

## ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



### LESSON 247 Without forgiveness I will still be blind.

#### Sarah's Commentary:

The Lesson today is about recognizing that if we see sin in anyone, we suffer. Jesus tells us, "**Sin is insanity. It is the means by which the mind is driven mad, and seeks to let illusions take the place of truth.**" (W.PII.Q4.1.1-2) The belief in sin is what has driven us into the illusory world, and in this world of illusion, we experience suffering until we accept the Atonement. We project the sin that we have accepted into our own minds, and now we see it in others and attack it there. When we attack anyone, we are actually excluding ourselves from the kingdom. We are excluding ourselves from the love we are. We are blocking it from our awareness with our attacks, and thus we remain blind to Christ's vision, which sees and knows only innocence.

Today is a day for watching our thoughts as is our practice every day. If we are serious about wanting to wake up from this dream, we truly cannot harbor any thoughts of judgment, comparison, disapproval, anger, or specialness. Those thoughts will arise and yet we must be willing to let them go. When we recognize that we are responsible for our thoughts and they alone are the cause of all suffering, we will willingly let them go. Any feelings of unworthiness, sadness, fear, worry, and self-judgment are all thoughts of self-attack. It doesn't matter whether I direct these thoughts and feelings to others or to myself. They are the same. If I truly want correction for these thoughts and feelings, I have to first recognize them.

All correction and all healing are at the level of thought because this is where the problem arose---in the mind. Defenses are what keep us from looking at what we are thinking and feeling. What are we defending except the self-concept we identify with in the dream? The self-concept is the image of myself that I hold as true. When I am willing to look at my egoic thoughts, which are the cause of all of my attachments and all of my suffering, I take responsibility for them and now they can be healed. Jesus helps us see that they are all just mistaken ideas about ourselves and others. He gives us a new interpretation, reminding us that our interpretations are always wrong. The thoughts we hold do not define what we are. On the contrary, they keep us from the truth. They keep us blind. "**Without forgiveness I will still be blind.**" (W.247)

Jesus calls on us to "**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) We believe events outside of us "cause" us to have the thoughts and feelings that we do. We absolve ourselves of responsibility, believing that we are at the mercy of the world, but Jesus helps us to recognize that we are responsible for what we think and feel. We think every sane person would react exactly the same way as we have in the face of certain situations. We justify our perspectives and our positions and rationalize the way we feel about what seems to be occurring and what or who has upset us. Yet Jesus is very clear, "**It is impossible that happenings that come to him were not his**

**choice. His power of decision is the determiner of every situation in which he seems to find himself by chance or accident.**" (T.21.II.3.2-3) (ACIM OE T.21.III.17) In other words, what we are experiencing right now, we have chosen and receive as we have asked. The beauty of accepting this fact as true is that it affirms the power that we have within us to make another choice.

There is no chance or accident in what seems to be happening to us. Everything we experience is already in the script of our lives. Everything is perfectly orchestrated as a classroom for our healing. If we accept this, we will not suffer. We do not know our own best interests. When we look back on our lives, we can see the perfection of our journey in bringing us to this place where we have said "yes" to healing our minds and where we have said "yes" to the Holy Spirit. It is all quite perfect, although it is not generally seen that way by the ego. The ego is afraid, but what it fears is music to the Spirit because it is a sign of hope that we are on the road to peace. If we want to release our unforgiving thoughts, we must watch our minds consistently for these thoughts. **"No accident nor chance is possible within the universe as God created it, outside of which is nothing. Suffer, and you decided sin was your goal."** (T.21.II.3.4-5) (ACIM OE T.21.III.17)

We bring pain to ourselves because we hold the idea that we deserve punishment because we believe we have sinned in leaving God and destroying Oneness. Oneness now seems to be out of reach. Instead, we see billions of separate forms in this world. Because of this belief in sin, we made a world of forms where we can now hide from the punishment we think we have coming to us. The good news that Jesus brings us is that we can return to the love buried in our minds. We do it by releasing our brothers from our belief that they are the source of our pain. By releasing them, we save ourselves, and thus we choose our own experience of release. As Jesus reminds us, **"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.2.3-5) (ACIM OE T.21.III.15)

