condition was made clear by Jesus when he answered one who called him good in the following scripture:

"And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God." (Matt. 19:17)

Here Jesus was clearly distinguishing between the "good" that people were labeling him with in a thought system that perceives "good and evil," and the "good" of God in a thought system where all is perfect and all is good.

**GOD**

We have defined God in this book as the Infinite Spirit that is omnipresent (present everywhere), omnipotent (all powerful) and omniscient (all knowledgeable). There are many Bible scriptures that confirm this definition, but we will limit our selection to four which, if taken together and clearly understood, should allow anyone with an open mind to reach the same conclusion:

"God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)

"One God and Father of all, who is above, all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph. 4:6)

"Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none else." (Isaiah 45:22)

"If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there." (Psalms 139:8)

This last scripture is really loaded with many very deep spiritual insights. First, note that there are only two "locations" where God can be found; heaven or hell. What about earth? Also, note that which "location" the person is in seems to be up to the person, himself; he can ascend up to heaven or make his bed in hell. Putting the other three scriptures together tells us that there is only one God and He is all around us, through us and in us. But we are here on earth, not in another "location" called heaven or hell! It must be that these "places" are not physical locations at all, but just states of mind. They represent the two thought systems that are our choice according to which one we believe to be true. However, no matter which we choose, in truth we are forever a part of God, so He must be within us regardless of what we believe.
SONS OF GOD
This book has, as one of its primary purposes, the goal of bringing us face to face with our true identity. Abstract logic and reasoning was used to arrive at the conclusion that we are perfect creations of God and are truly sons of God. Here are a series of Bible scriptures from both the Old and New Testaments that could lead a person with an open mind to the same conclusion by using just the Bible:

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (I John 3:2)

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." (John 1:12)

"Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." (I John 4:13)

"For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offsprings." (Acts 17:28)

"I have said, ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High." (Psalms 82:6)

"Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" (John 10:34)

"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say Lo here! or Lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you. " (Luke 17:20, 21)

SIN
In this book and the Course, we are told that sin does not exist as far as God's world of reality is concerned. Here, we are speaking of the definition of sin as an act against God or God's commandments that will be punished by God. A literal interpretation of the Bible contradicts this position about sin. Using metaphysical interpretation of the Bible, we find two reasons why this is not the case.

First, using the Aramaic (the language Jesus spoke) word that was translated into the English word sin, we find that it meant "missing the mark." It's like making a mistake or error in what one does or thinks. Such an error or mistake can easily be corrected by the one making it. Thus, God is not involved, even though God's law of cause and effect does bring undesirable results to the one placing these error thoughts into the law.

Second, there are many places in the Bible which state that those who sin will be sent to "hell." A literal interpretation of these scriptures would confirm that sin is real and a place called "hell" exists. In our discussion on God earlier in this Appendix, we reached the conclusion that heaven and hell were states of mind, not actual places. If "hell" is only a state of mind, it is reached by what we believe and think is true. So, sin is only associated with choosing our thoughts and belief, nothing more. To those that believe sin is real, the law of cause and effect will bring forth those experiences in their lives that they will interpret as God's punishment for their sins. However, in truth, it was only the results of their
thoughts and belief placed into the law that brought about their "hell."

We do have two scriptures that give us a clue that this is exactly what the situation is in regard to sin or God's blaming us for doing wrong:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:18)

Notice here that the only requirement to change our "sins" from red or scarlet (horrible acts) to white as snow (pure and innocent) is to reason with the Lord (law of mind). To reason with the law simply means to understand how it works and change our thoughts accordingly. God does not need to become involved with any of this. It's all between us and the law of mind or law of cause and effect. God's position on all this is as stated in this second scripture:

"According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." (Eph. 1:4)

Here we are clearly told that God has chosen us in Him, who is holy and full of love. We, being in Him must also be holy and, in love's thought system, must be blameless for any wrongs or sins that we might believe we are guilty of doing. Note also that we were chosen in Him (created) before the foundation of the world. Thus, there's no way we could be these physical forms we are using in this life experience which only lasts around 100 years, not billions of years that the world has existed.

CHRIST

In this book and the Course, we're told we have a choice of which thought system we want to use and believe is true. We also have been told that this choice is really a choice between states of mind known as heaven or hell. In each of these states of mind, a symbol is used to represent the type of thoughts associated with that state. In the ego thought system that symbol has names such as ego, satan, devil, serpent, lucifer, etc. In God's thought system, that symbol is usually called "Christ."

