

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 159 I give the miracles I have received.

Sarah's Commentary:

This follows beautifully on the Lesson yesterday about learning to give as we receive. To give means I have it in me so I can give it. Whether it is guilt that I am giving or love that I am extending, I will receive what I am giving, as giving and receiving are the same. **"To give is how to recognize you have received. It is the proof that what you have is yours."** (W.159.1.7-8) When I blame, attack, get angry, judge someone, or condemn them, I might as well be ordering up from Amazon the same things for myself because I will receive what I am giving. When I give love, gentleness, kindness, and joy, I know I have them in me. Whatever I give to anyone, I give to myself. It is important to become vigilant in watching what we are giving. This can be subtle, so we need to stay vigilant and honest about what we are choosing for ourselves.

Every time we project guilt onto anyone, we are choosing the ego. The guilt in the mind is always projected. Every time we attack anyone, we experience the pain of that attack on ourselves. When we take anything from anyone, we are attacking them and receiving that attack upon ourselves. **"To give a thing requires first you have it in your possession. Here the laws of Heaven and the world agree."** (W.159.1.2-3) But in the world, giving and receiving are not the same. What I have taken, you don't have. This reflects the Fourth Law of Chaos that **"is the belief you have what you have taken."** (T.23.II.9.1) (ACIM OE T.23.III.27) In other words, we believe we can take from someone and now have what they don't have. It comes from the belief that we have taken our identity from God and now we have it and He does not. It is a belief that we can separate from our Source. We relive this original attack every time we take anything from anyone, believing that now we have it and they don't.

The world is all about getting and taking, and in this process, we keep reinforcing the idea of separation. It all starts with the choice we made for the ego. It is a choice we are making in each moment between choosing with the ego or the Holy Spirit. On the basis of the choice we make, we are either giving or taking. We take because we feel a sense of lack and a need to get something from someone to enhance the ego. Giving is based on knowing that we have everything and are everything, so there is nothing we need from anyone. Thus, we extend the love we know is in us but not of us. It is the quiet center where love abides in us.

This quiet center is referred to as a storehouse in our minds. It is the storehouse of miracles. The Holy Spirit brings forth these miracles when we turn to Him for the Correction of our wrong-minded perspective. We are always in the wrong mind when we think we can gain at anyone's expense. When we turn to the Holy Spirit for His interpretation, He reminds us that our brother is our Self. We share the same need to awaken from this dream. We are not separate from each other. Recognizing our sameness as one Self is a reflection of the Oneness of Heaven. Through forgiveness, we reflect the love of Heaven and receive what we give.

I recall some years ago, when I was in the midst of reading in the Manual for Teachers about the nature of time, space, and the script, I got a call from the hospital. My mother, who was 96 at the time, had a serious accident and was very cut up and bruised. I walked into the hospital and found her frail body looking completely beat up with bruises and cuts everywhere. Then the doctor came in and started the procedure of stitching her up. As I sat watching, my mind was full of judgment. The doctor was an intern, and I could see he was not adept at what he was doing and he seemed very tentative and uncertain. I became aware of my judgments in that moment and decided to turn to the Holy Spirit for help. I realized I was hurting myself by holding onto my attack thoughts and jeopardizing my peace of mind. I was willing to acknowledge that there must be another way to see this brother, who seemed not to know what he was doing. I was willing to be wrong about my perception of the situation, and I asked for help to choose peace for everyone in the room. I realized it was all in my script, perfectly unfolding for my healing. We were together in this small operating room only for one purpose, which was for me to learn to let go of my judgments. I recalled what I had just read in the Manual and reminded myself that the scene unfolding in front of me was already over. It was only here for me to choose to experience the miracle. With that thought, everything shifted and all went well. I noticed that, as my mind shifted, the intern relaxed and seemed to become more gentle, as he attended to my mother and then turned to me and thanked me for my presence. We were all together for a holy purpose.

