

ACIM Edmonton - Sarah's Reflections



LESSON 37 My holiness blesses the world.

Sarah's Commentary:

We have probably all asked ourselves the question from time to time as to why we are here. Haven't we all wondered what our function is in the world? This Lesson says, **"This idea contains the first glimmerings of your true function in the world, or why you are here."** (W.37.1.1) He tells us, **"Your purpose is to see the world through your own holiness."** (W.37.1.2) It becomes quite clear, regardless of what we seem to be doing in the world, our function is to bring healing and blessing to the world. What this means is that we must bring awareness to our judgments and grievances so they can be released and blessings can come through us. There is nothing for us to try to do. It is all about undoing the way we see now. With this undoing, we will see the world as blessed because the world will simply reflect our minds. When we look with vision, we are joined with the Holy Spirit and blessings naturally extend through us. Our unholiness comes as a result of our choice for the ego thought system that perceives the world through judgment. Projection makes perception, meaning what we have chosen within, we see without.

When I see myself as lacking and deprived, I see a world constantly depriving me of joy, happiness, freedom, and abundance. I am drawing these kinds of experiences into my life. I may work very hard to overcome this, strategizing how I can find ways to be more fulfilled and abundant in the world, but until I look at the beliefs I hold in my mind, nothing I do will work. I constantly try to prove that my beliefs about myself are true. As long as I want to be right about those beliefs, I will not be open to their release. Holding onto them is my way of being right about myself.

Jesus says, **"No one loses; nothing is taken away from anyone; everyone gains through your holy vision. It signifies the end of sacrifice because it offers everyone his full due."** (W.37.1.4-5) No one is called to sacrifice. In the world of egos, this is not the case. We expect things in return for what we give. We want others to meet our needs. Someone always loses if we are to gain. It is a world of "one or the other." For my needs to be met in my relationship, you must sacrifice yours. Our idea of bargaining and negotiating is about looking after ourselves first. It is all about who can gain more. It is all about self-interest.

It is a competitive world because it reflects a thought system of competition. We believe the same thought system of competition in our minds is the thought system everyone else holds as well. It all started with the belief that we were in competition with God. For us to achieve our independent self, He had to lose. The state of Oneness is no longer in our awareness. Now we experience a state of separation. Since we believe we stole our existence from God, He had to sacrifice. It was a case of one or the other. Either God wins or I do. There can be no "me" in Oneness. With the choice for the separate self, God had to be sacrificed. This is the thought we continue to hold in our minds, as ideas do not leave their source. We project this thought onto our relationships and continue to hold the idea of competition, sacrifice, and loss in our minds.

We also believe that to get what we want there must be some kind of cost. That is what the bargain is about. I have to give something for what I am getting, meaning I have to pay something in return for what I want. It seems to us that nothing comes without sacrifice. It is also inherent in this belief that we have to pay God back for what we have taken from Him, which is our individuality. We make sacrifices for God, hoping He will go easy on us. **"Any other way of seeing will inevitably demand payment of someone or something."** (W.37.2.2) Anything we have in this world reflects a belief in the mind that we have taken it at someone's expense. That is why we feel guilty over what we have. We think the same way about others who have gained. We can see this when we look honestly at the beliefs we hold about anyone who has fame, money, or status. Yet when we bless them, we are blessed. That is how **". . . the idea of sacrifice can be removed from the world's thinking."** (W.37.2.1) By seeing our interests are the same, we go **". . . in faith together, or not at all."** (T.19.IV.D.12.8) (ACIM OE T.19.V.d.101) The idea of sacrifice is removed when we release the thought system of "one or the other" and make healing our minds a priority. Ultimately, it means living by the golden rule.

Jesus tells us, **"The Golden Rule asks you to do unto others as you would have them do unto you."** (T.1.III.6.2) (ACIM OE T.1.I.64) However, there is a proviso here as follows: **"This means that the perception of both must be accurate. The Golden Rule is the rule for appropriate behavior. You cannot behave appropriately unless you perceive correctly."** (T.1.III.6.3-5) (ACIM OE T.1.I.64) The Golden Rule, as discussed in the Course, is about looking **". . . out from the perception of your own holiness to the holiness of others."** (T.1.III.6.7) (ACIM OE T.1.I.64) What this means is that on our own, with the ego as our guide, we have no idea of how to extend love. Instead, we use others to have our needs met. As long as we don't perceive our brothers as innocent, we have no idea how to "do unto others".

When we see how we use our brothers for our own gain, we bring awareness to the way the ego set it up to keep us separate. Now we can ask for help to see our sameness with everyone. Our brother is our Self. With healing, we come to see the reflection of the Oneness we share with each other. **"It lets you teach the world that it is one with you, not be preaching to it, not by telling it anything, but merely by your quiet recognition that in your holiness are all things blessed along with you."** (W.37.3.2) We need do nothing except learn what Jesus is teaching us. It is not about trying to change anyone but about healing our own minds. Thus, to know our own holiness, we offer forgiveness. This is the way we accept healing for our own minds. Holiness can only be extended through the healed mind. Forgiveness is the only way we can clear away our ego thoughts. When the mind is healed, it is clearly not the personal self who is giving the blessing, but our healed mind can shine through us to others. Our responsibility with this Lesson is to clear the channel. Then the love that shines in our right minds, where the Holy Spirit resides, is not blocked by our investment in sacrifice. This is why Jesus tells us that our only responsibility, as a miracle worker, is to accept the Atonement for ourselves, meaning to accept the healing of our own minds.