In the Christian belief, Jesus was the first person to reach the state of mind in which he had completely and totally accepted God's thought system and his oneness with God. Thus he became the physical embodiment of the symbol known as "Christ." His name became Christ Jesus, which indicated a complete rebirth into God's world of perfect unconditional love. However, he was continually teaching that he was no different, spiritually, than we are and that we, too, could become a "Christ." But, we must also go through a "rebirth" of our minds the same way he accomplished it.

The New Testament has this message spread throughout, but let's pick a few to make the point clear:

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3)

"And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God." (Rom. 12:2)

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." (Phil. 2:5,6)

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind
"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also: and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." (John 14:12)

In this last scripture, Jesus is telling us that if we believe in him, which means believing in what he was teaching as true, then all the great feats that he performed here on this earth we also could do and even greater things than these. Clearly, he is saying we are no different than he is, we only need to change our minds to believe we are one with God as he has done. Until we do, we cannot see the kingdom of God that truly resides within each of us (see last scripture in "Sons of God" section).
DEFINITIONS OF WORDS
The following words are used to some extent in this book, but they are all used in the Course. The reader is asked to use these definitions only so that the material and its meaning can be correctly conveyed. No attempt to convince the reader that these definitions are the only ones to be used in everyday life is implied. Also, the "Manual for Teachers," Volume III of "A Course In Miracles," provides many definitions of words, and answers many questions readers may have concerning the Course.

1. ATONEMENT: A correction of the thought that we are separated from God. Atonement leads to the realization that we are not separate physical forms, but perfect spirits united in the oneness of God.

2. CREATE: The act of extending spirit or being to someone or something using God's thought system, in a state of mind called "Heaven." All creations are eternal.

3. EGO: The questioning and interpreting aspect of the self, which was made (see No. 8) rather than created. It is nothing more than that part of the mind which believes you are something, which in truth, you are not. It is the illusion that you are separated from God and are a physical form rather than a spirit.

4. EMOTIONS: There are really only two emotions, love and fear. All others are a subset of these two and are directly related to the type of thought system in which one believes. Love is of God and fear is of the ego.

5. FORGIVENESS: The overlooking of all errors that you and others made as a result of using the ego thought system. The recognition and realization that you and all others are guiltless and sinless in God's sight, thus your perceptions of wrong or evil are not true. Forgiveness is not from God, since He sees nothing to forgive, nor any reason to do so.

6. HOLY SPIRIT: The voice of God that continually communicates with us even though we may not listen. It has the capability to communicate to our minds regardless of which thought system or state of mind we believe is true.

7. KNOWLEDGE: God's truth, that is unchangeable and eternal. It is given, not learned, and has no opposites. It has no degrees or limitations placed on it, and is equally available to everyone that chooses to listen and accept its truths.

8. MAKE: The act of bringing forth into manifestation that which is temporal in the world of perception through the law of cause and effect. It is seen as real by the mind that believes it is separated from God, but in truth it is unreal.

9. MIRACLE: A loving thought about another person(s) which is aligned with God's thought system. It is a service willingly performed for all people, without exceptions or limitations of any kind, and recognizes the oneness of all people in God. It is a correction of error thoughts, not a change of what a condition or situation appears to be. A change may come about as a result of miracle thoughts, but this occurs normally through the law of cause and effect.
10. **PERCEPTION:** The resulting conclusion reached by a mind that has interpreted the information being supplied by the five senses as the only reality that exists. It allows us to believe in what is unreal (in God's thought system) as the truth about ourselves and our world.

11. **REAL:** That which is created by God or through God's thought system by the extension of perfect love. It is the eternal and never changes.

12. **UNREAL:** That which is made by the separated mind in the world of perception and given the illusion of being real by our belief in it. That which is temporal, having both beginnings and endings in the world of perception.
Appendix C

INFORMATION ON "A COURSE IN MIRACLES"
The following information may be helpful to those interested in reading and studying "A Course In Miracles," especially if such an undertaking is to be done by oneself. In any case, don't let what is presented here affect your decision to read the Course. This material only represents the author's opinion of the Course and in no way tries to present or duplicate the complete and thorough message the Course provides to the world. To me, the material in the Course represents a "New Age" Bible, not to replace our Christian Bible, but to supplement and amplify the message that Jesus brought to the world over 2000 years ago. I urge all of you to read, study and apply it in your life, for the treasures God has given all of us are ready for our taking if we will just offer the little willingness required to follow its guidance.