This is a very powerful thought, but it is one we are not entirely comfortable with. We would actually prefer to think of ourselves as victims of circumstances that we had nothing to do with. We tell ourselves that we didn't know what we were doing, or that we were oblivious to how this could come about. We tell ourselves that we did not mean to hurt anyone. Yet these excuses keep us from healing the mind. As Jesus tells us, we are actually choosing to be unaware. Everything that seems to happen to us, we have asked for. Why would we decide against our own happiness? Jesus acknowledges that no one would do such a thing unless he does not see what he does, and that is how we keep ourselves blind. Yet when the blinders are removed through forgiveness, we experience a beautiful world, shining with loveliness.

**"Think of the loveliness that you will see, who walk with Him! And think how beautiful will you and your brother look to the other! How happy you will be to be together, after such a long and lonely journey where you walked alone. The gates of Heaven, open now for you, will you now open to the sorrowful. And none who looks upon the Christ in you but will rejoice. How beautiful the sight you saw beyond the veil, which you will bring to light the tired eyes of those as weary now as once you were. How thankful will they be to see you come among them, offering Christ's forgiveness to dispel their faith in sin."** (T.22.IV.4.1-7) (ACIM OE T.22.V.41)

A Course in Miracles focuses only on the content in our minds, not on form or behavior. This content is either of the ego (sin and guilt) or Holy Spirit (love). Whether you are in a monastery or in a corporate office, it makes no difference. What does make a difference is whether we see our interests as different or the same as those of everyone else. Jesus encourages us to see our life

circumstances and settings as a classroom in which we continue to learn the ego's curriculum, which is based on separation, or choose the Holy Spirit's curriculum, which is based on the undoing of separation. He teaches us to think always in terms of purpose. Are we using the world and our relationships to reinforce our belief in separation or to undo it? Thus, the world and the body are not the problem. The way we use them is the problem and it is always as a result of the choice we make in our minds---to be taught by the ego or by Jesus. What would be most helpful in any situation is to ask for help in undoing the specialness usually involved in the decisions we are making. This would go a long way toward removing the doubts and conflicts we experience. The curriculum of the ego and our choice for the ego as our guide keep us blind.

We regain our sight by forgiving our brothers and seeing the Christ in them. By continuing to project guilt, we keep ourselves blind. Forgiveness is the only answer. Through forgiveness, we see our brothers with Christ's vision. We see the loveliness of our brothers when we forgive them. Our blindness to the truth of who they are and who we are is healed. There is a sense of a joyous encounter in the lines, "**Brother, come and let me look on you. Your loveliness reflects my own. Your sinlessness is mine. You stand forgiven, and I stand with you.**" (W.247.1.5-8) There is joy that comes from our eagerness to know the truth of our brother, to honor him, and to see everyone as a friend.

Let us carry this purpose into all of our encounters today. This is not a Lesson for a select few. It is to be applied to everyone with no exceptions. There is no "other." Everyone is me. I am my brother. Everyone I encounter gives me another opportunity to forgive, to see them with tenderness, and to know them intimately as my Self. Their souls shine forth beyond their mistakes when we can step outside of the dream and see with the eyes of Christ.

Our prayer today is to choose to see with the eyes of Christ, rather than our own, so we can look on everyone with love. We commit to waking up from this dream that we may recognize our brother as One with us. We make no exceptions today, being willing to apply this thought to everyone we meet or think about. By honoring our brother, we honor God. "**Today I honor You through them, [my brothers] and thus I hope this day to recognize my Self.**" (W.247.2.4) We choose to remember today that if we are serious about waking up, we cannot crucify God's Son, but when we attack or judge anyone, we can choose the Correction offered by the Holy Spirit. We are not responsible for the error, only for the Correction.

Love and blessings, Sarah  
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