Through this, we have the power to work miracles. Any other way of seeing means we lose, but we don't know why! Isn't that interesting? An earlier Lesson said, **"God is in everything I see because God is in my mind."** (W.30) This Lesson is very similar. Because God is in my mind, I am very holy. Holiness is a state of innocence. It is seeing with innocent perception and no preconceived notions. It is a mind willing to give up the belief that what it currently knows is the truth. Only blessings extend from a mind no longer blocked by judgments.

The state of innocence is total. When we experience our holiness, it is a beautiful state that radiates love to the universe. When we are in this state, all is perfect. Nothing can go wrong. A golden hue

paints the world in beauty. All is well. The world does not have to change because there is no world to change. Only our thoughts about the world change. We throw away this moment of joy and peace when we swing back into judgment and attack. That is how we play out the separation over and over. What we choose is demonstrated in our actions. **"Your witnessing demonstrates your belief, and thus strengthens it."** (T.1.IV.4.7) (ACIM OE T.1.I.66) **"You are asked to live so as to demonstrate that you are not an ego, and I do not choose God's channels wrongly."** (T.4.VI.6.3) (ACIM OE T.4.VII.89)

Our belief may still be weak, but through demonstration, it is strengthened. With each practice that we do, we remind ourselves about the truth of who we are. We are not the ego, meaning we are not the personality nor the self-concept we currently think defines us in this world. We are not this character who seems to be in this dream. We are actually the dreamer of this dream. It is our script, and since we wrote it, we can change it. Now, everything in the world that used to keep us invested in the dream is turned over to the Holy Spirit so the world and all of our relationships become a perfect classroom for healing.

"Miracles are teaching devices for demonstrating it is as blessed to give as to receive." (T.1.I.16.1) (ACIM OE T.1.I.16) This is a world of taking. It is a world where we mostly pursue what we think is our due. And everyone else functions in the same way, which puts us all in competition with each other. But now we are learning the only way we can receive blessings for ourselves is by extending blessings to others. With each miracle, there is a shift as we receive the blessing we give. **"When a brother acts insanely, he is offering you an opportunity to bless him. His need is yours. You need the blessing you can offer him"** (T.7.VII.2.1) (ACIM OE T.7.VIII.72)

Yes, it can be very challenging. Our usual response to insane behavior is to become angry and to justify our attack. Yet more and more we see that when our anger and judgment are brought to the light of truth, we experience a beautiful shift and feel blessed as we offer blessing. When we see attack, it is a reflection of our own attack thoughts that we would rather see in someone else. **"Those who attack do not know they are blessed."** (T.7.VII.7.5) (ACIM OE T.7.VIII.77) They are still lost in the dream. It is our function to forgive. Thus, we must look first to our own minds to see how we are blocking the love in us. Blessings extend through us when the blocks to love are released.

In our practice, we are applying the idea to whatever we see in our casual survey. We are not actually blessing the chair, rug, computer, or even a person we see. When we choose the blessing in our own minds, it envelops everything and everyone we see. It automatically extends through us. Then we close our eyes and apply the idea to any person we think of, saying, **"My holiness blesses you, [name]."** (W.37.5.6) It is important to see this as not just an exercise in affirming the truth, but an exercise in forgiveness with the goal of allowing the blessing to come through us naturally as a result of forgiving our expectations and demands of our special relationships. Conclude by repeating the idea with eyes closed and then again with eyes open.

Jesus tells us, **"It is particularly helpful to apply it silently to anyone you meet, using his name as you do so. It is essential to use the idea if anyone seems to cause an adverse reaction in you. Offer him the blessing of your holiness immediately, that you may learn to keep it in your own awareness."** (W.37.6.2-4) This is such a powerful part of the Lesson we can apply throughout the day. It can shift everything for us. It means you must stay vigilant throughout the day, watching your ego in action with its demands and requirements of others on behalf of your own happiness as you define it.

Also, if you have an adverse reaction to anyone you think of or meet, remember to **"Refuse to accept anyone as without the blessing of Atonement, and bring him into it by blessing him."** (T.14.V.11.5) (ACIM OE T.14.II.15) It is a day to pay attention to our thoughts, notice our inclination to keep others separate from us, and be willing to accept correction. It is about looking at our demands of others today, whether overt demands or subtle forms. It is always based on our perception that we are lacking and need something from others. When we identify with our holiness, there is no scarcity in us because we are everything and have everything. When we make demands of anyone, we hold the belief that we are lacking and needy.

Love and blessings, Sarah
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