

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 319 I came for the salvation of the world.

Sarah's Commentary:

Many times in this Course, we are told that it is arrogant to oppose the truth and to accept the limited self as what we are. The truth is that we are the unlimited Self. It is the Christ Self that brings salvation to the world. It cannot come from the self we think we are.

"Only the ego can be limited, and therefore it must seek for aims which are curtailed and limiting." (W.319.1.4) Because we think we are curtailed and limited when we identify with the ego, we set goals that are limited and self-serving. We try to achieve these goals, but it is always at the expense of our brothers. **"For specialness not only sets apart, but serves as grounds from which attack on those who seem 'beneath' the special one is 'natural' and 'just'."** (T.24.I.4.4) (ACIM OE T.24.II.6) To the ego, it is a game of competition based on the principle of "one or the other." You must lose, for me to win. It is based on the belief that we won our individual and separate self at God's expense. He had to lose for us to gain our independence. It seems as though we stole our individual self by destroying the totality of the Whole. In other words, we had to "kill" God. Oneness can't exist as long as we believe that we exist as a separate self. Thus, our gain as a separate self came at the expense of totality. To gain this world of separation and duality, we had to destroy Oneness/God. This is what seemed to happen in the original instant when the choice was made for the ego thought system. Of course, we are told this never could happen except in dreams. The Atonement Principle assures us that it could not happen even if we currently still believe in our individual existence.

Our identification with the ego is all about the limited self, which can never bring salvation to the world. So if we think we are doing good through our service to the world, it does nothing if driven by ego goals. Salvation can only come from the truth of who I am as the unified Self. Thus, the salvation of the world can only come through healing of the mind. It requires a deep level of surrender where we ask for help to see differently. It is about undoing our mistaken identity.

In the thought system of the ego, we hold the belief that totality must lose for us to gain, but through the healing of our minds, we come to the realization that we have been mistaken. No one loses and everyone gains. Salvation rests on the fact that we must all gain if we are to know the Self that we are. **"Would it be possible for you to hate your brother if you were like him? Could you attack him if you realized you journey with him to a goal that is the same. Would you not help him reach it in every way you could, if his attainment of it were perceived as yours? You are his enemy in specialness; his friend in a shared purpose. Specialness can never share, for it depends on goals that you alone can reach. And he must never reach them, or your goal is jeopardized. Can love have meaning where the goal is triumph? And what decision can be made for this that**

will not hurt you?" (T.24.I.6.1-8) (ACIM OE T.24.II.8) As we come to recognize that we are the same, the Oneness of Heaven is reflected in this realization.

God is the Author of reality, and as such, His Will embraces all there is. **"And the goal which stems from it shares its totality."** (W.319.2.2) In other words, a separate self cannot exist. We are part of the totality, dreaming instead that we are separate selves. **"What aim but the salvation of the world could You have given me?"** (W.319.2.3) What else is there to learn from our experience in this world except to realize, we are mistaken in our belief in separate goals. It is by remembering our purpose and our function to bring salvation to the world and to awaken from this dream through forgiveness that we come to know the Self we are. All our experiences in the world can serve this purpose. We have one aim, which is to bring salvation to the world. It is when the veil is lifted and we see the Christ in our brother and accept the truth about ourselves that we are saved and the world is saved along with us. It is not a statement of arrogance because it is not what we do, but what we are.

We read the same thing in Lesson 186: **"Salvation of the world depends on me."** (W.186) **"Here is the statement that will one day take all arrogance away from every mind. Here is the thought of true humility, which holds no function as your own but that which has been given you. It offers your acceptance of a part assigned to you, without insisting on another role."** (W.186.1.1-3) With this, and other references such as this, we start to get the idea that to insist that we know better than God about what He says is true is the real definition of arrogance. To accept God's word as to who we really are is to be truly humble. We release the "I know" mind and admit that we have been wrong in thinking our separate identity and unique self is who we are. We give up the beliefs, values, and concepts we hold that we are unworthy, little, limited, and lacking. We accept the truth about ourselves as limitless by recognizing that we can never gain at the expense of our brother. We recognize that when we make comparisons, find fault with others, or see ourselves as superior, we maintain the belief that we have killed God and thus gained this separate self and are now in competition with everyone else.

