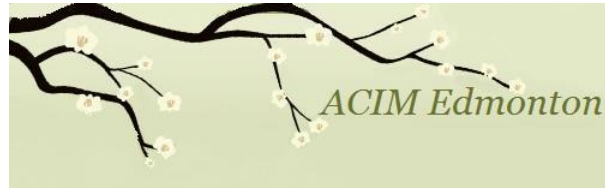


ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 111 Review III ~ Lesson 91 and Lesson 92

Sarah's Commentary:

The introduction makes some suggestions that require our attention. First, the importance of not ritualizing our practice periods is stressed. **"Rituals are not our aim, and would defeat our goal."** (W. Review III.IN.2.4) They should not be rote activities, **"Nor is it necessary that you make excessive efforts to be sure that you catch up in terms of numbers."** (W.RIII.IN.2.3) Instead, what is stressed here is willingness. There are many places in the Course that emphasize the importance of being willing. Our learning will not be hampered if we miss a practice because for some reason it is impossible to do what is suggested. However, learning will be hampered if we miss a practice period because we are unwilling to devote the time to it.

This is interesting because Jesus is helping us to see our resistance. **"Yet the wish for other experience will block its accomplishment, because God's Will cannot be forced upon you, being an experience of total willingness."** (T.8.III.2.3) (ACIM OE T.8.IV.17) How important is this journey to peace for you? How devoted are you to your awakening to the truth of who you are? The answer will be reflected in how willing you are to do this practice. How willing are you to give time to it? **"But learning will be hampered when you skip a practice period because you are unwilling to devote the time to it that you are asked to give."** (W.RIII.IN.3.1)

Jesus talks about how we can hide our unwillingness by telling ourselves that it is just not convenient to practice, and sometimes, this is the case. There are, however, other times when we lie to ourselves to camouflage our unwillingness. (W.RIII.IN.3.4) This is something we must look at, not only with the practice but in other ways, where we lie to ourselves and rationalize our behavior, which is a form of self-betrayal and self-deception. What we are lying about is that there are goals that we **"hold more dear"** (W.RIII.4.2) when we skip our practice of the Lesson.

Application is the essential part of these Lessons. To be vigilant and diligently do our Lessons is great, but when things come up during the day and we don't apply the Lesson, he says that you **"have not given your learning a fair chance to prove how great are its potential gifts to you."** (W.RIII.IN.9.3) Having said this, Jesus never wants us to feel guilty. On the contrary, he is very gentle and patient with us, as he wants us to be equally gentle with ourselves while still maintaining discipline. He knows how much guilt we continually place on ourselves, as well as the mountain of unconscious guilt we hold in our minds. His goal is not to add to that guilt but only to show us how much he loves us and wants us to have the gifts offered us through this practice. He wants us to experience the benefits so we can see how great are the gifts we receive in applying these Lessons. The reinforcement that we receive when we apply the Lessons throughout the day to situations that confront us, results in more peace. The Lessons are not intended as just an intellectual exercise. Every benefit we receive is in the application.

We do get off course regularly, but it is reassuring to remember that we need not beat ourselves up or get discouraged because once on the path, we can't turn back. In Gary Renard's book,

Disappearance of the Universe, Pursah says: "You should keep in mind that each of the four major attitudes of learning are long roads in themselves, and you will sometimes bounce around like a ping pong ball between them. The Holy Spirit will correct you along the way and set you back in the right direction. Do not feel bad when you temporarily lose your way. There is no one who has ever walked this earth, including Jesus, who did not give into temptation in some way. The myth of living a perfect life in terms of behavior is self-defeating and unnecessary. All that is necessary is to be willing to receive correction."

Pursah goes on to say: "Just as a navigator or computer constantly corrects the course of a jet airliner along its route, the Holy Spirit is always correcting you, no matter what you may appear to do or on what level of spiritual awareness you may appear to be. It may be possible to ignore Him, but it is never possible to lose Him. The jet airliner is always going off course, but through constant correction, it arrives at its destination. So will you arrive at your destination? It's a done deal. You couldn't screw up if you tried. The real question is, how long do you want to prolong your suffering?"

Whenever I have been willing to look at a grievance that I am holding and have given it over to the Holy Spirit, the miracle has always been present. When we are willing to be very honest with ourselves and look at our intentions, our needs, our expectations, and our motivations in any situation, we are given the correction. We are not responsible for the error, but we are responsible for choosing the correction. How would we ever learn if we weren't motivated to heal our minds when difficult events show up in our lives? Such events provide us with the perfect classroom where the healing can occur, and we have many opportunities throughout the day. Today, I noticed frustration showing up as I tried to respond to what seemed to me to be a long list of demands. I was feeling some resentment; yet when I looked deeper, I recognized these feelings came from my attempt to make myself worthy. The belief was that I needed to serve everyone's needs if I were to see myself as a good person. This desire to be seen as good comes from a feeling of unworthiness. It was a desire to be the hero of the dream.