"Temptation has one lesson it would teach, in all its forms, wherever it occurs. It would persuade the holy Son of God he is a body, born in what must die, unable to escape its frailty, and bound by what it orders him to feel." (T.31.VIII.1.1-2) (ACIM OE T.31.VIII.83) It was a situation where I had an opportunity to choose again. There were only two choices I could make. I could either stay with my judgments and attack thoughts, which was the temptation in front of me, or to do as Jesus urges on behalf of our happiness, which is to choose the Holy Spirit's interpretation, recognizing ours are always wrong. **"Trials are but lessons that you failed to learn presented once again, so where you made a faulty choice before you now can make a better one, and thus escape all pain that what you chose before has brought to you. In every difficulty, all distress, and each perplexity Christ calls to you and gently says, 'My brother, choose again'."** (T.31.VIII.3.1-2) (ACIM OE T.31.VIII.87)

We can make the decision in each moment to turn away from our judgments and give our minds over to the Holy Spirit if we truly want to take our place as saviors of the world. Why would we want to delay our happiness and repeat the lessons over and over? Right in front of us is another opportunity to make another choice and receive a miracle. My time in the hospital now became a healing opportunity. It was a holy encounter, and my gratitude for shifting from attack to peace overwhelmed me with the gifts of this choice. Until the choice is made in every opportunity in front of us, we simply continue down the same road we have traveled for eons. It is a weary journey, and we have become tired and worn by the seeming trials of this world. The ego set it up so we would keep focusing on the problems of the world, rather than on our own minds where our storehouse of miracles awaits our decision to judge or to forgive.

The ego urges us to get for ourselves at someone else's expense, to compete with others, to take what we can, to attack, to see others as guilty, and to blame them for our unhappiness. Yet when we listen to the ego, this is what we are choosing for ourselves. We are choosing to stay separate by seeing differences. Now we cannot experience the treasure house where miracles await us in our minds. Here are the gifts of peace, joy, love, innocence, and magnificence, all gifts that lie dormant until we give them. Forgiveness opens the door to these gifts of true perception. **"To give is how to recognize you have received. It is the proof that what you have is yours."** (W.159.1.7-8)

Jesus says that our worldly treasure house has no value. The only value is in the eternal gifts we are endowed with by our Creator. **"Count, then, the silver miracles and golden dreams of happiness as all the treasures you would keep within the storehouse of the world. The door is open, not to thieves but to your starving brothers, who mistook for gold the shining of a pebble, and who stored a heap of snow that shone like silver. They have nothing left behind the open door. What is the world except a little gap perceived to tear eternity apart, and break it into days and months and years? And what are you who live within the world except a picture of the Son of God in broken pieces, each concealed within a separate and uncertain bit of clay?"** (T.28.III.7.1-5) (ACIM OE T.28.IV.34)

Isn't this a poignant and sad reflection on what we value in the world---shiny things that attract us more than the unity with one another? We store these gleaming pebbles, which are given value as if they were gold. We mistake a heap of snow for silver. After a lifetime of accumulating these "treasures" that we endow with happiness, they deliver nothing of value. All the silver and gold cannot fulfill our deep desire for peace and happiness. Jesus says that we have no idea what was lost when the world was made and we seemed to separate from our real happiness. The special relationships we pursue are there only to serve our needs for power, prestige, and ego gratification, all amounting to nothing. While they seem to reinforce our specialness, it is all just a shabby substitute for our true reality as divine, eternal beings of light and love. We will never be deeply happy until we do the work of healing our minds by bringing all our self-serving dark thoughts of attack and revenge, specialness, and self-aggrandizement to the healing light of the Atonement.

Our treasures in the storehouse of our minds increase as we give them away. Everything in our storehouse can be received when asked for. The door is not locked. He asks us to approach this storehouse with perfect certainty that everything is there **"that can contribute to your happiness. All are laid here already. All can be received but for the asking."** (W.159.6.1-3) We only need to make the request and nothing will be denied us. No need is left unmet when we access this storehouse. When we open up to this place in the mind, we find a new world. **"What was to be the home of sin becomes the center of redemption and the hearth of mercy, where the suffering are healed and welcome."** (W.159.7.3) In other words, the world becomes a place where we can learn forgiveness and accept the miracle. Everything is here for our redemption.

Our focus shifts from judgments and grievances to forgiveness and opens us to the peace and joy within. All are made welcome as we extend the love of Christ to those who suffer. Love is our very being and it radiates to all. Salvation waits in the place in our minds where the treasures are. All that is asked of us is to accept the gifts, as we enter the door the Holy Spirit holds open for us. How willing are we to acknowledge Him and no longer attend to the ego? All we must do is be willing. Sometimes, in our insanity, we resist and refuse these gifts by stubbornly holding onto our judgments and grievances. Even then, Jesus asks us not to judge ourselves, as there will be other opportunities given us to learn what we were unwilling to learn at the time.