Today, we are asked to look at the thoughts we hold that block the truth. Yesterday, I was upset about a situation where I felt set up and abused. I immediately believed this upset was because of something that happened, but that was just my story. Anything that follows "because" is part of the justification for our upsets. The truth is that I was upset because it is what I wanted. So, one may wonder, why would any of us want to be upset? Jesus explains that we choose to be upset because we want to be right about the way we see our world. I want to be right about my reasons for the upset, and I tell my story because I want others to agree with me. To drop the story, and to admit that I am wrong in the way I see this situation seems like an affront to my own understanding of the situation.

This is why it is so challenging for us to admit that we are always wrong in our perceptions. Now we are called to turn to the Holy Spirit and to ask for His interpretation in everything. I have given meaning to an event that has no meaning. It is neutral. Everything in the world is neutral. However, we give it meaning and throw away our happiness, which is our birthright, because we would rather be right than happy. We prefer our way and defend our thoughts because truth threatens our individuality and our specialness. Now we are called to see how mistaken we are about who we think we are.

When we experience any irritation or feelings of impatience or superiority or compare ourselves with anyone it is because we want to be separate. Yet it is important not to judge ourselves when we become aware of the ego program. We are cautioned not to condemn ourselves for not being more spiritual. That simply can never work because, whether we judge ourselves or anyone else, it is all the same. It keeps us at the mercy of the judgmental ego. All we need do is to look, without condemnation, at our beliefs and judgments and be willing to see that we are wrong and be willing to give out misperceptions over to be healed. We can't heal ourselves. All we can do is bring our thoughts and beliefs to awareness. Our willingness is what makes the power of the Holy Spirit possible in bringing a new interpretation to every situation we encounter.

Some blocks are so subtle that we seem not to even notice them, but these seemingly small irritations build up during the day until we feel depressed or angry, and we wonder why. We need to pay more attention to what is going on inside of us, and not to give attention to what is going on outside of us. Judging and criticizing others will never be helpful to our awakening, but when we are willing to honestly and courageously look at the judgments we are making and bring them to the truth, then ultimately there is a recognition that we all share the same purpose. This requires a level of alertness to our thoughts that we are not used to, which is why mind-training is so important. Jesus reminds us that whenever we forget our purpose, **"will the world remind you gently of what you have taught."** (T.27.V.7.2) (ACIM OE T.27.VI.49) There will be many witnesses to what is going on in our minds, and they are called forth as reflections of our own thoughts, as the world is just a mirror of those thoughts.

In an article by Jon Mundy, he writes that what brings us sorrow is when we try to force things to happen the way we think we want them to happen. For the mystic, nothing has to happen. **"Recognize what does not matter, and if your brothers ask you for something 'outrageous,' do it because it does not matter."** (T.12.III.4.1) (ACIM OE T.11.IV.27) I notice how much suffering I bring into my life when I make something matter. Jon reminded me in his article, we truly can discover new freedom when we let our rules go of how we think things should be and simply accept what is. He wrote that when we say "whatever," it simply means it does not matter. It means that it is truly not important. When we get this, we can let go of being offended, disappointed, or upset by what someone has done.

Again, what is it to be the savior of the world? What are we being asked to do? Quite simply, we are to be the light of the world. We are to be happy. Happiness is our function. We bring joy by our very Being when we make space for truth. **"But when there is no arrogance the truth will come immediately, and fill up the space the ego left unoccupied by lies."** (W.319.1.3) As we willingly bring the darkness to the light and look to the truth beyond, we experience trust and confidence that grow in power and freedom. It is a matter of reclaiming our projections and recognizing what does not matter.

"Who is the light of the world except God's Son? This, then, is merely a statement of the truth about yourself. It is the opposite of a statement of pride, of arrogance, or of self-deception. It does not describe the self-concept you have made. It does not refer to any of the characteristics with which you have endowed your idols. It refers to you as you were created by God. It simply states the truth." (W.61.1.1-7)

We have made a commitment to healing and to remember who we are. It is what we are committed to do through this Course. Let's recommit today to affirm this aim for ourselves so we can strengthen our resolve and our motivation. We do grow weary and become resistant from time to

time, but we are not asked to force ourselves. In fact, it is not helpful to do so. When discouragement and resistance are high, it may be time to relax and take a break. When we are ready to recommit, we are renewed and strengthened, and our confidence grows.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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