

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 116 Review III ~ Lesson 101 and Lesson 102

Sarah's Commentary:

God's Will for you is perfect happiness. Go deep within to connect with the source of that happiness. Choose His Will rather than your own. His Will for us is that we would know who we are as the One Self. The condition of this Self is happiness. Happiness is natural. To be restored by His grace to our true nature of perfect happiness is our goal. Our part is essential to His plan for our happiness. Jesus tells us that our joy must be complete to let His plan be understood by those to whom He sends us. They will see their function in our shining faces and hear God calling to them in our happy laughter.

This happiness, this joy, and this happy laughter come from deep within you and are available in the holy instant. We are reminded in this Lesson that happiness is in us and always present. It is not something we have to look for. If we don't experience it, it is only because we are blocking it with our obsessive thinking. It is a question of where we want to put our focus. If we focus on our grievances, judgments, and anger, we block the joy that is there. When we tenaciously hold the belief that we are right about the way we see, we refuse to make room for joy. It takes great willingness to deeply question our thoughts, but unless we do, we stay stuck in being right and not allowing happiness in.

"Just as your light increases every light that shines in Heaven, so your joy on earth calls to all minds to let their sorrows go, and take their place beside you in God's plan. God's messengers are joyous, and their joy heals sorrow and despair. They are the proof that God wills perfect happiness for all who will accept their Father's gifts as theirs." (W.100.4.2-4)

Release your sadness today. **"Sadness is the sign that you would play another part, instead of what has been assigned to you by God. Thus do you fail to show the world how great the happiness He wills for you. And so you do not recognize that it is yours."** (W.100.5.3-5) Joy is your function here. **"If you are sad, your part is unfulfilled, and all the world is thus deprived of joy, along with you."** (W.100.6.2)

We all have hidden areas of the mind that sabotage our happiness. They include dark stories we tell, strategies we use to compensate for pain, failures we experience, and guilt we hold onto. They are places of self-attack and self-hatred that we need to see if healing is to occur. There may even be stories that come from deeper levels of our minds (past lives). I have forayed into this area for myself and have uncovered some strategies I have been using against myself that when seen, could be released. I saw my relationship to my father from a past life that helped me in my healing of this relationship. I can't verify the truth of it, but it led me to an understanding of how the relationship was set up. Whatever we do in uncovering the layers of the mind that are kept hidden from us is helpful.

We are also encouraged to look at the idols we look to for happiness that we have substituted for God. These may include drugs, food, money, lust, power, romance, suffering, illness, and martyrdom, among other things. Clearly, this is our misinformed, convoluted way of trying to find happiness and compensate for our pain. These ego strategies all have a purpose in our lives, but while they aim for happiness and safety in the world, they only bring more pain, which is kept hidden from our awareness. The purpose they all serve is to keep us invested in the world and in specialness, but they fail to bring us what we really want, which is peace and happiness.

We first need to uncover and discover our mistaken strategies so we can make a new choice. We think our strategies are protecting us and will get us what we want, but they lead to heartbreak. The ego is threatened at having its strategies unveiled. We can see this in the defenses we set up to protect ourselves. What is required is to be willing to look at these strategies without self-judgment. Yes, it does take great courage and honesty because the ego is invested in keeping us from seeing what it is up to. This is precisely why we need the help of our friends, companions, healers, and advisors. These are the people who do not believe our version of the story.

Looking at our defenses and allowing ourselves to be vulnerable breaks the sacred bond we have made with the ego. It tells us not to look, but Jesus is showing us that it is in our own interests to break this sacred covenant we have with the ego. In fact, it is the only way we can know the peace and happiness always available to us. It requires commitment and willingness to stay vigilant, watch our minds, and keep bringing the darkness to the light. Spirit does the rest. Our part is simply to uncover what is going on in our minds. Behind these thoughts that we defend so vigorously is pure peace and joy.

True happiness is not about making ourselves happy, manufacturing an emotion, nor trying to have a positive attitude; nor is our happiness based on things going well in our external life. It is an inner condition. It is a reflection of God's Love.

Where does our suffering come from if not from God? It comes from our separate will. It comes from the belief that we have separated from God. It is the ego, but the ego is not real. It has no power. We made it up, so we can release it with the help of the Holy Spirit. When we externalize it, we think it is the devil and that we are possessed. When we think it is a power outside ourselves, we are in fear. Recognizing that it is a decision of the mind, we can choose to withdraw our investment in it. The ego is only strong because of our belief in it. It lives on borrowed time. When the decision-making mind withdraws belief from the ego, it no longer exists. This is about withdrawing investment in our thoughts. The thoughts will continue, but when we lose interest in them, we withdraw power from them.

For the ego to continue to have power in our lives, it needs to keep us unaware. **"For still deeper than the ego's foundation, and much stronger than it will ever be, is your intense and burning love of God, and His for you."** (T.13.III.2.8) (ACIM OE T.12.III.12) The ego can't allow us to discover this love, for that would be its demise. The demise of the ego is our awakening to our Self, which is the reality of who we really are---changeless, limitless and eternally happy.

Let's review briefly the instructions we are given for our practice. Twice a day for five minutes each time and preferably longer, the first thing in the morning and last thing at night, we take time in meditation to reflect on the Lessons, **"God's Will for me is perfect happiness. God's Will is perfect happiness for me. And I can suffer but from the belief there is another will apart from His"**. (W.116.(101).1.1-3) **"I share God's Will for happiness for**

me. I share my Father's Will for me, His Son. What He has given me is all I want. What He has given me is all there is." (W.116.(102).2.1-4)

"And then begin to think about them [these ideas], while letting your mind relate them to your needs, your seeming problems and all your concerns." (W. Review III.5.3) We are basically letting related thoughts come to address any need, problem, or concern that we bring to this practice. Be willing to look at the thoughts blocking your happiness and bring them to the light of Truth. Now let the thoughts come up from your right mind, without your effort, by simply allowing them to emerge on their own. They are providing you guidance for your problem in light of this Lesson. We are being provided with wisdom in how to perceive any need, problem, or concern that we bring to this practice. As thoughts come up for me, I find it is like a form of helpful self-talk where I remind myself of the truth. I remind myself that the power is in me to choose not to listen to the ego. Such related thoughts will help in making the Lesson more meaningful to you as you keep telling yourself the truth.

"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." (W.RIII.6.1-2) **"Have faith, in these reviews, the means the Holy Spirit uses will not fail."** (W.RIII.6.4)

Remember to bring the idea to any perceived needs, problems, or concerns that arise during the day. Whenever you are not at peace, apply the idea to the upset. **"Think honestly what you have thought that God would not have thought, and what you have not thought that God would have you think."** (T.4.IV.2.4) (ACIM OE T.4.V.57)

Today, you might want to watch for times when you are missing the practices and deceiving yourself about the other activities and goals that you are finding more important. Recognize that this is resistance. I find I need to be very honest with myself if I am to make progress in my healing. The goals we give great attention to in our lives offer us nothing while practicing the Lessons offer us everything. How much do we buy this? Doing the Lessons diligently gives us, **"This second chance with each of these ideas will bring such large advances that we come from these reviews with learning gains so great we will continue on more solid ground, with firmer footsteps and with stronger faith."** (W.RIII.12.3)

Love and blessings, Sarah
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