Think about a problem you are currently experiencing or a relationship where there is a power struggle, regarding whose needs are going to get met. Recognize the Holy Spirit is there, waiting to offer a miracle when you let your way go and open to asking for His help. He is there, ready and willing, waiting for each of us to bring our dark thoughts to the light of truth so we can experience the miracle. So often we resist by holding onto our perspective of the problem, blaming our brother, or demanding him to sacrifice for our benefit instead of looking within where the answer lies. If there is not peace in the relationship, we have chosen wrongly. Anything missing in a relationship is what we are withholding from it.

Everything to nourish the soul is found in our right minds. Jesus describes this when he says, **"Christ's Vision is the holy ground in which the lilies of forgiveness set their roots."** (W.159.8.1) This is where we experience the Christ Self that radiates to the world. What a beautiful image when contrasted with the soil of this world, where there is no nourishment and the lilies of forgiveness cannot grow. And while we extend Christ's vision and offer our brothers these lilies of forgiveness, nothing is lost to us. We still retain the roots in the fertile soil of our treasure house. The messages brought to the world through Christ's vision doubly bless us because we receive the blessings we give. **"I give the miracles I have received."** (W.159) The treasures in our storehouse are, in fact, not lessened by giving, but indeed they are multiplied. At this feast of plenty, **"the more that anyone receives, the more is left for all the rest to share."** (T.28.III.9.2) (ACIM OE T.28.IV.36) Giving miracles just multiplies them for everyone in ways we can't even conceive of. It is our mission and our function here to be a miracle worker. It is what makes this journey so amazing. Life becomes rich with opportunities to forgive, and thus we experience more and more healing.

"Be not afraid, my child, but let your world be gently lit by miracles. And where the little gap was seen to stand between you and your brother, join him there. And so sickness will now be seen without a cause. The dream of healing in forgiveness lies, and gently shows you that you never sinned. The miracle would leave no proof of guilt to bring you witness to what never was. And in your storehouse it will make a place of welcome for your Father and your Self. The door is open, that all those may come who would no longer starve, and would enjoy the feast of plenty set before them there. And they will meet with your invited Guests the miracle has asked to come to you." (T.28.III.8.1-8) (ACIM OE T.28.IV.35)

The miracles are waiting for us to access them. The answers are all there for us in every situation and all the time, without fail, when we turn to the Holy Spirit. We just need to be willing to listen, and in listening, we open a vast storehouse of gifts, waiting for us in our minds. Our starving brothers and sisters are waiting for us to receive them so we can invite them to join in this feast. What are we waiting for? What can be more important than this? We have spent years standing apart from our brothers, sometimes with grievances that seem irreconcilable to us. It is time to dispense with this gap in our relationships. The ego will not want us to do it, justifying its position, but Jesus asks us to consider that our judgments are always wrong. He reminds us that in every brother we can see ourselves as the Christ, and we are worthy of this gift because **"God appointed it be given you."** (W.159.10.2) **"It is His gift, whereby a sweet transition can be made from death to life; from hopelessness to hope."** (W.159.10.5)

Yes, it takes work and daily practice with the Lessons. The words are just nice sounding thoughts until we put them into practice. It means taking the quiet time daily. It means that with every temptation to get upset, we stop and ask to see it differently, knowing that when we listen to the ego, we will always be wrong. It means letting go of our stubborn insistence that we know what everything means and that our perceptions are correct. It means not justifying our position but taking responsibility for what we see. **"I am responsible for what I see. I choose the feelings I experience, and I decide upon the goal I would achieve. And everything that seems to happen to me I ask for, and receive as I have asked."** (T.21.II.2.3) (ACIM OE T.21.III.15) We are not victims of any circumstance. Jesus tells us, **"Deceive yourself no longer that you are helpless in the face of what is done to you. Acknowledge but that you have been mistaken, and all effects of your mistakes will disappear."** (T.21.II.2.6-7) (ACIM OE T.21.III.16)

Today, whatever shows up in your life, watch your thoughts on how you are perceiving others in the situation because it will help you to see what you have chosen to align with---Heaven or hell, ego or Holy Spirit. The world offers us opportunities every day to see in its reflection what we have chosen for ourselves; because without this reflection, we would be unable to see our own secret sins and hidden hates. **"Now are they twice blessed. The messages they brought from Christ have been delivered, and returned to them. And they return them gladly unto Him."** (W.159.9.5-7) Jesus tells us that we are worth the gift. How can it be otherwise when **"God appointed it be given you?"** (W.159.10.2) And thus, we make a sweet transition from death to life, **"from hopelessness to hope."** (W.159.10.5)

Love and blessings, Sarah
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