

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



Lesson 35

My mind is part of God's. I am very holy.

Sarah's Commentary:

Yesterday was the anniversary of my brother's death. I was not thinking about him, but I was unhappy for no particular reason of which I was aware. The malaise just hung on like a gray cloud. Finally, toward evening, I decided to do some work to prepare my mind for today's Lesson. As I did so, I flipped the text open to **"The Acceptance of Your Brother,"** (T.9 VI.1.1-5) (ACIM OE T.9.V.31) and there was the exact paragraph I had sent to my brother in his final days. It was a paragraph given to me by the Holy Spirit for him and it made quite an impact on him. Now it seemed like my brother was reminding me of the same message that I needed for myself on this anniversary! It blew me away and brought tears of joy and remembrance. We are never abandoned. We are never left comfortless. He is always with me.

The paragraph that showed was given me for my brother was, **"How can you become increasingly aware of the Holy Spirit in you except by His effects? You cannot see Him with your eyes nor hear Him with your ears. How, then, can you perceive Him at all? If you inspire joy and others react to you with joy, even though you are not experiencing joy yourself there must be something in you that is capable of producing it. If it is in you and can produce joy, and if you see that it does produce joy in others, you must be dissociating it in yourself."** (T.9 VI.1.1-5) (ACIM OE T.9.V.31)

In today's Lesson, we learn what that "something in you" is. It is our holiness. We are not consistently aware of the holiness that we are. It comes from nothing we have done. It exists only because of who we are as God created us since He is our source. This is our inheritance, our true Self. We have the same characteristics as our Creator. All His attributes are ours. As Jesus says, **"Today's idea does not describe the way you see yourself now."** (W.35.1.1)

We need to clear away all the thoughts we think we think that have made this false self we think we are! It is the ego with which we identify as the character in the dream. It is the image of who we think we are, carefully construed and protected, containing all we value and believe about ourselves. What will it take for us to know our true reality, to know our holiness? This Lesson says, **". . . vision will show you,"** (W.35.1.2) and the way to vision is to bring our false thoughts, beliefs and concepts to awareness. These thoughts block vision. Thoughts can be uncovered directly or by bringing awareness to what we are feeling. Under our feelings are the beliefs and concepts we hold. Feelings are a good determiner of what we must be thinking and believing.

The ego reflects the wrong mind which is the part that believes it has separated from Love. It believes in its autonomy and individuality and, as such, resists the thought of dependency on God. We believe we have made ourselves and that what we are is up to us. We pride ourselves on our independence and self reliance. We embrace our uniqueness and our individuality. Jesus calls this the authority problem. **"The issue of authority is really a question of authorship. When**

you have an authority problem, it is always because you believe you are the author of yourself and project your delusion onto others. You then perceive the situation as one in which others are literally fighting you for your authorship. This is the fundamental error of all those who believe that they have usurped the power of God." (T.3.VI.8.1-4) (ACIM OE T.3.VIII.66)

We believe in our self-made reality and that we exist and live in this world. Jesus tells us the reason we think we are in this world is because we do not believe that we are at home in God dreaming of exile. Rather, we believe we are living in a world separate from each other and on our own. We have surrounded ourselves with the environment which seems to protect our self-made image. Everything we look upon attests to the reality of this world and to separation and differences. We seem to be in competition with each other, striving to make our way and constantly defending ourselves against the vicissitudes of life. We perceive ourselves as being hurt by people and circumstances in our lives and thus feel unfairly treated. Jesus says we actually invite this to prove we are not responsible for our state. He reminds us that we want this in order to **". . . protect the image of yourself that you have made."** (W.35.2.3) As long as we identify with this image and value what we have made, we will resist the holiness we are. When we recognize the core of this image is neediness, fear, guilt, unworthiness, and hate, we become motivated to do the healing work through the process of Course-based forgiveness.

The truth is, although we think we have left God, we have not and cannot. This is the Atonement Principle that states we cannot leave our Source though we can believe we have. **"Ideas leave not their source, and their effects but seem to be apart from them."** (T.26.VII.4.7) (ACIM OE T.26.VIII.49) While it seems to us that we are in this world, the reality is that we are at home in God. We are still very much connected with the holiness of God and can never change ourselves in spite of our experience in this dream. The memory of God is still in our right minds and is always available. All that is required is that we bring our misperceptions to the truth where they are dissolved. We could say no one in his right mind would come here and no one would. It was the wrong mind that made the decision for the ego.