SPIRITUAL AND METAPHYSICAL PRINCIPLES
A basic understanding of the following metaphysical principles is very helpful in approaching the material in the Course, allowing a clearer meaning of its message to be obtained and embodied:

1. God is the Infinite Universal Spirit that is omnipresent (present everywhere), omnipotent (all powerful) and omniscient (all knowledgeable).
2. We, being a perfect creation of God, are a part of God (spirit) and are one with all of God's creations.
3. Our minds are one with the Universal Mind of God, but being free to choose our thoughts, we can believe we are separated from God. This separation can not happen in reality, but it can appear to happen to those that believe in it.
4. We live by a universal law of mind, sometimes called the law of cause and effect, that continually operates on our thoughts and belief, producing all events, conditions and situations that occur in our lives. Nothing happens by accident, luck or misfortune. There is no such thing as innocent victims. We are always responsible for everything that happens in our lives, even though we may not be able to connect certain of our thoughts and belief (cause) with the results (effects) we are experiencing. All effects have causes and all causes produce effects.

WHAT "A COURSE IN MIRACLES" TEACHES "
A Course In Miracles" teaches that God is absolute love, and this love is infinite in all respects. However, it must be truly accepted in order to be received by us. If it is not truly accepted by anyone, then that entity will experience a lack of love, which is the same emotion as fear. God, being infinite love, cannot experience a lack of love. This would be impossible. Thus God cannot experience fear, or any of the emotions which are a subset of fear (lack of love), such as pain, suffering, unhappiness, loneliness, anger, etc.

So how do we resolve what appears to be two truths that contradict each other; (1) that God is all there is, being infinite, and thus there can be nothing outside of God, and (2) that God cannot experience the emotions of fear, and all its related emotions? There is, of course, only one logical answer. These "lack
of love" emotions do not exist in reality (the reality of God's world or God's thoughts). What is not a reality must be placed in the realm of unreality, or just a dream. We, being free to accept in our minds whatever we believe to be true, can choose either God's thought system or a thought system separate from God. Of course, any thought system separate from God must be only an illusion or dream since it cannot be associated with truth. Thus, it must be only a false perception in a mind that has falsely believed it could be separated from God.

This false thought system is the whole basis for the world of perception in which we now live. It is the world of the self-created ego, the serpent in the Adam and Eve scriptures, the devil, satan, or the many other names given it in the Bible. Because this whole false thought system is based on opposites (good and evil, love and hate, sadness and happiness, health and sickness, etc.), it cannot be brought to truth by improving it. It must be completely released and replaced by truth, the thoughts o' God. This can only be done by a complete change in our thoughts and our perceptions of this world in which we now live.

This change, or correction, brings about the miracle of true perception which leads one on a pathway toward God's thought system and God's world of reality. The only change required is to correct the only mistake we ever made. That mistake was to believe we could be separated from God. To correct this mistake, we must change our perceptions to see only that which is of God in all of God's creations. We must extend only perfect unconditional love to everyone and everything. Herein lies the peace of God. This is the goal of the teachings in "A Course In Miracles" and the only true goal that all of us share.
Where to Obtain "A Course in Miracles"

The Course is available in either hard or soft covers. Most large bookstores carry them or will order them for you. If not, you can get them by writing or calling as listed below:

The Foundation For Inner Peace
P.O. Box 615
Tiburon, CA. 92940-0615
Ph. (415) 435-2287
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Also, the complete story on the way the Course came into existence can be obtained in a book entitled, "Journey Without Distance" by Robert Skutch, published by Celestial Arts, P.O. Box 7327, Berkeley, CA 84707. If this book is not available in your local bookstore, it also may be obtained from The Foundation For Inner Peace.

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“You cannot be anywhere God did not put you and God created you as part of Him. This is both where you are and what you are.”

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“The journey to God is merely the reawakening of the knowledge of where you are always, and what you are forever. It is a journey without distance to a goal that has never changed.”*
The Ego Conspiracy

About the Author

A space systems project engineer at Kennedy Space Center, Florida, with 30 years’ experience in designing and launching space vehicles, Chuck Okerstrom had an intense yearning to uncover the mystery of life and his real identity.

He was drawn to study metaphysical philosophies which unite science and religion under a common bond. There he was guided to “A Course In Miracles” and immediately became enthralled with studying and teaching its astonishing message of enlightenment. Inspired by the Course and obsessed with an inner desire to share the love, peace and happiness he had found, he could not rest until this book was published.