Whenever I take this stance, I realize I can never offer anything of value to my brother. Jesus is very firm in this when he says: **"Whenever you consent to suffer pain, to be deprived, unfairly treated or in need of anything, you but accuse your brother of attack upon God's Son. You hold a picture of crucifixion before his eyes, that he may see his sins are writ in Heaven in your blood and death, and go before him, closing off the gate and damning him to hell."** (T.27.I.3.1-2) (ACIM OE T.27.II.3) It is a stark picture, but as we look at our own behavior when we sigh about all we have to do, we are doing exactly what Jesus describes here. We are the victim and he becomes the victimizer who is seemingly making demands of us. Now he must be made to be guilty and guilt must be punished.

Jesus supports us through all our tribulations, holding our hands and always supporting us on this journey. We will, from time to time, lose faith in the process, especially during turbulent times in our lives; but knowing that we can always bring our thoughts back to truth brings sanity in the midst of the chaos.

I feel deep gratitude in the knowledge that whenever I am open to His presence in my life, miracles abound. I can choose this experience, and I do so by being willing to let go of the obstacles to peace that I hold in my mind. These obstacles show up as judgment, anger, worry, depression, attack, grievances, expectations, feelings of unworthiness, fear, and all manner of self-attack.

Each time I am willing to look at these blocks without judgment from outside the dream (above the battleground), I can smile at the dream figure (the image of Sarah). I have taken all this drama so seriously. Now, grace can flow in, and with each experience, my faith is strengthened. Even in the midst of turmoil, I know I have been given another opportunity to look at the next level coming

up for healing. When I accept everything in my life as just a reflection of the thought system I am choosing in my mind, I am motivated to do this work, knowing the power is within me to change how I perceive everything. With willingness and readiness, I can take responsibility for everything that seems to be happening to me, and remind myself that I have chosen it all. I am not the victim of any situation I experience.

Jesus reminds us how to invite the Holy Spirit to use our minds. **"Read over the ideas and comments that are written down for each day's exercise. And then begin to think about them, while letting your mind relate them to your needs, your seeming problems and all your concerns."** (W.RIII.IN.5.2-3) It is important not to let our egos manage this process because the ego will never undo itself. We need the Holy Spirit for that purpose.

"Place the ideas within your mind, and let it use them as it chooses. Give it faith that it will use them wisely, being helped in its decisions by the One Who gave the thoughts to you. What can you trust but what is in your mind?" (W.RIII.IN.6.1-3) Today, we are asked to step back from the ego and simply try to give the mind over to the Holy Spirit, letting related thoughts come on their own. These are the healing thoughts now in our minds as a result of our work with the Course. We let these thoughts come to mind to address our needs, problems, and concerns. **"The wisdom of your mind will come to your assistance."** (W.RIII.IN.6.5)

I am so grateful this Course is in my life and I have a way to get to peace by bringing my needs, my seeming problems, and all my concerns to His healing light, so I can know the truth of my own innocence and the innocence of others.

I am so grateful I don't need to rely on my own puny strength to try to figure a way through this illusion and all its seeming problems. Instead, God's strength and guidance are available to me. I do not need to be strong to come to the light. I simply bring my weakness to Him. I give him all my murderous, angry, bitter, and despairing thoughts, as well as my beliefs in my specialness, and by releasing them, I gain strength by connecting with the light in me. If I don't like what I feel now, I can use these feelings as a motivation to find my way to peace by applying them: **"Miracles are seen in light,"** (W.91) and **"Miracles are seen in light, and light and strength are one."** (W.92) All these Lessons will only have value by applying them throughout the day and in every distressful situation.

These Lessons are not meant as pretty, inspirational words to be set aside. I know the only way to happiness is by getting in touch with my Self---the purely loving being I am. This is my motivation for doing the Lessons and applying them as often as I can to every situation in my life. Jesus says that if we consistently remember to do these Review Lessons, it is our second chance with each of these ideas and can bring great advances. Our learning gains will be **"so great that we will continue on more solid ground, with firmer footsteps and with stronger faith."** (W.RIII.IN.12.3) We still have much to learn, but we have learned much already. What is important is not to forget that we are needed in God's plan for salvation.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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