"The idea for today presents a very different view of yourself. By establishing your Source it establishes your Identity, and it describes you as you must really be in truth." (W.35.3.1-2) Our Identity as the Christ is not supported by the environment we seem to be in because it is not our real environment. Our Source is God. Our mind is part of God's Mind and not of this world. The Atonement principle reminds us that we never separated from God.

On one level, it seems great to realize that we are not what we have made of ourselves, and there is nothing we have to do to become holy because we already are. To know the peace and joy and love we are, we need to become aware of how we defend the image. When we identify with the separated self, what we perceive must be wrong. Everything we think about ourselves, the attributes we believe we have whether **"positive or negative, desirable or undesirable, grandiose or debased,"** are all wrong. (W.35.4.2) None of them are true no matter how much we cherish them. They are all meaningless perceptions based on a belief in separation. He calls them all fantasies we hold about ourselves and all untrue. Even if I describe myself as spiritual or holy, it is still coming from an image operating within a false and illusory environment. Seeing myself in this way is simply to put on a cloak of spirituality or, in other words, a spiritualized ego.

No matter what we may think about ourselves, the reality is that we are totally invulnerable beings of light and love because that is what God is. We are not this small, vulnerable, independent, and fearful self, separate from others and separate from God, all alone in a terrifying world. Yes, it is reassuring, but frightening at the same time if we really get this Lesson. It means we don't exist in

our current state and are not even here! As long as we are invested in our separate, independent selves, we will defend our specialness. Jesus knows this. He says, "**And you want it** [this environment] **to protect the image of yourself that you have made.**" (W.35.2.3) Because of this, we resist what the Course is teaching. We fear the love we are because we fear God.

Jesus keeps reminding us that who we really are is holy, magnificent and unlimited. He tells us that the way we will know this is to bring the darkness of our ego thoughts to the light. Jesus knows we do not see ourselves as holy now. He does not expect us to believe this about ourselves. We are not asked to cover our ego perspectives with this thought as an affirmation or spiritual override for false thoughts. Instead, we are told that we have a right mind where truth abides, available to us because it is within us and accessible. Thus, it is always important that we watch our thoughts and beliefs about ourselves and be willing to release them.

The Lesson says, "**In the earlier part of the mind-searching period, you will probably emphasize what you consider to be the more negative aspects of your perception of yourself.**" (W.35.5.1) Perhaps this is because we may be more comfortable with what we consider our smallness, our imperfections, and our self-criticisms in the name of humility. We may even be comfortable sharing our faults with others. We can quite readily admit to feeling stupid, being disorganized, feeling imposed on, feeling victimized, and not getting it right. Then why does he say, "**Toward the latter part of the exercise period, however, more self-inflating descriptive terms may well cross your mind?**" (W.35.5.2)

It may be because the conceited self is disturbing to us. The grandiose ideas we have about ourselves are just not that acceptable to us. Think about how uncomfortable you are about admitting you feel better and more superior than others. It is uncomfortable for us to share the things we believe about ourselves where we feel superior. It makes us squirm. To describe myself as victorious or virtuous is hard to say to myself, let alone to anyone else. "**Try to recognize that the direction of your fantasies about yourself does not matter. Illusions have no direction in reality. They are merely not true.**" (W.35.5.3-5) All fantasies reflect a false self-image and are illusory. They are all untrue and entirely meaningless, so there is no need to take any of them seriously.

We are constantly evaluating ourselves in every situation. We constantly look at how we are doing and who we think we are. How I react to various situations, personalities, and events brings up my self-evaluation. Today, a situation came up where I felt imposed upon, and another one brought forward feelings of frustration. I felt a sense of superiority in another conversation, and then offered some money to a street person and felt both sad, virtuous, and superior. Do you see how we can use the Lesson to constantly watch our minds? I can see how I describe myself when these situations and people show up in my day and trigger some kind of self-assessment. I remind myself that all of my assessments about myself, whether positive, or negative, are illusory. That is why, in each instance, we remind ourselves of the truth. "**But my mind is part of God's. I am very holy.**" (W.35.7.5) The reason, of course, is that our real environment is not this world but One with God.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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